

HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL, AT-LARGE 5
COUNCIL MEMBER

SALLIE ALCORN

WATER LEAKS

Dear Friends,

I understand how frustrating it is to witness water leaks, especially when the city is restricting water use due to drought conditions. There's nothing worse than seeing water running down the street when you can't even water your own lawn except on certain days. I get it. At this morning's council meeting, the public works director shared some of the context behind the ongoing water leaks. I thought it was important I pass this information along.

Houston Public Works (HPW) Director Carol Haddock stated that in regular, non-drought times, Houston has about 100 to 150 active water leaks on a weekly basis. HPW has staff to address, investigate, and repair 100 to 200 leaks per week. Due to drought conditions we are experiencing this summer, the number of leaks has grown to 500 per week. In the 1940s, 1950s,

and 1960s, when many Houston neighborhoods were built, standards called for shallowly buried sewer and water lines. These shallow water lines are more susceptible to shifting and breaking when the soil dries. Pipes installed today are buried deeper, lowering the chance of being affected by extreme weather.

City crews are averaging more than 200 repairs a week, utilizing overtime to work around the clock, seven days a week. During this time, HPW has also been working to add more contractors to our leak repair efforts. We have increased the number of contractors from four to ten and are hoping to add two more contractors soon. As contractors onboard, we have been able to increase the number of leaks contractors are addressing from 100 to 200 per week. Our goal is to have contractors repair 300 to 400 leaks a week until the backlog is completed. Since June 1st, 3,000 leak repairs have been completed, with 2,000 of the repairs performed by city crews.

It's extremely important to report a water leak to 311 when you see it. Don't assume that someone else has already reported it; we will be able to filter out any duplicate reports. If a leak you previously reported has worsened, please call 311 to let us know. Like the water leaks we're experiencing, some sewer lines are also experiencing leaks, but the effects may not be as visible. If you're noticing that your shower or sinks suddenly start draining slower and you have no reason to believe it's an issue caused by your household pipes, please call 311.

HPW indicates that repair crews are addressing leaks in order of severity. Normal, routine leaks may take two to three weeks, sometimes longer. If more severe leaks arise, they jump the line. HPW is working to shorten these timelines by hiring more contractors and increasing their workloads. Combine this with improved weather conditions and hopefully, we will soon return to normal.

Stage Two drought restrictions remain in place to maintain water pressure for firefighters, hospitals, and other life-safety facilities. During Stage Two, outdoor water use is restricted to

nighttime hours, beginning at 7 p.m. on your assigned day through 5 a.m. the following morning, on a schedule:

- Sundays and Thursdays for single-family residential customers with even-numbered street addresses
 - Saturdays and Wednesdays for single-family residential customers with odd-numbered street addresses
 - Tuesdays and Fridays for all other customers
-



This email was sent to president@jdylwood.org
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)
City of Houston At-Large 5 · 900 Bagby St # 1 · Houston, TX 77002-2527 · USA