



Bellaire Board

Environmental & Sustainability Newsletter



August 2013

Bellaire Environmental and Sustainability Board (ESB) has New Members!

The Bellaire City Council voted on July 2, 2013 for one returning member and three new members to the ESB. They include: returning member Bill Stone and new members Mike Korotinsky, Jason Wintz and Kirstin Feazel. Welcome new members to the ESB! Current members of the full ESB board include: Bill Stone, Dorene Delaloye-Schroder, Seth Miller, Gayle Davies, Mike Korotinsky, Jason Wintz and Kristin Feazel.

ESB Board seeks volunteers

The Environmental & Sustainability Board is a very active group and is always in need of additional volunteers to help out with planning and preparing for events, especially the upcoming Fifth Annual Bellaire Recycles Fest (see more below). Those interested in volunteering are encouraged to attend the monthly ESB Meeting on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Building, 4337 Edith Street. For more information about becoming a volunteer, please email Dorene.Kevin@att.net



Bellaire Recycles Fest
Saturday, November 2, 9am – 1pm



DON'T MISS OUT! MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Fest is a well-attended, outdoor fair that includes music, kids' activities, educational information, environmentally-conscious goods & services, and more!

We will again offer FREE and SECURE Electronics Recycling and Paper Shredding.

HOSTED BY THE BELLAIRE ENVIRONMENTAL & SUSTAINABILITY BOARD



Bellaire Recycles Fest Participants

All businesses/organizations with an emphasis on green goods/services and activities are invited to participate, as well as all Bellaire-area businesses to emphasize the importance of "doing business locally". Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other children's organizations are also invited to participate. Develop an educational booth or hold a drive to collect old athletic shoes or children's books-the possibilities are endless. Businesses/organizations interested in participating should contact: Dorene.Kevin@att.net

Are you using the Recycle Bins in Bellaire's Parks?????

When you are enjoying the great outdoors in Bellaire parks, look for the recycling bins & recycle your bottles and cans. The Little League park at Jessamine has recycling bins to collect recyclables. Please look for the recycle symbol on the bins & **avoid mixing other non-recyclable trash in with the plastic and cans** on their way to a new life. Let's help Bellaire be a GREEN city.



Whole House Recycling

Recycling is not just about plastic bottles, you can take recycling farther. When homes are demolished much of the contents can be repurposed too. We are thrilled to report that the Bellaire City Council voted unanimously to adopt the amended Demolition & Salvage Ordinance to include Whole House Recycling. Whole House Recycling is now officially recognized as permissible in the City of Bellaire. An example of this took place on Jessamine next to the Bellaire Library. The city bought the property with a small, older house on it. The house was deconstructed and its materials were salvaged rather than being sent to the landfill.



HOT TIMES IN THE SUMMER

It's Hot Out There--Watch out for our Trash Collectors

It's summer in the Houston area and temperatures are rising! Our trash/recycling collectors not only are out in the extreme heat daily for 8-10 hours or even more, they are jumping on and off the back of the truck and picking up and throwing your garbage bags into the back of the truck. This is very strenuous work. Employees look out for each other and try to notice whether fellow co-workers are showing signs of heat exhaustion. Please be extra careful when driving near and around garbage trucks. Heat exhaustion can come on quickly and workers may not see or be aware of an approaching car. Safety comes first, employees have to take frequent breaks to cool off in this weather so if your trash/recycling is picked up a little later than normal, please be patient and understanding.



Air Quality--listen carefully to the news this summer and you may hear on the radio or TV a weather announcement that there is an Air Quality Advisory or Ozone Alert. This is a warning that air pollution levels are high. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality offers a free service to receive Today's Texas Air Quality Forecast and/or Ozone Action Day email alerts at http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/ozone_email.html. Or check out the Air Quality Forecast for areas around Texas at:

http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/forecast_today.html.

Breathing relatively high levels of ground-level ozone can cause acute respiratory problems like cough and respiratory irritation and can aggravate the symptoms of asthma.

What are the conditions that lead to elevated ground-level ozone? Ozone, typically referred to as smog, mainly forms the highest concentrations on sunny days with slow wind speeds, which allow pollutants to accumulate. Summer days in Texas can be conducive for ozone formation as high pressure systems dominate our local weather patterns, giving us clear skies and stagnant winds.

What can I do to limit ozone formation?

- Limit driving and idling; instead, car pool, combine errands, use public transportation, bike, or walk.
- Don't top off the tank when refueling your vehicle.
- Keep your vehicle maintained, including proper tire pressure.
- Maintain your yard equipment, including changing the oil and replacing air filters. Use electric lawn equipment when possible.

- Don't burn yard waste.
- Use paint and cleaning products with less or zero VOCs.
- Conserve energy.
- Refuel in late afternoon or evening.

