

A newsletter  
for the customers  
of the Wells Branch  
Municipal Utility  
District

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February 2003

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Municipal Utility District

## INSIDE: RECREATION PROGRAMMING GUIDE

# WELLS BRANCH

# WORD



**NEW RAINWATER COLLECTION TANK**

## HealthFest moves to Rec Center Feb. 22

Wells Branch's highly successful HealthFest gets to grow this year with its new location at the Indoor Recreation Center.

HealthFest provides a wide array of activities, exhibits and information about living healthier. It's scheduled from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, at the recreation center, 3000 Shoreline Drive.

You'll find many opportunities for free health screening, including a spinal check as well as vision, dental and hearing screenings.

Firefighters from Travis County Emergency Services District No. 2 will be at the HealthFest with their Smokehouse, a mobile display that gives adults and children critical experience in evacuating a home during a fire.

Because the HealthFest is at the Indoor Recreation Center, there'll also be chances to get certified for the Rec Center's fitness equipment (a Wells Branch recreation tag is required) or to check out

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3: 'HEALTHFEST' +

## Wells Branch collection saving for a sunny day

Wells Branch MUD has stepped up its rainwater harvesting efforts, adding a 37,000-gallon collection tank at the District Office-Indoor Recreation Center campus.

Another, 1,500-gallon tank collects rainwater that falls from the roof of the Rec Center. That is pumped into the larger tank and augmented with well water, when necessary, to irrigate the 12.5 acres of the tract.

"We don't have to use any water purchased from the City of Austin [the MUD's wholesale water supplier] for irrigation," noted District Manager Don H. Williams. Williams pointed out that helps

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2: 'RAINWATER' +

## *New policy to assure timely bill payment*

To assure that Wells Branch utility customers don't pay any more than their fair share for water and wastewater service, the MUD board has adopted a new policy regarding late payments.

The policy is designed to encourage timely payment of utility bills.

"This new policy will have no effect on the vast majority of our customers, because most of our customers pay their bills on time," said District Manager Don H. Williams. "We hope

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2: 'BILL POLICY' +

## Rainwater

From Page 1

save taxpayers money.

The area can be irrigated without affecting the City's complicated formula to determine what Austin charges Wells Branch for water and wastewater service, he said.

The district already collects rainwater off the Community Center in Katherine Fleischer Park for irrigation. And Wells Branch MUD is selling 500-gallon- and 1,000-gallon rainwater collection barrels for residential use at reduced cost.

For more information, contact the district at 251-9814.

## Work begins on detention

Work is getting under way on the Shoreline detention pond, adjacent to the MUD office and Rec Center.

With financing assistance from the Texas Water Development Board, the MUD will construct the area to detain water during rains to avoid flooding.

During dry weather, the area will serve as a playing field.

## Letter of thanks for MUD action

*Editor's Note: Here are excerpts from a letter presented to the MUD board at its January 21 meeting. It comments on the MUD board's action imposing a fine after a dog escaped a back yard and attacked a small child in the MUD greenbelt.*

**Dear Mr. Williams and all Board Members:**

I wanted to send you a long-past-due thank you letter to you and the Wells Branch Municipal [Utility] District Board Members. You all showed immense concern for our safety in dealing with our unruly neighbor and his pit bulls back in October.

I was very happy to see the quick work of blocking the dog's exit into the park and the increase in law enforcement patrolling our street. Shortly after one more police-involved altercation, this tenant was forced to move out and all has returned to normal.

Please never feel that your quick actions were the wrong decision. As time has past, more neighbors and I have become friends and have learned much more about the rental tenant and his dogs. In addition to the salesman, small boy, neighbor's dog and my cat that were attacked before your response, there were previously two cats destroyed, one medium-sized dog mutilated and a large dog bitten. All these animals lived within four or five houses of the pit bulls. There is no doubt that your fast response saved lives.

Wells Branch is one of the nicest, friendliest and safest communities in the Austin area, and I would like to thank all of you for helping us keep it this way.

**Sincerely,  
Betsey A. Dennis**

## Compost guidelines

1. Place your container(s) of grass clippings, leaves and brush at curbside by 8 A.M. MONDAY. Items placed at curbside after 8 a.m. cannot be picked up.
2. Please place grass clippings in the containers, NOT IN PLASTIC BAGS.
3. Place limbs which are too large for the containers on the ground next to the containers. Please cut the limbs — about 6 feet is an ideal length.
4. Do not put rocks, ashes, lumber, animal waste or other trash in the containers.
5. If you need additional tubs or information, call 251-9814.

## Billing policy

From Page 1

that the new policy encourages the other few to pay their bills on time."

Studies have shown a high correlation between late payment and customers who leave the district owing money on their utility bills. When that happens, the remaining customers have to make up the difference.

"The MUD has to pay its bills to its wholesale supplier of water and wastewater service. We have to expect the same from our customers," Williams said.

