



01 AVOID FLOODED AREAS

MAY IS FLOOD AWARENESS MONTH

Know your risk of flooding. Where it can rain, it can flood. Everyone is at risk – even those who don’t live close to rivers and creeks. Just because a property has not flooded in the past does not mean that it won’t in the future. Flood risk can change over time. Visit www.floodsmart.gov to find out what you can do about your flood risk.

During a 30-year mortgage, homes located in high-risk flood zones have a 26 percent chance of flooding compared to a 9 percent chance of fire. Most insurance does not cover flood damage. Buy a flood insurance policy to protect your home. Renters can buy contents coverage even if the structure is not insured. Residents in the Tulsa city limits are eligible for a 45 percent discount on policies from the National Flood Insurance Program.

Spring rain can bring severe and sudden flooding. Never walk through flood waters – 6 inches of moving water can sweep you off your feet. Remember the phrase, “Turn Around; Don’t Drown,” and avoid driving through flooded areas, as most flood deaths occur in cars.

Flood risk still exists! Call the City of Tulsa’s Customer Care Center at **311** or **(918) 596-7777** to find out the flood hazards on your property and to find out ways to protect your property from flooding. City staff is available to help interpret floodplain maps, explain flood insurance and provide technical assistance.

CITY LIFE

MAY 2024

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+ PLUS: KEEP FATS, OILS, GREASE OUT OF SEWERS

WWW.CITYOFTULSA.ORG | TULSA311@CITYOFTULSA.ORG | CALL 311

02 READING A METER

SIMPLE WAYS TO CHECK FOR LEAKS

Does your water bill seem high? Here are some ways to check your water meter for billing accuracy or water leaks:

Where is my water meter? It’s probably in your front yard near the street, or in the back yard/side yard. Look for a cast iron or black plastic lid on the ground with the words “water meter.”

What type of meter do I have? If there is a white disk on top of the meter enclosure, you have an AMR (Automated Meter Reading) meter. These meters have a digital display and can be read automatically by a meter reader walking or driving down your street. If your meter has analog dials and no digital display, you have a direct read meter. All direct read meters will be replaced over the next several years. For more information, visit: www.cityoftulsa.org/trureads

How should I check my meter for a leak? If no water is being used inside the home, your meter should not be running. Turn off all water usage, and then look for the leak indicator on your meter. If you see the indicator, you may have a leak.

- **AMR Meter Leak Indicator – Look for the leaky faucet icon at the top of the digital readout.**
- **Direct Meter Leak Indicator – Look for a small red triangle – if spinning, you may have a leak.**

How is my meter read? Simply read the numbers shown on the odometer (this records total water usage) from left to right to take your meter reading. If your meter has an analog register, the number shown represents water usage in thousands of gallons. If your meter has a digital display, the number shown is listed in gallons.

How do I check for leaks? Look for dripping faucets, showerheads and fixture connections. Also check for leaks in your irrigation systems and outside spigots. To check for a toilet leak, put a few drops of food coloring in the tank and see if it appears in the toilet bowl before you have flushed.

If you suspect an error in your bill, send an email to Utilities Services at Tulsa311@cityoftulsa.org or call **311**.

03 BACKFLOW PREVENTION

PROTECT OUR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM

The City's Water and Sewer Department is dedicated to ensuring that the water delivered through the public water system to your home is safe to drink. However, situations outside of the City's control sometimes occur and can jeopardize the quality of your drinking water by allowing backflow into the public water system.

Backflow is the reverse flow of water from a private plumbing system back into the public water system. Backflow occurs because of back-siphoning or backpressure. Back-siphoning happens when there is a loss of pressure in the water system and something foreign is sucked back into the water supply. Backpressure occurs when the pressure in premise plumbing is greater than the pressure coming in from the water main.

Follow these simple precautions to help protect our drinking water system from backflow events:

- **NEVER submerge hoses in buckets, pools, tubs, sinks or other containers.**
- **Always keep hose ends clear of possible contaminants. Leave an air gap of 2 inches or more between the hose end and the receptacle.**
- **Don't tamper with the temperature and pressure valves on hot water tanks. These valves will safely discharge when there is thermal expansion in the tank, helping to protect your hot water heater from damage while limiting the conditions for a backflow event to occur.**
- **Buy and install inexpensive backflow-prevention devices, called atmospheric vacuum breakers, for all threaded faucets around your home. These devices are readily available at hardware stores and home improvement centers.**
- **Don't use garden hose spray attachments to apply chemicals without using a backflow prevention device at the faucet. Lawn or cleaning chemicals are toxic, and many can be fatal if ingested.**
- **If you have a lawn irrigation system, have your backflow preventer tested annually by a qualified professional to ensure it's working properly.**

TRAP THE GREASE

AVOID COSTLY HOME PLUMBING BILLS

Fats, oils, and grease aren't just bad for your arteries; they are bad for the sewers, too. When food scraps are washed down the drain, the fat and grease from the food can build up in your sewer lines, causing raw sewage to back up into homes, businesses and the environment. Anything with a fat content can contribute to grease-clogged pipes. Avoid costly home plumbing bills by following these three simple steps:

1. **TRAP** bacon grease or meat drippings in a sealable container and toss in the trash.
2. **SCRAPE** all food scraps in the compost or trash.
3. **WIPE** all greasy, oily, creamy or buttery food residues from dishes before you wash them.

*Running hot water and soap down the drain does not prevent grease build-up and blockages.

You also can recycle your liquid cooking oils at the City's Household Pollutant Collection Facility, 4502 S. Galveston Ave. It is open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 8 to 11:30 a.m. and noon to 4:30 p.m.

Visit www.TrapTheGreaseTulsa.com for more information on proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease.

Despite all these preventive measures, if you see, hear or smell something you think might be a sewage overflow or backup, report it immediately by calling **(918) 586-6999**. The City of Tulsa has a customer service employee available around the clock and, if needed, a work crew is available to inspect and take action.



04 RE-USING BIOSOLIDS

WASTEWATER RESIDUALS AS FERTILIZER

Did you know that municipal wastewater treatment plants in Tulsa separate the liquid and residual portions of wastewater for processing and treatment? Biosolids are the residuals that have undergone additional treatment (stabilization) to prepare them for environmentally acceptable beneficial use or disposal.

The City's biosolids are stabilized and applied to land in an environmentally acceptable manner in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) regulations.

Land application of biosolids is a common disposal method that has been used for decades. It involves spreading the biosolids on the soil surface or injecting them into the soil. Biosolids enrich the soil by providing organic matter and nutrients needed for crops. The most common crop utilizing biosolids is pasture land used for hay production.

Applying biosolids to land is another way the City of Tulsa's Water and Sewer Department strives for sustainability with our resources. We are able to save landfill space, provide a beneficial product for the local community, and reduce cost of service for our customers.

For additional information about the City of Tulsa's Biosolids Program, please call the City's Customer Care Center at **311**.