

Prairielands eLine

The Newsletter of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District

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Board Adopts Resolution Authorizing Increase of Groundwater Production During 2022's Extreme Drought

On Monday, September 19, 2022, the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District's Board of Directors adopted a resolution under District Rule 5.10 to provide some relief from this year's extreme drought to water well permit holders. The resolution allows each water well permittee of the District to produce an additional 20% of groundwater over and above their total annual permitted amount in calendar year 2022 if they comply with the terms of the resolution, which requires:

- timely payment of water use fees for the excess water produced; and
- for permittees that are public water systems, implementation of their drought contingency plans during calendar year 2022, including mandatory water use restrictions.

Overpumping produced in compliance with the drought resolution will not be subject to an enforcement action by the District.

The District has determined in working with its hydrogeologist that allowing this amount of additional groundwater pumping for calendar year 2022 will not hinder the District's ability to achieve the management goals it has set for each of the aquifers in the District. However, if the drought continues for multiple years, there is no guarantee that additional water will be available for permittees in future calendar years. The Board of Directors will reassess water availability in future years based on drought conditions and how much groundwater pumping has occurred at that time.

District staff have been and will continue to monitor monthly groundwater production reports from all permittees to attempt to identify those permit holders that can benefit from the additional groundwater production authorized by the drought resolution. All permittees are encouraged to monitor their own actual pumping as compared to their permitted amount and contact the District staff at 817-556-2299 if they foresee they will exceed their permit limit by the end of this year.

In addition to timely payment of water use fees, permittees that are public water systems are required to submit proof to the District that they have implemented their drought contingency plans, including mandatory water use restrictions, in order to qualify for the 20% additional production authorization. The District is committed to working with those permittees who are doing their own part to manage the extreme drought conditions by implementing their drought contingency plans.

The District will invoice permittees monthly for groundwater amounts produced in excess of the total annual permitted amount under the drought resolution, and the final deadline to pay all water use fees for all overproduced water in calendar year 2022 will be February 15, 2023.

The drought resolution may be viewed on the District's website <https://www.prairielandsgcd.org/>

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Prairilands Groundwater Conservation District receives the Texas Water Development Board's Texas Rain Catcher Award

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) announced October 5, 2022 the recipients of its annual Texas Rain Catcher Award, a rainwater harvesting competition and recognition program. Prairilands Groundwater Conservation District in Cleburne, Texas, was recognized in the governmental category.

The TWDB's Texas Rain Catcher Award recognizes excellence in the application of rainwater harvesting systems in Texas, promotes rainwater harvesting technology, and educates the public on this critical water-saving practice.

Prairilands Groundwater Conservation District offsets the demands and potential environmental impacts of its new office facility by using the rooftop footprint to capture rainwater. The District installed two metal cisterns along with a rain garden and native plant beds that use the rainwater harvesting system for irrigation. Additionally, the District promotes rainwater harvesting with a robust education program to correspond with the onsite utilization. The District's Water Education Trailer includes a rainwater harvesting model with a rainfall simulator, water collection calculator, and diorama of a traditional residential rainwater harvesting system.

Between the cisterns and rain garden, an average of 80,000 gallons of water is captured over the course of a year. The system has proven useful and cost effective by providing a dependable water source that allows the District to water efficiently through drip irrigation instead of relying on the public water supply.

The Texas Rain Catcher Award competition began in 2007 and is open to all individuals, companies, organizations, municipalities, and other local and state governmental entities in Texas. It recognizes entities and individuals in the rainwater harvesting community and beyond and establishes award recipients as dedicated water conservation leaders in Texas. Prairilands Groundwater Conservation District is one of five awardees being recognized statewide this year.

"We are honored to be recognized from the Texas Water Development Board," stated PGCD General Manager, Kathy Turner Jones. "We look forward to continuing to educate the community about ways to conserve water."

The TWDB is the state agency charged with collecting and disseminating water-related data, assisting with regional water and flood planning, and preparing the state water and flood plans. The TWDB administers cost-effective financial assistance programs for the construction of water supply, wastewater treatment, flood control, and agricultural water conservation projects.



*PGCD receives TWDB Texas Rain Catcher Award
From left to right. George B. Peyton V, TWDB Board Member;
PGCD General Manager, Kathy Turner Jones; PGCD Board
President Charles Beseda; and TWDB Chairwoman, Brooke T.
Paup*

Schedule the Water Education Trailer for Your Next Event Today!

