

# STONE FOREST

## Flyer

April 2015

Volume 5, Issue 4



## President's Message

This month's 'ramblings' consist of several tidbits of information and some observations. The first deals with water usage and runoff. One of our fellow residents is very knowledgeable of matters concerning such matters. Although at the present time Mother Nature has provided what we may view as plenty of water (at least in our geographical area) such is not always the case---especially in the majority of Texas. However, what we do with that water (use and runoff) is important to have a full understanding as to what is happening. You'll find his article within this newsletter.

The next matter---trash and recycling collection. As some of our neighbors found out in early March, the trash collection may occur VERY early, actually as early as 7:15 a.m. For those people who aren't moving very well at that time of day, they got their stuff out a little late and were probably wondering why their trash didn't get picked up. Now they know. I've made a point of meeting the driver whose name is Gibson. He has the unenviable task of picking up our trash and recycling by himself since it is just him and the massive truck. He says we appear to be adjusting pretty well but that some of the cars parked near the trash bins make it difficult or impossible to get to the bins.

News alert! It hasn't happened in Stone Forest (yet) but recent local

news info shows that guys are cruising neighborhoods at night, getting into cars in driveways, taking the garage remotes, opening the garage doors (either then or the next day when occupants are gone to work) and taking whatever they find. If you are intent on keeping your cars outside, then it is recommended that you take any valuable papers and the remotes into your house for safekeeping.

Last matter: a local school crossing guard at an elementary school was hit by a dad shortly after he dropped off his child. Witnesses said he got out of his car stating that he hadn't seen her (she is there every school day) because he was on his phone. Now, personally, I don't mind if someone hurts themselves or their own vehicle while using their phone, that is their choice (not necessarily a good one) but they can also do a lot of damage to others who have no choice in the matter. Now I see why the large car makers are having to design cars that can drive themselves---people are no longer capable of doing it themselves. Wow, what progress.

Keep watching the playground---things should be happening.

Thanks,  
Dick Leonard

# COMMUNITY CONTACTS

STONE FOREST HOA  
 Spring, Texas 77379  
 HOA BOARD

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## CHAPARRAL MANAGEMENT CO.

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Mailing address:

P.O. Box 681007, Houston, TX 77268-1007

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6630 Cypresswood Dr. Suite 100, Spring, TX 77379

## UTILITIES

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 .....**P.O. Box 90045, Houston, TX 77290**  
 Centerpoint Energy (to report street light outages) ....713-207-2222  
 .....**[www.centerpointenergy.com/outage](http://www.centerpointenergy.com/outage)**  
 Harris County Health Dept. ....[www.harriscountyhealth.com](http://www.harriscountyhealth.com)  
 Harris County Precinct #4 .....[www.hcp4.net](http://www.hcp4.net)  
 Comcast (cable) .....713-462-9000, [www.comcast.com](http://www.comcast.com)  
 U.S. Post Office .....1-800-275-8777  
 .....**7717 Louetta Rd., Spring, TX 77379**  
 Republic Waste .....  
**Trash pick-up days: Mondays & Thursdays**

## NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Articles ..... [kserventi@chaparralmanagement.com](mailto:kserventi@chaparralmanagement.com)  
 Publisher - Peel Inc. .... [www.peelinc.com](http://www.peelinc.com)  
 Advertising .....1-888-687-6444

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## UNDERSTANDING WATER QUALITY FOUR AREAS OF FOCUS WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Submitted by David Renniger*

**Question:** What is the most common pollutant in the urban waterways of Harris County, Texas? (Answer below)

### WATERSHEDS AND WATER QUALITY

Water quality describes physical and chemical parameters of surface water that impact both human and ecological health within a given watershed. A watershed is a geographic area where flowing water (and everything we put in it) drains into a larger common body of water. It can be the gutter system around your house that flows to the storm sewer, or an entire river basin that collects runoff from surrounding towns, roadways, and green spaces. Everyone lives in watershed. In Texas alone, there are 23 major river basin watersheds, each ultimately flowing into the Gulf of Mexico.

Understanding the relationship between water quality and human activity is the cornerstone of my own transformative experience in becoming NatureSmart. You see, I spent the majority of my career liberally applying pesticides and chemical control products to keep my demanding landscape clients happy and their gardens as green and pest-free as possible. Little did I know that most of these chemicals would eventually find their way into watersheds where they negatively affect everything from contact recreation and fishing areas, stream ecology, human health, and the safety of our drinking water.

### IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

Water quality is determined by comparing levels of pollutants like sediment, nutrients, bacteria, and man-made chemicals against baseline levels in a watershed. While this monitoring activity is performed by regulatory agencies and trained experts, here are four areas where you can make a significant contribution to improving water quality in your watershed:

#### 1. Landscapes

- Choose sustainable landscape practices
- Minimize exposed soil with vegetative cover
- Plant vegetative barriers to filter runoff and trap sediments
- Mulch lawn clippings
- Stop using pesticides and chemical fertilizers

#### 2. Car Care

- Regularly check for fluid leaks
- Recycle used motor oil
- Wash vehicles at the car wash and not in the driveway

#### 3. Paved Surfaces

- Sweep/blow driveways, sidewalks and roads
- Don't sweep/blow debris into storm drains
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces

#### 4. Home Care

- Never pour anything down storm drains
- Carefully store and dispose of cleaners, chemicals, and oil
- Pick up pet waste
- Pump and inspect septic systems regularly

Unfortunately, most major streams in Harris County, Texas are listed on the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's 303(d) list, which identifies impaired waters with higher than acceptable values for pollutants. The good news is that implementing the recommendations in these four areas of focus can make a difference and cost nothing more than a simple change in behavior.

