



Dedicated to Service

Newsletter

DECEMBER

2024



Lead in Drinking Water Infrastructure

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District

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Pay Your Bill 24/7

Online: hpwsd.org

By Phone: 360-427-2413

Billing Office Hours

Mondays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Tuesdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Thursdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Board of Commissioners meetings are held on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month at 1:00 pm in the District Office, 119 E Liberty Rd. All meetings are open to the public.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is not associated with or governed by the Hartstene Pointe Maintenance Association. Please direct water-sewer service related questions to the District.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Several years ago, there was a drinking water crisis involving lead in Flint, Michigan. It was big news at the time and it put a bright spotlight on water service lines containing lead. Due to this, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ordered that every public water system in the country create an inventory of their water lines. This consists of documenting what kinds of pipes are connected to customer water meters, both feeding into it from the water main and exiting it to customer




homes. The goal was, and is, to determine if there is or ever *has* been any lead piping in the service lines and to eliminate it.

Since this is such a time-consuming project, the initial portion of it was due by October of this year. District operators were allowed to inventory just the homes that were built prior to 1986 and then randomly select 20% of those to inspect, which worked out to 49 homes at the Pointe. Of those homes, 3 were identified to have lead fittings on the customer side of the meter and no lead on the District's supply side. The 3 affected homeowners were notified and they can work with a plumber to address the problem.

This is a start. The EPA is requiring lead inventories to be updated every year. District operators will continue inspections as time goes on, until an assembled inventory of homes at the Pointe is complete. In the meantime, if you suspect you may possibly have lead pipes or fittings, contact a licensed plumber to verify.

Read several facts about Lead below and for tips on how to check for lead or reduce it in drinking water, please refer to EPA's guidance →



-  Lead is odorless, tasteless and invisible when dissolved in water—to detect presence of lead in water requires laboratory testing
-  EPA set action lead levels at 15 parts per billion, which is the maximum allowed
-  Drinking water is not a common source for lead—lead from paint is more common and can be dangerous

Cybersecurity in the Water & Sewer Industry

It used to be that for a public water system, we ensured public drinking water safety by making sure our facilities were secured by physical means: locks, fences, etc. While that is still important, in an ever evolving world, there exists ever-evolving threats. If you watch or read the news, you may already have heard of this one: cyber hacking.

Bad actors, in the form of governments, terrorist groups or disgruntled ex-employees, have already made successful attempts to cyber hack some water systems in an attempt to make adjustments that could affect drinking water quality. *(continued on reverse→)*

General Manager's Report

Rainy Season Impacts, Wastewater Project Update



We've reached the time of year that I really dislike. No, not the crowded stores—I'm referring to the dreaded rain.

Rain itself doesn't bother me, but how it impacts our wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) does. In October, we had flows ranging from 20,000 gallons per day (GPD) to 40,000, with higher flows on weekends when more people were here at the Pointe.

As it does every year, the rainy season arrived and started saturating the ground. The excessive rainwater finds its way into sewer pipes, known in the industry as *Inflow & Infiltration* (I&I) and into the WWTP. In November, flows ranged from 50,000 GPD to 221,000 GPD.

Thankfully, this should be a far different story a year from now. With the Wastewater Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project (WIRP) taking place, I&I problems will be rectified. I'm happy to share this update with you; on November 22, we hosted a pre-bid meeting, where several contractors were in attendance. This was a chance for contractors who are interested in bidding on this project to do a site visit to see the area. This allows them to get a better picture of where they will be working if they are selected as the winning bidder. In December, we will be opening bids received and selecting a contractor as the winning bidder. Once that happens, we will be able to start meeting with them and finding out more on timelines for work.

We will continue to share news of the project in monthly newsletters, website, and possibly mailings. Stay tuned!

—Jeff Palmer, General Manager



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Drippy the Droplet's Water-Saving Tip:

"Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't need to run the water while it heats up. This reduces water use and energy costs."

(continued from front page)

As caretakers of the water system, the District wants to reassure residents that Commissioners and staff take seriously the responsibility to provide safe drinking water. We read the reports that come in from various government agencies, warning us about these threats. We strive to use the utmost care to ensure systems are secure and had a cyber security audit performed in 2021/22. This has been, and continues to be, a top priority at the District.

Think you know a lot about treatment plants? Let's see how much of a water treatment expert you really are over the next several newsletters! (see bottom of page for answer)

Which of these methods is used to disinfect water by destroying harmful bacteria?

- a) Ultraviolet (UV) Light
- b) Activated carbon filtration
- c) Reverse Osmosis

Office Closures & Response Times

In observance of holidays, the District will be closing at noon on Tuesday, December 24 and all day on Wednesday, December 25. The District will also be closed on Wednesday, January 1. If you have any water or sewer emergencies during those times, contact the GM, Jeff Palmer, at 360-427-2413 option 3.

Please be aware that the District will be short-staffed until at least December 19. As a result, there may be times when staff are unable to respond to field calls right away unless it's an emergency situation. Operators will do their best to respond, but ask for patience regarding response times during this period.

2025 Water & Sewer Rates

The Board of Commissioners approved the fee schedule for 2025. As of January, base rates for residential water and sewer services will be as follows:

Water:	99.90
Sewer:	98.90
Total Monthly:	198.80

The increase will allow the District to meet its financial obligations in 2025, accounting for inflation, looking ahead at needed capital improvement projects and increased operational costs. Loan repayment for the Wastewater Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project (WIRP) begins in 2025. WIRP loan payment will increase substantially in 2026 and the monthly sewer rates per household may need to increase by an additional \$94.

Most other charges and fees remain unchanged.

Quiz Answer: (a) Zapping with the power of light! Ultraviolet light is a common water and wastewater treatment process used to destroy pathogenic microorganisms and break apart chemical bonds of pollutants. UV is effective and, if replacing chlorination, leaves behind no residual.