



SJRA Woodlands Division Water System

By: Ronda Trow



Since 1975 the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) Woodlands Division has served as the wholesale provider of water and wastewater services to the Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) that provide retail services within The Woodlands. This long tenure in the area has helped SJRA grow with the community and understand the needs of the residents and commercial users. The area's growth has dictated a corresponding growth in the wholesale water system. To help understand some of the tasks and demands on the SJRA Woodlands Division water system, below are some statistics for the wholesale system.

• Water Distribution and Production

- o Average water production / distribution between 2012 and 2015 – 6.225 billion gallons per year
- o Maximum groundwater well capacity: 70 million gallons per day (MGD)
- o 38 active water wells
- o Well depths range from 890 to 1,710 feet below ground

- o First well drilled in 1973 (still operational)
- o Blend purchased surface water with existing groundwater supply (treated surface water from SJRA GRP Division)
- Six Elevated Storage Tanks (Water Towers)
 - o Total of 4.5 million gallons of capacity (in the air)
- Five Groundwater Plants
 - o Eight Ground Storage Tanks
 - o 17 million gallons of capacity (on the ground)
 - o Chlorine disinfection
 - o No additional chemicals are added to the water system
- 126 miles of water distribution lines (12" and larger diameter)

There are many tasks that must be conducted in a public water system in order to protect the drinking water from contaminants and provide a high level of service so there is no worry or concern when you fill a glass of water for a drink or take a shower.

One of the more important items of water system operations is water quality testing and sampling. In coordination with the 11 MUDs in The Woodlands, over 5,500 water quality tests are conducted on the water delivered annually throughout The Woodlands. These tests, and other tests conducted by the MUDs, show that the water delivered to the residents and commercial users is safe for consumption. All of the water quality testing and sampling that is conducted is compared against State and Federal guidelines in order to

show ongoing compliance with all regulations. The results from these tests are partially why each of the MUDs in The Woodlands has a Superior Rating for the water systems.

Another important item with a water system is water system reliability. The Woodlands Division wholesale water system is called a looped system. What this means is that rather than having single water lines serving an area the water lines are connected together like links on a chain. This is a benefit to the system since without a looped system a single water line would have a dead-end that could potentially reduce water quality and drastically reduce reliability. In the majority of cases when a water line breaks within a looped system water availability to the end user (residents and commercial users) is not impacted. The valves located within the various loops allow for individual segments of the water line to be isolated for repairs to be conducted and still have water serving the resident from one of the other segments of the water loop. With a single water line, any water users past the line break would be without water until the line is repaired.

There are many other aspects of water system operations such as asset management, water availability, water age, flushing programs, and so on, that assist to ensure continuous water supply with high quality results. If you have questions regarding the water system or its operations, you can contact The Woodlands Joint Powers Agency (WJPA) at 1-855-H2O-SAVE (1-855-426-7283) or the SJRA Woodlands Division at 281-367-9511. ♦