

Water Matters

August - November 2022

*No water to drink, or wash your hands with. No water to shower, flush the toilet, or do laundry. Hospitals would close without water. Firefighters couldn't put out fires and farmers couldn't water their crops. Disease would spread. **Imagine a Day Without Water** is held this year on October 20. Take a deeper dive into the impact drinking water and wastewater providers have within our community.*

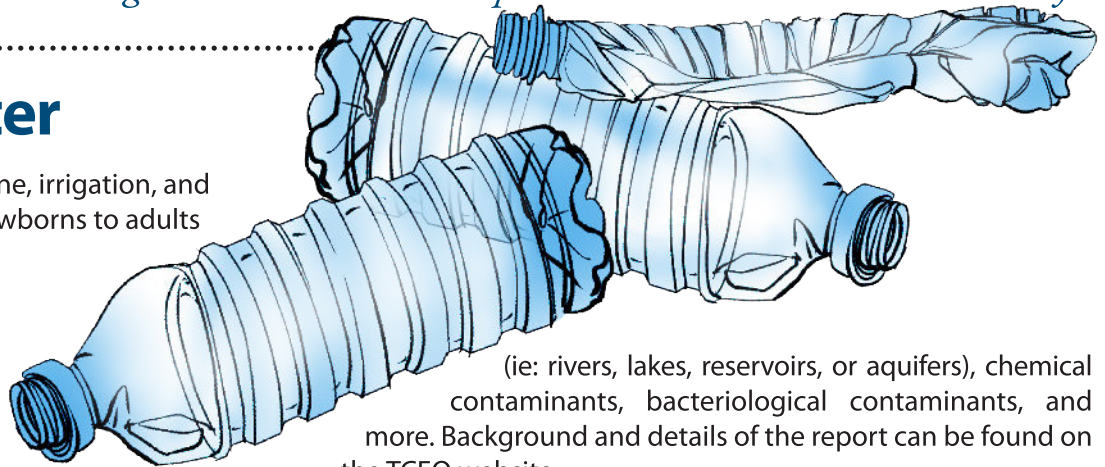
Choose Tap Water

Water is essential. Not only for hygiene, irrigation, and cooking, but for our health. From newborns to adults to seniors, our bodies are primarily made up of water; everyday activities cause us to lose that water...especially in this Texas summer heat! Beyond hydration, water is required to keep your body functioning properly – from helping to regulate body temperature to fighting off infections to maintaining focus.

But several factors come into play when assessing the water provided to a community by its public water system that greatly impact the quality and reliability of their tap water, including: raw water source, the process used for treating water, and the infrastructure for storing and conveying treated water. For Lakeway residents, when it comes to deciding between tap water from your sink or bottled water from the store, the choice is clear.

REGULATIONS Public water systems, like Lakeway Municipal Utility District (LMUD), are required to follow strict standards and submit regular reporting to local and federal authorities, unlike the manufacturers of bottled water. These standards were set nationwide by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Safe Drinking Water Act, a federal law passed in the 1970s that sets quality standards for the systems that provide Americans with drinking water. In Texas, we are also subject to standards set in the Texas Water Code by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Most public water systems treat water above these standards.

Each summer, by federal and state laws, public water systems are required to develop a Consumer Confidence Report and distribute it to their customers. This annual water quality report provides residents information about the quality of their tap water. It includes information about the source of their water



(ie: rivers, lakes, reservoirs, or aquifers), chemical contaminants, bacteriological contaminants, and more. Background and details of the report can be found on the TCEQ website.

TAP WATER VERSUS BOTTLED WATER Unlike the annual reports supplied to customers by public water systems, getting information about the quality of bottled water is difficult. Consumer Reports has stated there is no single source that maintains a list of quality reports from the manufacturers of bottled water. Besides that:

- Bottled water is wasteful: Single-use plastic bottles are the third most common item found in ocean debris and represent 15 percent of marine waste (only 14 percent of all plastic gets recycled).
- Bottled water is expensive: On average, bottled water costs \$10 per gallon compared to tap water which costs most of our customers \$0.0025 per gallon.
- Tap water and bottled water are generally comparable in terms of safety...we'd argue tap water is safer!
- Taste varies depending on the source: Minerals and other compounds determine a water's taste.

At LMUD, we are thankful to have our water system managed by well-trained staff and adequately supplied with provisions made for future growth. Our department supervisors on all levels – wastewater, potable water, and field maintenance –

See 'Tap Water' continued inside...

