

Blue Lake News

April, 2005

A joint publication of BLPOA and LCMUD #1

OUR WATER PLANT

The water plant serving Blue Lake is approaching 50 years old and is in need of major improvements. At our last inspection by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), no violations were documented during the investigation. However, two areas of concern were noted. One of the areas of concern is that it is necessary for us to increase our filtering capacity. A plan to ensure adequate pump capacity must be developed before any additional connections are added to the current distribution system. We are trying to obtain a variance or waiver on this issue.

The filters we use are those originally installed and continue to work well, but do not meet the TCEQ's minimum requirement of 0.6 gallons per minute per connection, with the largest filter off-line, even though the plant never has exceeded the maximum daily demand.

The building is also in need of extensive repairs, which include new wiring, and a new roof. New modern filters cannot be installed without taking down and replacing part of the present building. We have no space to add on to the building and there is no room for storage of chemicals, grinder pump inventory, etc.

A very rough estimate to replace the filters with modern filters that would be smaller and have a greater capacity, repair the building and install new electrical wiring is about \$400,000.00. We have not consulted either engineers or contractors regarding any of the foregoing.

As we see it, there are several possible ways to solve the problem. First, we can attempt

to secure a government grant or issue bonds, which would necessitate an increase in taxes. Next, we could attempt to get the LCRA to take over our water system. Or, we could attempt to buy our water from Lake LBJ MUD at "out of district" prices. Presently, we plan to contact our engineering firm to secure a "plan" that would include reconstructing our water plant building as necessary and installing new filters that meet TCEQ requirement. If that is found to be feasible, we would then explore obtaining a grant and issuing bonds.

A further complication is a desire by some members of the Lake LBJ MUD Board to terminate our "maintenance and operations" agreement for both our water and sewer system.

SPECIAL GARBAGE PICK-UP

It's that time of year again for Spring cleaning! Our "Special Garbage Pick-up" has been scheduled for May 17th, 2005.

Now is the time to clean out garages and attics and get rid of those unwanted items that BFI cannot pick up on their normal runs.

As always there are guidelines we MUST abide by in order to keep having the special pick-ups.

Items that MAY be left out for pick-up include: old mattresses, appliances, (without Freon), and lumber or tree trimmings that are bundled in lengths of not more than four (4) feet and weighing less than 35 pounds.

Items that WILL NOT (cannot) be picked up include: batteries, tires, paint cans (unless they are empty), motor oil, oil filters,

or appliances that contain Freon. Refrigerators and air conditioners, for example, CANNOT be picked up unless the Freon has been removed and a certified refrigeration technician has tagged them. BFI is prevented from picking up these items due to environmental and/or safety regulations. Also, these items CANNOT be placed in the dumpsters for the same reason.

To make the collection as simple as possible, please bag, bundle or box as much as possible and place all items beside the road next to your garbage cans. Please call the MUD/POA office (598-5460) if you have any questions about what can or cannot be picked up.

911 HOUSE ADDRESSES

We remind our residents of the importance of posting 911 addresses so they are visible from the street for emergency identification. The 911 Coordinator for Llano County recommends numbers that are at least three (3) inches in height, of contrasting color to the background. Preferably, the numbers should be of reflective material and definitely visible from the road. If a house is set back from the road or the front of the house is hard to see, it would be advisable to put the numbers out by the street.

Summer is right around the corner and while we never expect an emergency, an easily identifiable home may make a difference when seconds count.

BLUE LAKE ROADS

The MUD Board has studied the roads in Blue Lake for several years trying to determine the best course of action to rebuild or restore the roads. Many of the roadways have been eroded, or covered with grass, which also destroys the surface. The roadside ditches in many areas have been filled with dirt causing drainage problems. Over the years, frequent resurfacings of roadways have resulted in the roadways

moving to one side or the other of the right-of-way.

We have determined that a complete rebuilding of the roads is out of the question due to the high costs of reconstruction. One idea that may be feasible is pouring concrete strips alongside the road surface to prevent erosion, limit damage from large trucks, and to eliminate the problem of grass encroaching on the surface. This in itself is a very expensive undertaking and could only be done over time in different areas. At the same time, a road survey may be made to restore the proper right of way.

Discussions are still very preliminary and nothing will be done without extensive discussions with Blue Lake property owners.