Source: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/ozonefacts.html>

Water Conservation--Bellaire's surface water comes from man-made lakes, which are also used by other cities that will be affected by the warmer and drier weather. Lake levels may decrease due to heavy demand and the dry conditions. Also, the dry conditions can increase the chances of wildfires, which likely could create additional demands on water resources. As the demand increases and the supply under increased stress, it is imperative that all water users are aware of and take positive steps to conserve this valuable resource.



Helpful tips to conserve water:

- Do not water lawns daily.
 - Lawns typically only need about one (1) inch of water per week. (This encourages the growth of deeper roots.)
 - Do not overwater.
 - Do not allow water to run off into the street.
 - Change timers on sprinklers to water after midnight.
- Check your swimming pool to make sure it is not overflowing.
- Check for and repair detectible water leaks as soon as possible.
- Keep showers under five minutes.
- Turn water off while brushing teeth.
- Wash only full loads of dishes or clothing.
- Replace older-model showerheads and faucets.
- Limit washing vehicles.

Your cooperation at this time will help to ensure that water supplies are maintained at maximum levels and prevent the need to impose more restrictive measures to conserve water.

SEE IDEAS TO DROUGHT PROOF YOUR LANDSCAPE AT:

<http://dallas.tamu.edu/media/38377/drought-proofing-your-landscape-final.pdf>

About Summer Electricity Conservation Alerts

PowerfulAdvice is brought to you by the Public Utility Commission of Texas to educate and inform Texans about energy conservation. PowerfulAdvice uses a color-coded system to notify Texans of conditions on the electricity grid, including conservation steps that Texans can take to reduce the chance of involuntary rolling outages being needed in the event an Electricity Emergency is declared. See today's alert at: <http://www.puc.texas.gov/agency/conserves/Conserve.aspx>

**Conservation
Encouraged
Normal
Conditions**

On GREEN days, no Electricity Emergency is likely, but normal conservation measures are recommended as a means for reducing Texans' electricity bills. On GREEN days, some simple conservation steps, in conjunction with shopping for a lower cost electricity provider, can significantly reduce your electric bill.

- Set air conditioning thermostats to at least 78° and use fans in occupied rooms to make it feel cooler. Block the sun by closing blinds or drapes on windows that get direct sun.
- Turn off lights, TVs, computers, or other electrical equipment when not in use.
- Run your dishwasher and laundry equipment only when fully loaded.

On **YELLOW days**, extra conservation measures are urged because of a chance that electricity shortages may occur during the peak usage hours. A YELLOW Alert will be declared for days when temperatures statewide are expected to be extremely hot, leading to record or near-record electricity consumption. A YELLOW Alert will also be declared if high electricity demand and unexpected power plant outages cause a greater than normal chance of shortages. Consumers are encouraged to reduce their electricity use as much as possible during the peak electricity usage hours from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

**Conservation
Needed
Power Watch**

- Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.
- When at home, close blinds and drapes that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 78° or higher, and use fans in occupied rooms to make it feel cooler.
- When away from home, set air conditioning thermostats to 85° and turn all fans off before you leave. Block the sun by closing blinds or drapes on windows that will get direct sun.
- Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryer, coffee maker, or other home appliances during the peak hours of 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- Avoid opening refrigerators or freezers more than necessary.
- Cook in the microwave instead of the electronic range or oven.
- Set your pool pump to run in the early morning or late evening instead of the afternoon.

**Conservation
Critical
Power Warning**

On **RED days**, conservation is critical to avoid Electricity Emergencies and rolling outages which could lead to uncontrolled blackouts. Red alerts are declared when all interruptible loads have been deployed. Customers should reduce electricity usage as much as possible to avoid outages.

Limit electricity usage to only consumption that is absolutely necessary. Turn off all unessential lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.

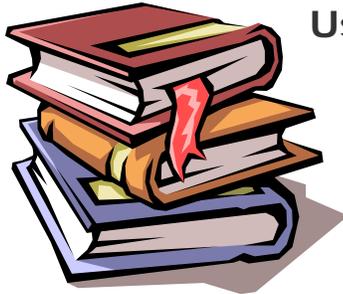
- Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryer, coffee maker, pool pump, or other home appliances between the hours of 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- When at home, close blinds and drapes on windows that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 80°, and use fans in occupied rooms to make it feel cooler.
- When away from home, close blinds and drapes on windows that will get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 85° and turn all fans off before you leave.
- Use the microwave or an outdoor grill for cooking. Using an indoor range or stove will heat up your house and cause your air-conditioner to run harder.
- Check out other no- or low-cost conservation tips or other energy efficiency improvements you can make to your home by clicking on the links to the right.
- If rotating outages are ordered, they are designed to be limited in duration unless equipment trips due to a power surge during the restoration process.
- Customers can minimize the chance that power surges will occur by turning off all appliances, lights, and other electrical equipment. Leave one task light on to determine when power has been restored.
- Minimize unnecessary travel as traffic signals may go out of service resulting in traffic jams.