Tap Water...cont.

average over 15 years of experience; as such, they understand our water system and the needs of our community. Our facilities are regularly upgraded with backup measures in place to minimize the impact of man-made or natural disasters. Our distribution system is monitored 24 hours a day by our own operators with accessibility to make changes from their mobile devices. We are fortunate to be able to utilize the most effective water treatment options available while staying under budget from year to year.

So, the next time you need a drink, where will you turn? •

FACTS ABOUT BOTTLED WATER

30%

DOWNCYCLED

MOST RECYCLED PET PLASTIC GETS DOWNCYCLED INTO POLYESTER FABRICS, CARPET, AND CLOTHING.

70%

LANDFILLS & OCEANS

THE MAJORITY OF PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES ULTIMATELY END UP IN OUR LANDFILLS, EVEN AFTER BEING DOWNCYCLED INTO FABRICS

450 YEARS
BIODEGRADE

PET IS MADE WITH CHEMICALS THAT BACTERIA CANNOT CONSUME, SO IT TAKES A LONG TIME FOR IT TO DECOMPOSE IN A LANDFILL.

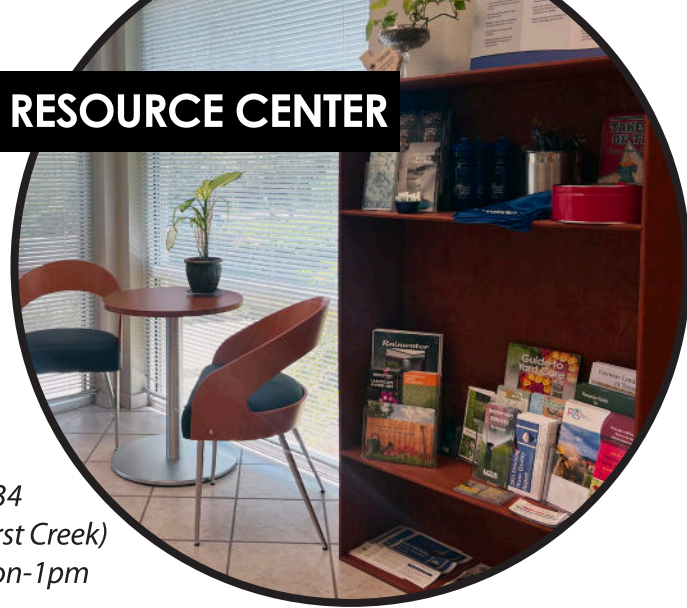
For information on PET plastic, visit: petresin.org

Spotlight

LMUD RESOURCE CENTER

Stop in at our District Office any time during regular business hours to peruse an assortment of water-saving information and other useful goodies you're welcome to take home with you.

1097 Lohmans Crossing, Lakeway, TX 78734
(near the intersection of Lohmans and Hurst Creek)
Monday thru Friday, 8am-5pm, closed noon-1pm



ESSAY WRITING Contest

LTISD STUDENTS: ELEMENTARY | MIDDLE | HIGH SCHOOL

Imagine a Day Without Water October 20, 2022

This year, in recognition of Imagine a Day Without Water, we are hosting an essay writing contest open to all Lake Travis Independent School District (LTISD) students as well as local private or home-school students. Three winners will be chosen, one to represent each level: elementary school, middle school, and high school. Winners will be recognized and awarded at an open house event on Thursday, October 20, 2022 (*details to be provided*).

Participating students write an essay in which they imagine a day without water.

Word Count: About 300 to 500 words
Submission Deadline: Thurs., October 6, 2022
Submissions can be legibly hand-written or typed.
Include student's name, age, grade, and school
as well as a parent's contact information.

Send submissions to:

Lakeway MUD

attn: essay contest

1097 Lohmans Crossing

Lakeway, TX 78734

or

customerservice@lakewaymud.org

All essays submissions become the property of LMUD. LMUD has the right to display or otherwise use the submission for future promotions. Student's first name and age will be credited.