The WET or Water Education Trailer, is a FREE mobile classroom featuring exhibits that provide demonstrations about rainwater harvesting, indoor water conservation tips, pollution prevention, how a water well works, and features a working aquifer model! The presentations included in the WET meet TEKS standards and provide STEM-based learning activities.



Since its development in 2015, over 14,000 adults and children have toured the WET at over 140 events. The WET is available for elementary, middle, and high school classes, teacher development, community events, meetings, and workshops. We are happy to tailor the presentations and curriculum to your specific needs.

Please email wcurry@prairielandsgcd.org to schedule a visit!



The District's Water Education Trailer recently received a facelift and has been completely revamped with a new wrap.

Staff Spotlight: Whitney Curry

Public Relations and Education Director - Joined PGCD in August 2022



Tell us a little about yourself.

"My family and I grew up in Dublin, TX, where we showed various species of animals. I graduated from Tarleton State University in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in agriculture services and development and a master's degree in agricultural communications from Texas Tech University in 2014. I have previously been the Director of Communications and Public Affairs with Plains Cotton Growers in Lubbock, TX, and the Marketing and Communications Manager with the Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council in Austin, TX."

Do you have any hobbies outside of work?

"Spending as much time with my family as I can. When I moved back near my family, I made a promise to myself that I would attend as many dance recitals, sporting events, and stock shows as I could – which is where I spend most weekends! I love to casually read self-improvement books. And, I always have background noise going, I listen to a lot of true crime podcasts while driving and when at home my TV is usually turned to a documentary on crimes or a family friendly show that I've seen a few times, so I don't have to pay too close attention."

What do you enjoy about working at PGCD?

"Working with the staff here at PGCD is like coming home! I have enjoyed my time here so far and look forward to continuing to learn from everyone."

Prairielands GCD Board of Directors Set Water Use Fee Rates for 2023

In a public meeting on August 15, 2022 the Prairielands GCD Board of Directors voted to keep 2023 water use fees set at \$0.20 per 1,000 gallons of groundwater pumped for any non-exempt well required to pay water use fees under the District Rules. The Board also determined it necessary and appropriate to keep the production fee of \$0.00 per acre-foot used annually for agricultural purposes, which is based on the exemption provided for agricultural use in District Rule 2.1(a). In addition to the water use fee rate, the 50% export surcharge will still be in effect for any groundwater produced within the District that is transported for use outside of the District.

Non-Exempt Wells
\$0.20 per 1,000 gallons
Exempt Wells
\$0.00 per acre-foot
Groundwater Transport Fee
50% surcharge in addition to water use fee

The District would also like to provide a reminder that beginning January 1, 2023, in order to encourage groundwater conservation, eligible permittees have the opportunity to receive a refund for payment of unused water use fees from the previous calendar year of up to twenty (20) percent of the amount of groundwater authorized by permit to be produced. The amount of any refund due to a permittee will be determined by the District each calendar year after receipt of the Water Production Report due by January 15th.

If you have any questions or would like some additional assistance, please contact the District office at 817-556-2299.

How to Accurately Read a Water Meter

Reading an Analog Display

The large sweep hand on the dial measures water use in gallons, one gallon of water passes through the water meter as the sweep hand moves from one number to the next (e.g., 0 to 1). Every time the sweep hand makes a full rotation, that is 10 gallons, 100, 1,000 etc...The last number on the right is a static zero (does not change). When you record your reading to report to the District, make sure to add the stationary zero(s) as the final digit.

Example: The analog meter display to the right would read as 300 gallons.



Reading a Digital Meter





If you have a digital meter, it may need light for activation so you may need to shine a flashlight on it. The display typically alternates between the meter reading and the flow rate. The meter reading equals the gallons used while the flow rate equals the number of gallons per minute flowing through the water meter.

Example: The digital meter display on the right would read as 91,547 gallons.