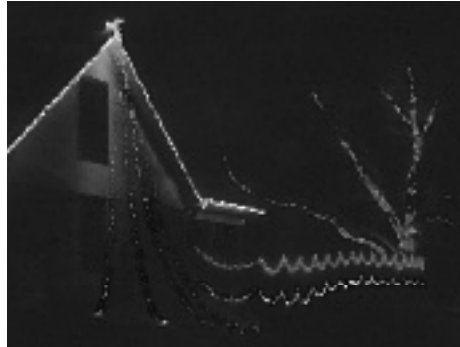
Beginning with the March billing, a customer who is late on his payment twice out of four consecutive months will be required to post an additional \$100 deposit, up to a maximum of \$500 on deposit.

Previously, the additional deposit was required when service was terminated because of late payment and the maximum was \$300.

For more information, contact the MUD office at 251-9814.



**MOST ORIGINAL:** 14909 Bescott



**MOST EFFECTIVE USE OF LIGHTS:**  
2011 Klattenhoff



**MOST BEAUTIFUL:** 14409 Oceanna Ct.



**MOST TRADITIONAL:** 2102 Nathan Ln.

## *Holiday Highlights*

These homes won top honors during holiday lights judging Dec. 14. Honorable mentions went to 3505 Sauls, 2100 Rick Whinery, 2111 Taylor-Simonetti, 3612 Kissman and 14560 Robert I. Walker.



**MOST PATRIOTIC:** 3916 Sambuca Ct.

## *Gung-ho neighbor may have overdone covenant zeal*

Some imaginative Wells Brancher wants to help the MUD enforce restrictive covenants to preserve property values in the neighborhoods.

That's okay, but this someone may have taken it a little too far.

Someone has been circulating flyers, designed to look like official Wells Branch correspondence, reminding residents to keep trash carts and recycle bins out of sight except on scheduled collection days.

Similarly worded yellow cards were attached to carts and bins.

In his (or her) zeal, the person circulating the phony literature even made up legal-sounding ordinances supposedly passed by the MUD board to keep containers off the streets.

While keeping the containers off the streets is a good idea and required in many sections' covenants, the MUD has no authority to make ordinances.

When a covenant is violated, the violator will receive a letter from the MUD, on official stationery, asking that the situation be corrected.

If the situation isn't corrected, the matter may be turned over to the MUD's law firm, Armbrust & Brown, for action. If the matter still remains uncorrected, the MUD may proceed to court for appropriate remedies and collect attorney's fees from the violator.

For the straight story about covenant enforcement, call 251-9814.

## HealthFest

*From Page 1*

a demonstration of aerobics, Tai Chi or sign language classes offered by the MUD.

Even though the location is new, HealthFest will still offer the popular inspection of child safety seats from noon to 3 p.m. in the parking lot. The child must be accompanied by a parent and in the car seat for the inspection.

For more information, contact the MUD recreation manager at 251-9814.

### **REMINDER:**

If you see someone tampering with a manhole cover, it could be mischief and that could be dangerous. Call the MUD office, 251-9814, or call 9-1-1 for the sheriff's office.

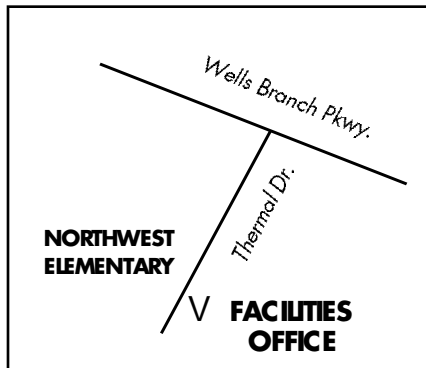
## WELLS BRANCH WORD

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**DUMPSTER AVAILABLE FOR  
LARGER-THAN-USUAL ITEMS**  
2nd Saturday of every Month  
Facilities Office, 13905 Thermal



### *Turn back the hands of time...*

Members of the Society for Creative Anachronism put a spin on Christmas at Wells Branch during community festivities Dec. 14. The group leads Wells Branchers through a "serpentine dance," one of the many Renaissance-era dances performed. The Society for Creative Anachronism practices "rendance" the first and third Sundays of the month at the Indoor Recreation Center. For more information, consult the Community Recreation insert in this edition of the *Wells Branch Word*.

## City of Austin offers free low-water-use toilets

The City of Austin wants to buy you a toilet...or three.

In one of the most ambitious water conservation programs in the nation, the City of Austin on Dec. 2 began offering its water customers — including customers of Wells Branch MUD, which it wholesales to — one brand of low-flow toilets for free and offering rebates for other brands.

The City will supply up to three Universal Rundle/Crane toilets per household and also offer a \$30 per toilet installation rebate. The house where the toilets are installed must have been built before 1991.

For other low-flow brands it specifies, the City will offer a \$100 rebate to cover the cost of each toilet (up to three per household) and installation by a licensed plumber. The City requires that the old toilets be rendered useless and will visit the house to assure installation of the new toilets.

The City will also provide free low-flow showerheads and require their installation.

For more details, consult the City's water conservation website — [www.ci.austin.state.tx.us/watercon](http://www.ci.austin.state.tx.us/watercon) — or call 974-2199 or 974-2461.