

Mayor Maxton's Message

(As Published in the Hill Country Weekly on July 21, 2022)

Water is a Precious Resource

The heat continues to bear down on our area, as we are experiencing an extremely hot summer. We have set some daily records with multiple days of temperatures above 100 degrees.

With the heat wave continuing, we are still in a severe drought condition. More concerning, we are now headed into what is typically the hottest and driest part of the year.

On June 15, 2022, the City of Fair Oaks Ranch went to Stage 2 of our Drought Contingency Plan. We were forced to go to Stage 2 due to two issues. First, the water level in our monitoring wells was dropping rapidly. Second, the amount of water being used by Fair Oaks Ranch water utility customers had increased dramatically.

We have experienced several rain showers over the past couple weeks, which has helped to cool things down. This has also slowed down the drop of the water level in our city wells. We have also increased the amount of water that we are taking from GBRA (Guadalupe-Brazos River Authority) through Canyon Lake. For now, the water supply is in good shape. If we were to see another long dry spell, it is possible we will begin to experience water level drops in our monitoring wells.

The significant increase in water consumption has been the biggest factor. We normally experience about 2 million gallons of water distribution in a day for water utility users in Fair Oaks Ranch. Since June 1, 2022, we are seeing over 3 million gallons per day. This large increase in water usage is impacting the water level in our wells and pushing the capabilities of our water distribution system.

I fully understand the need to protect your landscaping, but I believe we are seeing an increase in consumption due to increased watering of yards with automated sprinkler systems. Plants, shrubs, and trees can all be hand watered, which decreases that amount of water being used. It's great to see beautiful green grass throughout the City, but during this period of severe drought, having available water for our homes is more important.

All water users of the Fair Oaks Ranch water utility can monitor their daily amount of water use through the Aqua Hawk system. The Aqua Hawk system is also good for detecting leaks that you may have when you see high water usage during a time where you believed you were not using water. Also, the Aqua Hawk system will send you notifications when it detects there is abnormal water usage. If not signed up for this free service from our water utility, I encourage all to do so.

Currently, we are not in an emergency situation. By taking positive measures now, we can prevent ever getting to that state or having to go to Stage 3 of our Drought Contingency Plan. Please find ways to use our water wisely and conserve as much of this precious resource as possible.

As many residents may have noticed, the Fair Oaks Ranch Country Club is going through a major renovation of one of its golf courses. As a result of this multi-million-dollar project, water will be required to make this project successful. The City and Country Club leadership met to discuss projections for water usage to support this project and other needs for the Country Club. They do use the grey water from the City, but require more than this amount. With these projections, the City was

able to establish a manageable level of water supply that could be provided to the Country Club and not have an impact on water utility users. Brad Belson, the Country Club Manager, fully understands the situation and to a great extent has been fully understanding and a great partner for our City.

All of the routine messaging from the City is distributed through the City's [Notify Me](#) system. Sign up for this service can be found on the home page of the City Web site at www.fairoaksranchtx.org. It takes less than five minutes to sign up and is a valuable service to stay up to date with what is happening around "The Ranch".

Notify Me provides updates on our water utility along with information on other areas impacting the City. Messages are delivered straight to your email or mobile phone via text message. *Notify Me* is the primary method of getting information from the City to its residents, although we do post messaging to the [City's website](#), [NextDoor](#) account and [Facebook](#) site also.

A typical *Notify Me* message will provides a topic and a link to the full message. If you are interested in the topic, choose the link and you will be provided with all the information.

The City of Fair Oaks Ranch also uses "[CodeRED](#)" for distributing emergency situation information to all our residents. This also is a free service that residents must sign up for and the link to sign up for this service is on the City's website main page.

As always, lets bond together to make it through this situation where we are experiencing severe drought conditions. Please do not take this lightly, this is a serious condition that we are in. By taking appropriate measures now to conserve our water resource, we can prevent an emergency condition or going to Stage 3 of our Drought Contingency Plan.