A **BLACK** alert indicates that ERCOT has entered level 3 of its Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) and has initiated planned rolling outages in order to prevent an uncontrolled blackout. During a BLACK alert, customers need to reduce electricity consumption immediately to help reduce load.

**Power Emergency
Rolling Outages**

- Rotating outages are designed to be limited in duration unless equipment trips due to a power surge during the restoration process.
- Customers can minimize the chance that power surges will occur by turning off all appliances, lights, and other electrical equipment. Leave one task light on to determine when power has been restored.
- Minimize unnecessary travel as traffic signals may go out of service resulting in traffic jams.

Source: <http://www.puc.texas.gov/agency/conserves/Conserve.aspx>



Used Book Sale

The Bellaire City Library will hold a Used Book Sale November 2, 2013 from 9AM to 4PM. Donate unwanted books prior to the sale. As always it is in the parking lot between the Fire Station and the Library.

Trash



Talk

****Where can I get more recycling bins? How much do they cost?***

Additional bins may be purchased for \$10 at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2nd floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm.

****How clean do containers need to be before I toss them into the recycling bin?***

That dried-on milk or bit of peanut butter might compel you to run your recyclables through the dishwasher before tossing them in the bin. But a good rinse is good enough. Just try to remove all food bits.

****Do I need to take the labels off of jars and cans?***

No need to waste water and energy; labels will be burned off during the recycling process.

****I mow my own yard and do not want to leave grass clippings on the grass. Where can I take my yard clippings to be recycled?***

Grass clippings and leaves may be dropped off at Living Earth, which has several locations throughout the Houston area. There is no charge to drop off such items. Note, though, that there might be a charge for tree branches, limbs, and stumps that require more work to break down. Check with Living Earth for more information, locations, and hours.

****My neighbor told me that yard maintenance companies are not to leave bagged grass clippings in Bellaire. Is this true?***

Yes, garbage generated by commercial lawn maintenance companies, tree-trimming companies, handy-men or anyone else not considered the occupant must be hauled away by the service provider. It is up to residents to notify service providers of this requirement and ensure it is met. See Code of Ordinances, Chpt 16, Solid Waste, Section 16-7. <http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=13798>

****What's the best way to put plastic bags into our recycling bin?***

The most effective way to recycle plastic bags is to put several bags within one plastic bag. Individual bags sometimes get caught in the equipment that sorts the recycling which causes it to break down.

****How do I find out what to do with hard-to-recycle items?***

A surprisingly wide variety of products are recycled by various local organizations. Computers, CDs, cell phones, cooking oil, foam peanuts, light bulbs, batteries and even clothing to name just a few of the items you can recycle with very little effort by taking them to a drop-off center instead of throwing them away. For drop-off centers in your area, visit www.earth911.com. The Westpark recycling center on Westpark between Chimney Rock and Renwick takes many items. Bellaire residents can take items there—no proof of Houston residency is required to use the facility. See <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/westpark.html> for items accepted.

****I have big blocks of Styrofoam and don't know where to take them to be recycled. Do you know of anyplace I can take them?***

The Westpark Recycling Center accepts Styrofoam blocks and foam take out trays (but not packing peanuts, shipping stores take those). The Center is located at 5900 Westpark (between Chimney Rock and Renwick) and offers convenient drive through service.



****I have too many recyclables to fit in my bin, so I put what won't fit in black plastic garbage bags. Public works employees never pick up the garbage bag sitting right next to my recycle bin. Why is that?***

The Public Works employees have no way of knowing what is inside a black plastic garbage bag. Rather than risk contaminating a whole truck of recyclables with garbage, the workers are instructed NOT to pick up black garbage bags on recycle Wednesdays.

Other alternatives include (1) purchase more bins for \$10 each at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2nd floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm or (2) place non-glass recyclables in cardboard boxes or brown paper bags and place next to your bin.

****Is it ok for my recyclables to get wet?***

Yes, it is ok if they get wet. Rain does not damage or contaminate what is in your recycle bin.

****What happens to the brush and tree limbs picked up by the City?***

Tree limbs and brush are taken to the landfill where it is turned into mulch.

****My recycling bin has disappeared. Can I get a replacement?***

The City only provides one recycle bin per residence free of charge. You may purchase a replacement for \$10 at City Hall, 7008 S. Rice, 2nd floor utilities window, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm. In addition, you can spray paint your address on your bin to minimize the likelihood of someone taking it.

****Can I recycle waxed cardboard juice or milk cartons?***

Yes these waxed cardboard container like ice cream cartons, cardboard juice and cream containers are accepted in your Wednesday recycling bin.

Have a question you'd like answered? Send it to: Dorene.Kevin@att.net