ZEECON INTERNET

The MUD has entered into a contract with Zeecon Internet Services to install an antenna atop one of our water tanks. In return Zeecon has provided free installations at both the MUD Office and the Golf Club office and will provide free services to each.

Some have complained that this constitutes an endorsement of Zeecon services, which is completely inaccurate. The installation of the Zeecon antenna on the water tower will make fast internet service available to Blue Lake residents immediately should they choose to buy that service.

CORRECTION TO JANUARY NEWSLETTER

In the last BLN, (January, 2005), there was some information reported erroneously. Since it concerned POA expenses, we want to correct the information.

Last year, the Blue Lake Community Center (Golf Club Building), owned by the POA and leased to the Golf Club, required a new roof and termite repair which cost

\$19,445.67. Additionally, an air conditioner was replaced at a cost of \$2,052.96.

BOTTOM LINE- Your POA expenses are growing and income is stagnant.

TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

There is a growing concern in Blue Lake regarding unsafe traffic practices. Due to the increased amount of traffic and school about to let out for the summer, we remind our residents (full-time and weekenders) that citations will be issued for traffic violations.

The four way stop at the intersection of Blue Lake Drive and Bluebonnet Road is just that: **A STOP SIGN**. According to Texas law, a “STOP” is defined as: “a complete stop, with the vehicle brake fully applied so the vehicle “rolls back” to a COMPLETE stop, then proceeds.” Many near misses have been witnessed at this intersection. We are asking for your total compliance with this **law**. As stated above, citations will soon begin.

Another concern is children (under the age of 16), driving golf carts and go-carts on the roads in Blue Lake. The MUD / POA Office has received several complaints from residents, again regarding near-misses. Children do not have the driving skills necessary to be driving on public roadways. They are not trained to be aware of blind spots, oncoming traffic, vehicles that do not stop at stop signs, vehicle malfunction, etc. Please consider this the next time you allow your children, grandchildren or young guests to operate any kind of vehicles on public roads.

NEW PROPERTY OWNERS

The Llano County MUD and the BLPOA extend our heartiest “WELCOME” to our newest property owners. Please help them feel welcome:

Todd & Celeste Malaise at 208 N. Blue Ridge Trail

Jack & Mollye Taylor at 3103 Packsaddle Drive

OVER WATERING YARDS

A serious problem has developed due to some residents over watering their yards because they have the capability to pump out of the lake at no charge. During over-watering situations, water naturally collects in low spots such as water meter and sewer valve boxes; making it appear there is a leak in the water or sewer distribution system. Repairmen are called to investigate standing water, and, unfortunately everyone in Blue Lake pays for these costs.

Over watering also causes erosion of our roadways. Please adjust your irrigation heads so they are not causing additional damage to our roads.

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) and the Texas Water Development Board have several publications available through the MUD/POA Office that have some very useful information regarding the amount of water your lawn requires, when to water, how to water and most importantly, ways to cut down on water consumption.

The top five (5) ways to cut down on water consumption:

5) Mulch your plants, shrubs, etc. to protect the soil from heat, reduce evaporation and discourage weed growth.

4) Remove weeds before they get large. They not only look bad, but, they also steal water from desirable plants.

3) Raise the height of your lawnmower. Leave clippings on the lawn to reduce soil temperatures, help retain moisture and provide natural mulch.

2) Know the watering needs of your soil and grass. Different soils, grasses, etc. require different amounts of water. Established plants need deep watering, but, not until they begin to wilt. Sloped areas should only be given minimal watering and the water turned off as soon as run-off begins.

And, the # 1 way to cut down on water consumption: Check all hose connections, valves and pipes for leaks. Even small leaks can waste hundreds of gallons of water in a single day. (Example: water flows through a 5/8" hose at about 10 gallons per minute. Therefore, 30 minutes of unnecessary watering wastes around 300 gallons of water!)

ILLEGAL DUMPING

The MUD Office is responsible for the dumpsters located at the Fire Station, and while signs and surveillance cameras have been installed, illegal dumping continues. Once identified, those responsible have been assessed fines for the illegal dumping. The MUD reminds our residents that illegal dumping will **NOT** be tolerated.

As a reminder, **contractor trash OF ANY KIND is not permitted.** This includes pieces of sheetrock, pieces of carpet, lumber, old appliances, paint, windows or trimmings, furniture, tree trimmings, lake trash and building scraps. All of these have been found in recent months at the dumpsters. A \$100.00 fine **WILL** be assessed against **anyone (residents and contractors alike)**, caught dumping illegally.