Steps to Reporting Batch Readings, Meter Rollover or Replacement Readings to the District

Replacement Meter Readings

1. To login visit the District's database (<https://prairielandsgcd.halff.com/>).
2. Once you are logged in, click  **My Wells** on the left-hand side.
3. Select the  **Batch Meter Reading** button.
4. Here, you will see a list of all the wells linked to your account. You will now enter the end of the month meter readings for each Well ID. *If a Meter Replacement, enter the last meter reading before removing the meter.*
5. After all the end readings have been entered, click "SUBMIT" (*If you do not enter an end reading for each Well ID, the database will not allow you to submit your readings.*)
6. Once you have submitted the Batch Meter Readings, click  **My Wells** tab on the left-hand side.
7. To the left of each Well ID there is a little blue meter icon "", click on the meter for the respective Well ID that had a Meter Replacement.
8. You will now see the previous readings for the well you selected. Click on **Enter Meter Reading** button listed above the meter readings.
9. This will redirect you to the "Report Meter Reading" page.
 - a. After verifying the report month, you should see a blue row in the middle of your screen with an **Enter Rollover / Replaced Reading** button. Click here.
10. You will be redirected to the "Create Meter Reading" page.
 - a. Verify that the meter event is a "New/ Replaced" meter.
 - i. The "Initial Reading" will be the number the new meter started on.
 - ii. The "End of Month Reading" will be the last reading recorded for the month.
 - iii. The "Meter Serial Number" can be found on the meter, if the serial number is not known enter "unknown".
 - iv. The "Date Meter Installed" will be the date the new meter replaced the original meter.
 - b. Click "SUBMIT" to complete the METER REPLACEMENT Submission.

Meter Rollover Readings

1. To login visit the District's database (<https://prairielandsgcd.halff.com/>).
2. Once you are logged in, click  **My Wells** on the left-hand side.
3. Select the  **Batch Meter Reading** button.
4. Here, you will see a list of all the wells linked to your account. You will now enter the end of the month meter readings for each Well ID. *If a Rollover, enter 9's for every digit on the meter.*
5. After all the end readings have been entered, click "SUBMIT" (*If you do not enter an end reading for each Well ID, the database will not allow you to submit your readings.*)
6. Once you have submitted the Batch Meter Readings, click  **My Wells** tab on the left-hand side.
7. To the left of each Well ID there is a little blue meter icon "", click on the meter for the respective Well ID that had the Rollover.
8. You will now see the previous readings for the well you selected. Click on **Enter Meter Reading** button listed above the meter readings.
9. This will redirect you to the "Report Meter Reading" page.
 - a. After verifying the report month, you should see a blue row in the middle of your screen with an **Enter Rollover / Replaced Reading** button. Click here.
10. You will be redirected to the "Create Meter Reading" page.
 - a. The "Initial Reading" will always be zero (0) on a meter rollover.
 - b. The "End of Month Reading" will be the last reading recorded for the month.
 - c. Click "SUBMIT" to complete the METER ROLLOVER submission.

Reminder: Your meter readings must be submitted to the District by the 15th of the following month.
For example, November meter readings are due by December 15th!

About Prairielands GCD

The Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District was created in response to a finding by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality that groundwater shortages were expected in Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell counties over the next 25 years. The TCEQ finding required local residents to create a groundwater conservation district, or else TCEQ would mandate one. Enabling legislation for the Prairielands GCD was passed in 2009.

The Mission of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District is to develop rules to provide protection to existing wells, prevent waste, promote conservation, provide a framework that will allow availability and accessibility of groundwater for future generations, protect the quality of the groundwater in the recharge zone of the aquifer, insure that the residents of Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell Counties maintain local control over their groundwater, and operate the District in a fair and equitable manner for all residents of the District.



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Randel Kirk
Ellis County

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Maurice Osborn
Ellis County

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Marty McPherson
Somervell County

Director

Paul Tischler
Johnson County

Director

John Curtis
Somervell County

Director

Brad Daniels
Hill County

Director

Barney McClure
Johnson County

Upcoming Events and Meetings

November

11

Veterans Day
PGCD Office Closed

21

**PGCD Public Hearing
and Board Meeting**
9:00 a.m.
208 Kimberly Dr
Cleburne, TX 76031

24-25

Thanksgiving Holiday
PGCD Office Closed

December

12

PGCD Board Meeting
9:00 a.m.
208 Kimberly Dr
Cleburne, TX 76031

22-26

Christmas Holiday
PGCD Office Closed

January

2

New Year's Holiday
PGCD Office Closed

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