



Village of Bear Creek Newsletter

Water in the Village of Bear Creek

Water for human consumption as well as irrigation has been a major topic of interest in central Texas for as long as most of us have been alive, and this year is no different. In fact, with the discussions of AI data centers and the amount of water that gets consumed operating the local power generation facilities that support them have actually added to most communities concerns about their water supplies. As a side note, most data centers use a closed cooling system method for the data center computers themselves, which reuses nearly 100% of the water used. The power generation is a separate matter and typically uses a steam turbine generator, which can in some cases consume 100's of thousands, or even millions, of gallons of water each day.

Getting back to the topic of local water, for the VOBC, we have 3 principal water sources, West Travis County Public Utility Agency (WTCPUA), well water and rain water. There is a 4th source, which is trucked in water, but that is fairly costly and is only usually considered to be practical for small residential usage and is therefore normally only a back up for when one of the other 3 primary sources above is temporarily unavailable.

The WTCPUA water is available to approximately 60% of the VOBC, primarily along South Madrone Trail and most of Bear Creek Drive. North Madrone Trail, and most of the cull-de-sacs are not currently served by WTCPUA water. We estimate that less than 5% of the homes in the VOBC are served by rain water collection, therefore we estimate that 40-45% of the homes in the VOBC are served by well water as their primary water source. As many of us are aware, the aquifers in central Texas are a limited resource with more and more users all the time, as a result, whenever we experience drought conditions, it is also common to hear stories of wells sputtering, or going dry completely.

With this in mind, the VOBC asked the City Engineer to work up an estimate for what it would cost to extend WTCPUA water to the remaining ~40% of the VOBC that is not currently within the WTCPUA water service area. Additionally, we also asked that large enough pipes be selected to ensure proper fire hydrant support. The estimate came in at approximately \$3M USD, which is unfortunately far beyond VOBC budgets and is also impractical for city wide funding options such as bond measures, etc....

That being said, several residents on North Madrone trail have expressed an interest in teaming up and locally funding an extension of the South Madrone water line to some or all of North Madrone Trl as well as the associated cull-de-sacs. Please reach out to Zach Christopher, at 248-640-0079, he recently purchased a home on North Madrone Trail and is wanting to speak with similarly minded neighbors.

VOBC Roads

Our roads were repaved approximately 10 years ago and are starting to show their age. Our VOBC City Engineer is also the City Engineer for Dripping Springs Texas as well as Wimberly Texas and he is combining all three of our repaving needs together in combination to try to achieve more favorable large municipality pricing from vendors for our repaving requirements.

As expected, the process takes a little longer due to all the different participants, but we are expecting the first round of bid responses in the August 2026 time frame.

Our present budget likely can't repave 100% of the VOBC, but we believe it can repave somewhere between 50%-70% of the VOBC and we have asked the City Engineer to identify and prioritize the areas that need attention the soonest.

The recent city trash cleanup day

Many of us took advantage of the city wide cleanup day on April 11th from 9am - 1pm and it was another great success. The ability to get rid of old items, trash, etc... without having to drive all the way to the landfill in Creedmore Texas is a wonderful perk of our annual trash contract with Texas Disposal Systems (TDS).

Unfortunately, we had an incident where someone dropped items off to the Madrone Circle location outside of 9am-1pm time frame. In this case, TDS kindly picked those items up a week later, but it required a separate truck roll which cost \$\$\$\$\$. If this happens again, TDS may need to cancel cleanup days. Please help us to retain this perk keep an eye out for abuses as noted above. Let a VOBC commissioner know of any illegal dumping.

Fire Hazards and Homeowners Insurance

We have been notified by several homeowners that their homeowners insurance coverage was either canceled, or was not eligible for renewal due to fire risk. At present we are only aware of a few cases where this has occurred so at this time the issue appears to be localized to a small minority of the insurers who serve this part of central Texas.

That said, we wanted to publicize the issue just in case there are others who have been impacted, if so, please reach out to someone on council so we can track these issues more effectively.

Additionally, we also want to highlight an opportunity that the Bear Creek Oaks Property Owners Association (BCOPOA) is looking into, which is the Firewise USA program. <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa>

This program offers a certification for communities that meet certain goals for fire prevention and preparedness, which also appears to be recognized by many homeowners insurance companies and helps to ensure that annual policy renewals are not interrupted by cancellation notices.

Please reach out to your BCOPOA board member Hailee Graham (haileehgraham@gmail.com) for more information on this program, and what you can do to help.

Our area is still in stage 3 drought

<https://www.austinchronicle.com/news/edwards-aquifer-nears-emergency-drought-conditions/>