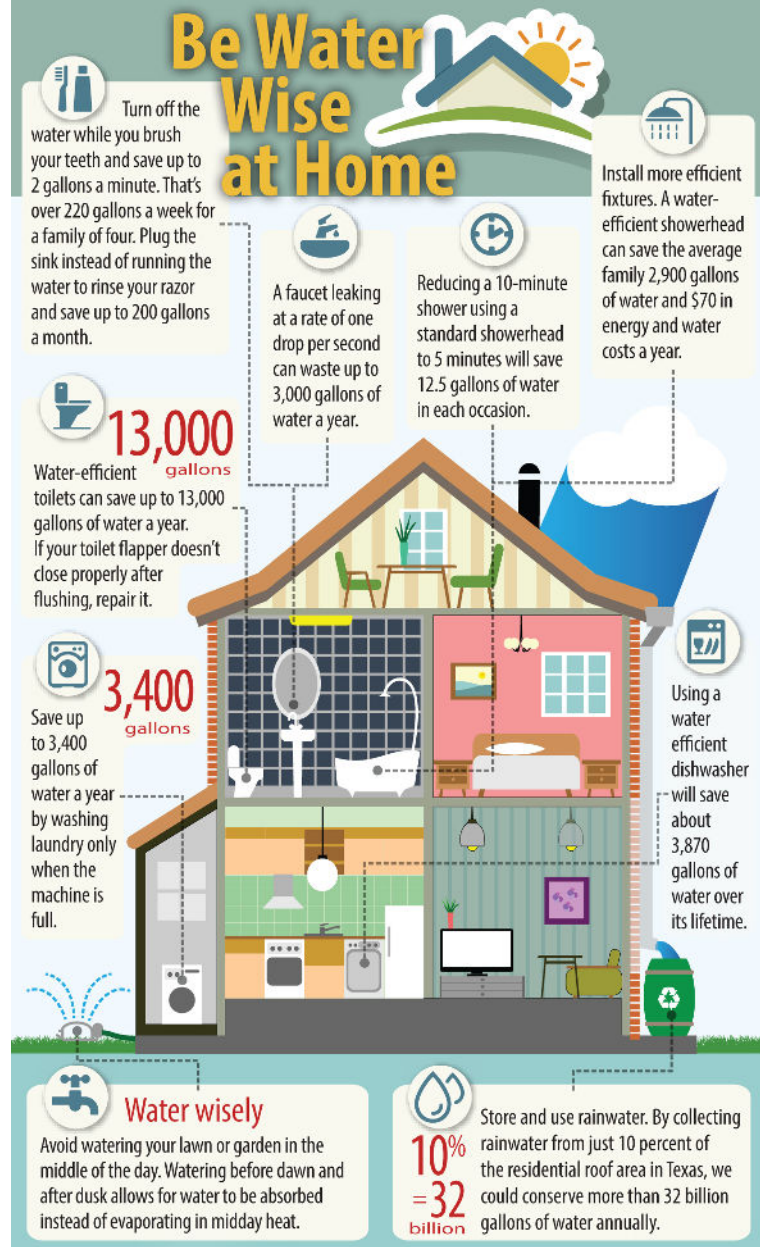
Clean water is essential to protecting public health

Clean water is and always has been essential in protecting public health. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the emphasis placed on washing your hands regularly cannot be overstated. In addition to water being the basis for every possible cleaning agent, water also needs to be consumed regularly to keep us healthy. Thankfully, water is an area most people in developed countries do not need to worry about. Tap water remains safe and reliable for use in your normal everyday activities, including for drinking, cooking, hand-washing, and cleaning.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognizes "16 critical infrastructure sectors" which include Healthcare, Energy, Communication, and Water, among others. These industries are essential to the way we live and are critically important in emergencies with special responsibility to continue their operations. DHS states, "Promoting the ability of such workers to continue to work during periods of community restriction, access management, social distancing, or closure orders/directives is crucial to community resilience and continuity of essential functions." The industries deemed "essential" during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic were estimated to collectively employ anywhere from 49 to 62 million workers prior to the outbreak, based on figures from DHS. These workers help us get what we need and get rid of what we don't.

The World Health Organization (WHO), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNICEF, and others also recognize the important role of water, sanitation and hygiene services working together, collectively known as "WASH." Global WASH programs provide expertise and interventions aimed at saving lives and reducing illness by improving access to healthy and safe water, adequate sanitation, and improved hygiene. Within their critical infrastructures document, DHS states, "Safe drinking water is a prerequisite for protecting public health and all human activity. Properly treated wastewater is vital for preventing disease and protecting the environment. Thus, ensuring the supply of drinking water and wastewater treatment is essential to modern life and the Nation's economy."

