

May 2020
Issue 24

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Is it Time for Spring Cleaning?

Now is the time of year when many people think about spring cleaning - whether that means sprucing up their property, or decluttering the house. At Aqua Water Supply, we are conducting a similar clean-up effort across our service area.

In order to provide safe and reliable service to our members, Aqua maintains a program to remove trees and other vegetation from utility easements that have become overgrown.

Clearing the utility easement, also commonly called the right-of-way, makes it easily accessible for our crews to safely and efficiently restore service after a water outage, or perform maintenance when needed. In this way, the Aqua right-of-way (ROW) clearing program allows us to effectively maintain services for our members.

At times, clean-up work

to clear an existing easement might affect a portion of a member's property, such as a fallen tree that crosses the property line into the right-of-way.

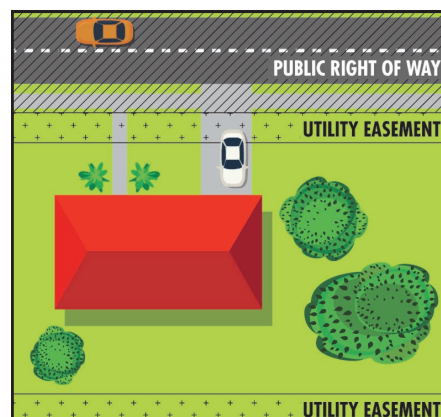
Those members who might be impacted by the ROW clearing program will receive a letter notifying them that we will be working to clean-up and maintain the easement on their property.

Currently, our ROW clean-up is taking place in those areas outside the designated breeding habitat of the protected Houston toad, per U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines. During the months of July through December we will be able to conduct ROW clearing work within the Houston toad breeding area.

And while there have been some

delays in the ROW clearing program related to the ongoing COVID-19 virus situation, the Aqua maintenance department is still continuing this work.

But rest assured that we are following all recommended safety guidelines and taking precautions to protect our members and their families, Aqua employees and the surrounding communities. If you should have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the Aqua office at (512) 303-3943.



Utility easements are designated for overhead and/ or underground electric, water, sewer, telephone and cable lines.

Office Hours:
MONDAY - FRIDAY
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Drive-Thru Window:
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Aqua Water Supply Marks 50 Year Anniversary

Aqua Water Supply began operations 50 years ago on April 11, 1970. As a cooperative business owned by its member customers, Aqua remains dedicated to providing a safe, reliable and sustainable source of drinking water for homes, farms, businesses and ranches in six Central Texas counties.

Since its earliest days, Aqua's mission has been to enhance the quality of life for our members and their families, and we are committed to responsible management and preservation of natural resources to continue our mission well into the future. For more information about the history of the Aqua Water Supply Corporation, visit our website: www.aquawsc.com.



Aqua Scholarship Reminder

Don't forget! The deadline to submit applications for the annual Ernest W. Bracewell, Sr. Memorial Scholarship Program is May 28, 2020. The Aqua scholarship application and guidelines can be obtained through Aqua's website at www.aquawsc.com.

Completed application forms must be received by May 28, along with proof of GPA, two letters of recommendation, proof of citizenship (copy of birth certificate or passport) and a personal essay for review by the Aqua scholarship committee.

Good luck to all our scholarship applicants!



Canine Companion Helps Save Water

The old adage says that a dog is man's best friend. A dog might be your faithful companion, a family pet or your service animal. And now they can also help conserve water!

A female rescue dog named Vessel has been trained to use her keen sense of smell to detect water leaks for the Central Arkansas Water (CAW) system. Vessel is the first water leak detection dog in the United States, although water utilities in Great Britain and Australia have used dogs to sniff out leaks for a number of years.

Vessel and her handler check easements in the CAW service area to find and verify suspected leaks. The dog detects the smell of chlorine in treated water. That means she isn't misdirected by a puddle of rainwater that a utility worker might otherwise suspect to be a water system leak. Vessel knows when she puts on her

working vest — a regular no-pull harness — that it's time to work. When she sees the vest and hears the order to "Get dressed," she gets excited. Before getting started, Vessel drinks nonchlorinated well water or bottled water to reset her senses and open them up to be as sharp as possible.

When her handler orders "Find leak" Vessel searches the area, sniffing all around. If she detects the smell of chlorine, she will stop at the spot and look at her handler. Then when she hears the command "Show me" she will bark and lie on the spot.

While human leak detection specialists must use listening equipment and visually see water to detect a possible leak, Vessel can work much more quickly and avoid several steps a human crew must take to identify a leak.

"We are impressed and amazed at

her accuracy. She pinpoints the location," said Stephen Sullivan, CAW water leak detection specialist and Vessel's handler. "She has pinpointed leaks whether the water is coming up or not."

One Lucky Dog

A rescue organization saved Vessel after she was dumped in a field. Then she was transferred to the Arkansas Paws in Prison program, which teaches prisoners to train rescue dogs.

"She came into the Paws in Prison program not knowing anything," said volunteer trainer Carrie Kessler. "This is just a rescue dog straight from the shelter, and we saw her transform to the dog you see today, working and finding water leaks."

Vessel is rewarded with a game of fetch each time she successfully finds a leak. She knows how to sit, stay, lie down, shake hands, and even "high five." You can follow Vessel, a black Labrador retriever mix, by searching @CAWdetectedog on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Based on the success of Vessel and other water leak detection dogs, Aqua Water is investigating the possibility of a similar program in the future. Water conservation is an important goal here in Texas in order to ensure a reliable water supply for generations to come. And a leak detection dog just might turn out to be a good friend to all of us.



Vessel is the first water leak detection dog in the United States.

AQUA

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Free automated phone payment and online bill pay are available 24/7. You can pay with all major credit cards, E-Check or automatic bank draft.

Payment by phone: Call Aqua at (512) 303-3943 and select option 5 — the interactive voice response system will guide you through the process.

Online: Visit www.aquawsc.com and select Pay My Bill. You will be redirected to a secure website with instructions for payment.

Automatic bank draft: Complete a Bank Authorization form, available from our office or website, and return the completed form to our office with a voided check.

Go Green: To start receiving an e-bill please email a request along with your 10-digit Aqua account number to: ebilling@aquawsc.com.

Safe ♦ Reliable ♦ Sustainable

CALL AQUA BEFORE YOU DIG:

Aqua Water will locate the Aqua water lines for you. Calling for a line locate before any type of excavation is a good idea. Water loss and service interruptions from damaged lines are avoidable, please call the Aqua office: (512) 303-3943.