**The answer to our question:** E.coli bacteria from fecal contamination is the number one cause of impaired waterways in Harris County, Texas. The bacteria is carried by stormwater runoff that flows into our creeks and streams. You can make an immediate impact by cleaning up pet waste and not allowing them to defecate near stormwater drainage areas.

#### References

<http://www.b-gac.com/>



# Portable Fire Extinguishers



A portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives; but portable extinguishers have limitations. Because fire grows and spreads so rapidly, the number one priority for residents is to get out safely.

Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the fire department has been called or is being called; and the room is not filled with smoke.

To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:

- **PULL** the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism.
- **AIM** low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- **SQUEEZE** the lever slowly and evenly.
- **SWEEP** the nozzle from side-to-side.

For the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle.

Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of an independent testing laboratory.

Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out. KVFD offers hands-on fire extinguisher trainings.

Install fire extinguishers close to an exit and keep your back to a clear exit when you use the device so you can make an easy escape if the fire cannot be controlled. If the room fills with smoke, leave immediately.

Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape. Every household should have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

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# GET MORE FROM YOUR GARDEN

Raspberries require little care to grow, but can cost a lot at the store. You can even freeze them.

Mixed salad greens, like baby lettuce and arugula are tough and quick growing, even after cutting.

If you cut them correctly they will grow again. Start at one end of your garden and cut plants about an inch from the ground. The plant could grow back 3-4 times in a season.

Flat gardening was popular years ago, but now raised beds are much better. They prevent weeds from taking over, let water drain more efficiently and plants thrive in aerated soil.

A very common error in gardening is over watering and drowning plants. If it rains at least one inch per week, you can probably skip heavy watering. Purchase a rain gauge (under \$10) at garden stores to keep track of how much or how little water your plant is getting and add or subtract from there.

An advertisement for Texas Direct Auto. It features a golden retriever puppy wearing a grey baseball cap with a Texas flag logo. The puppy is sitting next to a plate of hot dogs and a baseball. The text "Hot Dog" is written in large, stylized, orange-outlined letters. At the bottom, there is a blue banner with the text "SELL US YOUR CAR, SKEETERS FANS!" and "TEXASDIRECTAUTO.COM". A cartoon character of a blue and yellow bird is also visible in the bottom left corner.

**Hot Dog**

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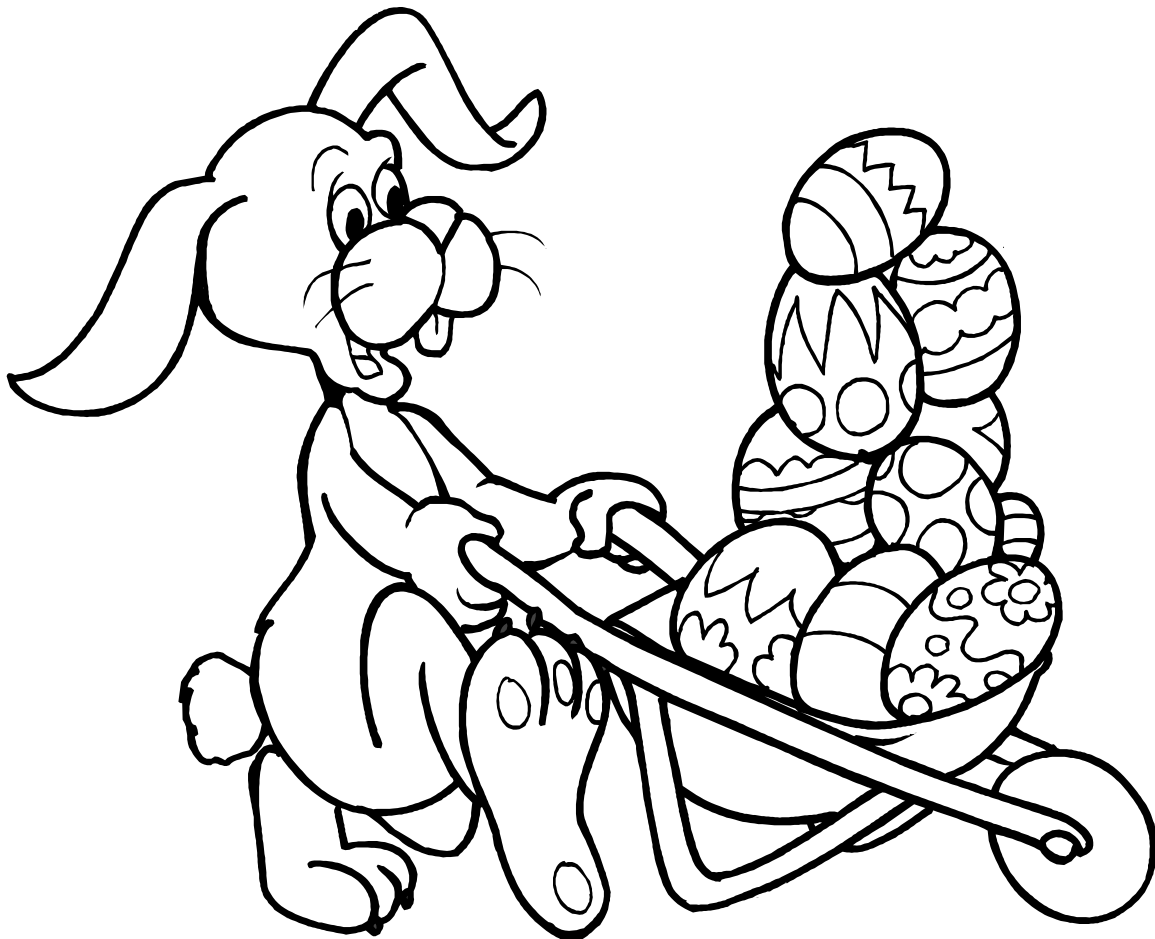
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