• Edited from original version published in Lake Travis View, Apr. 2020



Graphic Credit: TCEQ, takecareoftexas.org

WINTERIZING YOUR LAWN

Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service reminds Texans that their grass goes dormant in the winter, which means that you probably don't need to water your lawn at all during the winter months. To winterize your lawn:

- 1 Fertilize your lawn in late fall before the weather gets too cold.
- 2 Learn how to raise the deck on your mower to increase the height so you don't mow off the brown grass in the winter. That top layer of brown grass insulates and protects your lawn in the winter.
- 3 Don't prune too early. Wait until late winter or early spring (Feb.-Mar.) and only trim off the dead, brown growth where it meets the new green. For perennial grasses (a drought tolerant choice), trim them 4-6 inches off the ground for a new plant every year.



The experience with Lakeway MUD was exceptional. ...I loved that you came out so quickly and the guy(s)...worked to not just fix it but to let me know what was going on and what they were seeing.”

- Steve,
RE: Grinder Pump Repair

“so much of what our team does on a daily basis goes unnoticed..’ Your work is never unnoticed. I truly appreciated how you’ve helped the community see all the MUD does for us. I do so enjoy your articles.”

- Frances,
RE: Lake Travis View article

Lakeway Municipal Utility District (LMUD), established in 1972, provides water, wastewater and some reuse services to many of the homes and businesses in the City of Lakeway and a portion of the Village of the Hills.

District Office:
1097 Lohmans Crossing
Lakeway, TX 78734

Phone: (512) 261-6222 ext. 110
CustomerService@lakewaymud.org
www.LakewayMUD.org



Updates

WATERSMART APP LAUNCH ANTICIPATED THIS FALL

LMUD is moving towards the launch of a new platform that will allow customers access to detailed information about their household water use. Customers will be able to track their hourly and daily water usage, self-identify and resolve leaks, understand where their water is being used, compare their water use to similar households, and set water use alerts.

This access and availability of information was made possible after the installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) water meters across our service area last winter. These “smart” meters represent the latest proven technology in water metering, allowing for near real-time water usage data. LMUD’s previous meters provided data only during readings which took place upon customer request or during billing cycles (every two months).

Upon recommendation by our water meter supplier, Master Meter, and after careful vetting by our management team, we have contracted with the WaterSmart platform.

A press release announcing the collaboration between Master Meter and WaterSmart states, “The collaboration between Master Meter and WaterSmart will help deliver actionable data insights to utility staff aimed at reducing real costs related to serving customers while at the same time improving the experience and satisfaction of their customers.” In the same release, Erik Andersen, WaterSmart Software SVP of Sales, said “Using our advanced technology solutions, water utilities are able to better educate their customers about how much water their household is using and send automated alerts to customers to help them save water and money.”

Registration and access to this secure online customer portal will be available from many device (desktop computers, laptops, tablets, or smart phones). We currently expect the

launch to take place this fall. Updates will be posted on our website and the launch date will be announced to all active customers by email. lakewaymud.org/update/watersmart

RESIDENTIAL REUSE FOR IRRIGATION MADE AVAILABLE IN SELECT SERVICE AREA

Since the 1970s, LMUD has been a leader in the beneficial reuse of treated wastewater for land application, but exclusively for commercial accounts. A recycled water system decreases the demand on our water plant and the amount of water we have to pull out of Lake Travis. LMUD is now offering access to this system to select residential accounts along the Live Oak Golf Course where reuse lines were laid in conjunction with wastewater lines as part of the Out of District Wastewater (ODWW) Project. Customers can contact us for more information to see if they are eligible. lakewaymud.org/update/reuse-residential

ODWW PROJECT UPDATE

The Lakeway Municipal Utility District (LMUD) Board of Directors invited Stephanie Threinen, LMUD Public Information Liaison to present at the May 11, 2022

Board of Directors meeting to give a general overview of the communications aspect of the Out of District Wastewater (ODWW) Project. The presentation covered a comprehensive overview including workflow, connection options, the number of eligible and completed connections, as well as the connection process from first contact through final inspection. Presentation slides and notes can be found on the LMUD website. lakewaymud.org/update/project-update-to-lmud-board-may-11-2022

GRINDER PUMP MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PROGRAM

On Sept. 11, 2019, the LMUD Board of Directors approved changes to the Rate Order that included the decision to add system maintenance and repair in the base rate charge for LMUD customers who use a grinder pump to connect to the public sewer system for \$5 per month. Electrical-related as well as sewer yard line issues are beyond the scope of this program. Any irregularity in the system will trigger a red light and audible alarm to go off on the system’s control panel. If this happens, the occupant will need to call LMUD to investigate and remedy any problems with the system. Service technicians are available 24/7/365. •

WaterSmart will allow LMUD customers to check and receive alerts about their water usage.