The dumpsters are provided for **BLUE LAKE Residents ONLY.** If you see someone dumping illegally, please write down the license plate number of the vehicle and turn it in to the MUD/POA Office. With this information, we will be able to locate the violator and assess the fine, all the while keeping **YOUR** costs down.

WATER METER BOXES

The MUD Office would like to remind all property owners to inspect their water meter boxes monthly for ants, obstructive landscaping, etc. During the warmer months, the meter boxes are often a haven for insects, pests and, yes, even snakes. Our meter reader needs to have access to the meter boxes without risk of injury or obstructive landscaping. Several meter boxes need to have trees and shrubs trimmed around them. Several of them need to have dead cactus removed and leaves cleaned up. Please check your meter box and ensure it is cleaned up and not a haven for snakes and other pests.

GRINDER PUMP CARE SHEET

Enclosed in this newsletter you will find a "**Grinder Pump Care Sheet**". This page should be saved and posted somewhere in your home that is convenient to your family and your guests.

One of the MUD's largest expenses is the repair of grinder pumps.

The care sheet lists the appropriate actions to take if the alarm signals, as well as the places to call for service. The MUD asks that if you have a grinder pump failure after 8:00 P.M., please consider waiting until the following morning to call for service. If this is the case, water usage **MUST** be kept to a minimum.

Should you have further questions, please contact the MUD Office at 598-5460.

POA PARKS REPORT

While Lake LBJ was lowered during January and February of this year, our volunteers completed a great deal of work in our waterfront parks.

Our two "work days" at Driftwood Park and Wenmohs Park were very well attended and

resulted in the removal of debris and driftwood from the shore area. At Wenmohs Park, some of the riprap was repaired along the bulkhead, a new swim ladder was installed and an additional utility panel was added to the pier. We expect to get new sand for the beach area in early May.

Most of the parks will be fertilized during April and our volunteers will help with this annual project.

We also have a new, wider boat ramp at Devil's Hollow Park. It makes launching your boat much easier.

Our parks are in great condition as the summer months draw near. Thanks to all our Blue Lake volunteers!

TENNIS COURTS

Our tennis courts are in excellent condition and are ready for some serious (and not so serious) tennis play.

Annual membership in the Blue Lake Tennis Club is just \$50.00. This membership entitles the family and guests unlimited access to the courts. The membership is available to residents and non-residents of Blue Lake.

Those who wish to play but are not annual members can rent a court for \$5.00 for ninety (90) minutes of play. All players should check in at the Blue Lake Golf Club before playing. Annual membership fees and daily fees may be paid at the Club House.

Enjoy the tennis courts!

BLUE LAKE POA ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Blue Lake Property Owners Association will be held on Saturday, July 2nd, 2005 at 3:00 P.M. at the Blue Lake Golf Club. Following the meeting, a catered barbecue dinner will be

offered for those wishing to purchase tickets in advance.

The Blue Lake POA Board of Directors encourages all of the Blue Lake property owners to attend this meeting. The Board will present a review of the 2004-2005 financial condition of the POA and will also present a five-year plan of the expected future expenses and revenues needed for Blue Lake.

As many of you may realize, the infrastructure of our Blue Lake parks and buildings require, at some point in time, major repairs or replacements. The Board will welcome questions at the meeting regarding the proposed five-year plan. We hope that each property owner will make a special effort to attend.

We will also elect four (4) new Board members for the 2005-2006 term. Ballots and information about the annual meeting will be mailed to you in the near future. We look forward to seeing you at the annual Blue Lake POA meeting.

BLUE LAKE GOLF CLUB NEWS

The Blue Lake Golf Club announces that it will be holding a four (4) person scramble every Wednesday, at 3:00 P.M. starting April 6th and continuing through September 28th.

Check the Club House for details and how to enter. Come out and join the fun!

GLO-BALL TOURNAMENT

The Blue Lake Golf Club will be hosting a members' scramble glo-ball tournament on April 24th. Show time is 4:30 P.M. with play starting at 5:00 P.M.

The first nine (9) holes will be played during the daylight hours with snacks and drinks following. The final nine holes will be played in the dark with glo-balls.

Sign up at the Golf Club for this fun event!