



SJRA's Woodlands Division



When residents of Montgomery County hear "San Jacinto River Authority" (SJRA), they typically think of Lake Conroe or the new surface water treatment plant. Altogether, SJRA has four operating divisions - Highlands, GRP, Lake Conroe, and Woodlands. Although the Woodlands Division does have interactions with the other divisions of SJRA, the main operations of the Woodlands Division are wholesale drinking water production and distribution and wastewater conveyance and treatment. These services are provided to the 11 municipal utility districts (MUDs) in the Montgomery County portion of The Woodlands.

To handle the day-to-day management (customer service, billing, etc.) of the MUD-owned, retail water and wastewater systems, 10 of the 11 MUDs joined together to form the Woodlands Joint Powers Agency (WJPA). The WJPA is the central management agency for MUD Nos. 1, 6, 7, 36, 39, 46, 47, 60, and 67, and Metro Center. Retail water and wastewater management services (customer service, billing, etc.) in MUD 386 are handled

by Municipal District Services.

For retail water and sewer customers in The Woodlands, it can sometimes be confusing to determine who to call for assistance with utility issues. The purpose of this article is to help explain SJRA's roles and responsibilities in terms of providing wholesale water and wastewater services in The Woodlands.

The SJRA portion of the drinking water system encompasses all water wells, water

storage tanks (water towers and other water tanks), water lines 12 inches in diameter and larger, water delivery pumps, and required water quality testing and sampling services. Also, the SJRA water system is the delivery point for all surface water from the GRP Division of SJRA to The Woodlands. In basic terms, SJRA's Woodlands Division purchases the surface water, pumps and disinfects the groundwater, mixes the surface water



and groundwater, and conveys the final product to the MUDs for delivery to the residents and commercial establishments within The Woodlands. The MUDs, through the WJPA and Municipal District Services, handle all customer service items such as water quality questions, water outages, pressure questions, billing questions, and other customer-service related inquiries. Additionally, the MUDs are responsible for drinking water lines smaller than 12 inches in diameter and all residential and commercial water meters.

When it comes to the wastewater system, the SJRA Woodlands Division is responsible for all sewer lines 14 inches in diameter and larger, as well as the associated manholes on these lines, all wastewater lift stations, all wastewater treatment facilities, and all required water quality testing and sampling from these facilities in the Montgomery County portion of The Woodlands. The MUDs handle all retail customer service items such as odor complaints, sewer blockages and overflows, billing questions, and other customer-service related items. Additionally, the MUDs are responsible for all sewer lines under 14 inches in diameter.

There are also a number of programs and projects that SJRA, WJPA, Municipal District Services, and the MUDs partner together on in order to pool resources. One of these programs is the Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Program. This is a program that has been jointly developed and implemented to reduce the amount of fats, oils, and grease entering the collective wastewater system from commercial users. Through coordination with the MUDs, SJRA conducts routine inspections of commercial users who have interceptors (devices on the commercial sewer line to trap non-biodegradable material and fats, oils, and grease). The reduction of these items flowing into the wastewater system will assist in reducing wastewater blockages and overflows.

As you can imagine, there is a lot of coordination and communication that takes place between SJRA, WJPA, and the MUDs. Together, we share a common goal of providing professional, reliable, and quality services consistent with fiscal responsibility. We are also committed to improving our efficiency and effectiveness at maintaining the utility infrastructure and enhancing communication with our customers. ♦

Links:

<http://www.sjra.net/woodlands/>

<http://wjpa.net/>

<http://www.municipaldistrictservices.com/>



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