

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Definitions

**Prestonwood Forest Utility District** – Sometimes herein may be referred to as the “District”.

**District Water Main** – The water pipe that transports water from the water plant throughout the neighborhood. This network of piping is referred to as the distribution system.

**District Water Service Line** – The water pipe that transports water from the water main to the meter. In almost all residential connections this is a one-inch line. This line is usually made of copper tubing or plastic tubing.

**Customer Water Service Line** – The water pipe that transports water from the meter to the house or business. This line is usually made of PVC or galvanized metal.

**District Sewer Main** – The sewer line in which provides for the transport of waste from the collection system to the wastewater treatment plant.

**Customer Sewer Line** – The sewer line which transports the waste discharged from homes and businesses to the district sewer main.

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)** – The state agency which supervises the operation of utility districts within the state of Texas. Always remember, if at any time you feel you need assistance from your water/sewer department, you may contact us at 281-376-8802.

**Q1. What should I do if my water is discolored or has an odor?**

**Answer:** Report the problem to [Water District Management](#) at 281-376-8802. The District will dispatch a technician to determine the reason for the situation and report back to you.

## **Q2. What should I do if I think there is a leak?**

**Answer:** Your response should be based on where the possible leak is located and your degree of comfort with evaluating a leak. Always remember, when in doubt, call your water department at 281-376-8802. The following are a few scenarios that you may be exposed to regarding a possible water leak.

- You may notice a part of your lawn is remaining wetter than the rest of your lawn and will not dry out, there could possibly be a leak.
- You may notice a stream of water coming out of the ground. In some cases, the water will wash the dark color from the dirt and leave a sandy looking soil in the area where the water is coming out of the ground. This is most likely a water leak.
- You may notice water gushing from the ground. This is usually a water leak. We state usually because in some cases swimming pool drain lines or backwash lines discharge water in a way that appears to be a water leak, but this is rarely the case.

**In the scenarios 1 & 2 listed above, there could be one of the following types of leaks:**

**A leak in the district's service line:** If the apparent leak is within 15 feet of the street, between the street curb and meter box, or in the street, it could be a district service line. Contact your water department at 281-376-8802.

**A leak in the customer's service line:** If there is a leak between the meter box and your home, it is most likely to be the Customer's Service Line. If you can see your water meter, you will see a registering pointer (similar to a time clock minute hand). Make sure all water is off in the home. If the pointer moves, this means that the water is discharging the pipe at some point after the meter. However, in some cases the water main may be located closer to the home than the meter box. If in doubt, contact your water department at 281-376-8802.

**A broken water main:** If at any time you see water gushing out of the street, or ground and you are not absolutely sure it is not a water leak, notify your water department immediately at 281-376-8802.

### **Q3. What do I do if I have sinkholes or if the ground is sinking in my yard?**

**Answer:** Numerous things may cause Sinkholes or ground sinking in your yard. Please call us to report the sinkhole giving the address and location of the sinkhole or depression. We will assess the problem and advise you either in person, by door tag, or by telephone of what needs to be done.

### **Q4. Why is my water bill high?**

**Answer:** Listed below are several possible contributors for a high water/sewer bill: (a) customer service line leak, (b) leaking faucet, (c) leaking toilet, (d) over watering the lawn, (e) running half-loads of laundry, (f) Running half-loads in dishwasher, (g) leaving the water hose running while washing the car, or (h) leaving the water hose dribbling in the yard after watering the yard.

### **Q5. Who maintains the street lights?**

**Answer:** The street lights are maintained by [Centerpoint Energy](#). Therefore, problems or questions related to the street lights should be directed to Centerpoint at 713-207-7777. Please note that the street light pole number will be necessary to properly address the location in need of repair.

### **Q6. Who owns and maintains the water plants?**

**Answer:** The water plants are owned and maintained by Prestonwood Forest Utility District. We retain Water District Management Company for all operations of the water and sewer system.

### **Q7. Where do I find ideas to reduce my water bill?**

**Answer:** Your water bill may be reduced using several techniques. Links on this site go to several water related web sites with multiple ideas you may use to reduce usage and the 'bill'.

**Q8. How does Prestonwood Forest Utility District “treat” the water I drink?**

**Answer:** Your water currently is drawn from two deep wells in the District. The water is pure and drinkable as it comes from the well according to our constant testing. Additionally, we are supplied surface water from the North Harris County Regional Water Authority ([NHCRWA](#)). NHCRWA receives water from the City of Houston via their northeast water plant. However, for safety and protection due to the transportation of the water through water lines to your house, we add chemicals at a very low level to disinfect the water as it is transported and stored. We also treat the water to reduce naturally occurring odors.

**Q9. Why does Prestonwood Forest Utility District care about water conservation?**

**Answer:** Prestonwood Forest Utility District cares about water conservation for many reasons. “Water is our most precious resource” is the motto of one water agency in Texas. The water in our aquifer is limited. As is noted in numerous articles in the newspaper, we are being mandated to conserve water and to convert to surface water (more renewable) in a very short time. Conservation results in reduced cost to the consumer, not using up natural water resources and looking to the future when water resources in Texas may be even more limited than today.

**Q10. If the district provides water service to a new business, who pays for the connection expense?**

**Answer:** Who pays for new or extended services in the District? The user of that new service. The Board’s policy for many years is that the requesting party pays 100% of all costs for (his/her) service. Requestors are required to make a deposit, and that deposit is used for all expenses related to their request. At NO time does any Prestonwood Forest customer pay for any costs related to providing service to new entities. In fact, fees for new services help to offset expenses and maintain our low water rates.

**Q11. Where does my sewer go?**

**Answer:** The sewer discharges into the collection system and then to the wastewater treatment plant for processing. The water and solids are separated throughout the treatment process, the solids are disposed of at a

**TCEQ registered location and the treated effluent is returned to the environment (Cypress Creek).**

**Q12. Do I get an adjustment on my bill if I fill up my pool?**

**Answer: No, Prestonwood Forest UD's policy does not provide for adjustments of water bills for filling swimming pools.**

**Q13. Where do I drain my pool?**

**Answer: Prestonwood Forest Utility District's Rules & Regulations Governing Sewer House Lines and Sewer Connection prohibit the connection of swimming pool drains, downspouts, yard drains, or any other substance deleterious to the wastewater collection and/or treatment systems.**

**Q14. What do I do if I have a sewer back up?**

**Answer: First determine if the sewer backup is isolated to one location within your home such as a toilet, sink, tub, or if the backup is throughout the entire home. If it is determined that it is throughout the entire home, then you should call your operating company at 281-376-8802. The operator will investigate the situation at no cost and advise you of our findings.**

**Q15. How is my bill developed?**

**Answer: The water meter serving your home or business is read on a monthly basis. From those readings your water bill is generated. If at any time you feel your readings are incorrect, please contact our operator at 281-376-8802.**

**Q16. Do you read meters every month?**

**Answer: Yes, we read meters every month. The meters are read on the 20th to the 24th of every month (weather permitting and depending on how the calendar falls).**

**Q17. What is in my water?**

**Answer: The latest water quality analysis from Prestonwood Forest Utility District may be found on this web site. Drinking water (including bottled**

water) may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling EPA's Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791, or at following websites: EPA website [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).

**Q18. How much fluoride is in water?**

**Answer:** There is 0.4 ppm (parts per million) of fluoride in your water. The EPA's maximum contaminant level (MCL) is 4.0 ppm.

**Q19. When will the Christmas lights be on display?**

**Answer:** The Christmas Lights Display usually begins around the second Sunday of December. For details go to [www.prestonwoodforestonline.com](http://www.prestonwoodforestonline.com).

**Q20. Who maintains the streets, and who should I call if there is a problem with the street?**

**Answer:** The paved streets in Prestonwood Forest Utility District are maintained by Harris County Precinct 4. Therefore, problems or questions related to the streets should be directed to HC Precinct 4 at 281-353-8424. The Harris County web site is: <http://www.hcp4.net/index.htm>.

**Q21. Who maintains the storm sewers?**

**Answer:** Storm water sewers, or street drainage are maintained by Harris County Precinct 4. Therefore, problems or questions related to the storm sewers or street drainage should be directed to HC Precinct 4 at 281-353-8424. The Harris County Precinct 4 web site is: <http://www.hcp4.net/index.htm>.

**Q22. Why do I pay more for sewer when I use more water?**

**Answer:** To cover the cost of operating the wastewater facility and the collection system. The infrastructure is over 30 years in operation. Consequently, failure of this aging system results in elevating repair & maintenance cost.

**Q23. How do I know my water is safe?**

**Answer:** The TCEQ ([Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)) has assessed and determined that our water is safe to drink. Our water meets all state and federal standards.

**Q24. What is the North Harris County Regional Water Authority (NHCRWA) fee?**

**Answer:** These fees were established by the NHCRWA to cover the expense of planning, operation, and maintenance expenses to convert from 100% ground water, to 20% groundwater & 80% surface water by the year 2030. Being a member of the NHCRWA accommodates this requirement. More information can be obtained at [www.nhcrwa.com](http://www.nhcrwa.com).

**Q25. Are our fire hydrants maintained?**

**Answer:** Prestonwood Forest UD fire hydrants are inspected and flushed at least twice annually. This includes flow testing, replacing missing or damaged parts, confirming that blue reflectors are appropriately in place, repairing and painting as necessary.