



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Lone Star GCD Board Votes to Keep 2022 Water Use Fees Constant**

August 12, 2021 – On Tuesday, the Lonestar Groundwater Conservation District (the “District”) Board of Director’s took multiple actions intended to benefit the residents of Montgomery County. Keeping with the District’s mission to protect water and consumer’s rates, the board of directors voted that annual water use fees would not change over the year and remain steady at a rate of \$0.085 per 1,000 gallons for the second straight year. In addition to maintaining rates, the Board of Director’s voted to allow continue to allow constituents to participate in meetings via videoconference.

The Board of Directors approved Resolution No. 21-008, officially adopting water use fees for 2022. District staff worked with the Budget Committee, of which includes Directors Jim Spigener, Larry Rogers, and Janice Thigpen to review and forecast all reasonably anticipated revenues, expenses, and activities; and after giving much consideration to these important factors, it was the Committee’s recommendation to keep the regulatory water use fee the same for all groundwater produced from the Chicot, Evangeline, and Jasper aquifers.

Groundwater produced from the Catahoula aquifer also remained unchanged at \$0.06 per 1,000 gallons. Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code specifically caps the District’s water use fees for agricultural use at \$1.00 per acre-feet. Chapter 36 also caps the District’s water use fees for other purposes at \$0.17 per 1,000 gallons. The District’s action at Tuesday’s meeting continues to keep the water use fees at a rate that is at least 50% less than what the statute provides.

In addition to approving water use fees, the Board also acted to approve changes to the District’s Administrative Fee Schedule. Changes to the fee schedule were small but reflected the additional staff and consultant time needed to process permit applications and amendments submitted to the District. The fee schedule had not been amended since 2018 and was not amended when District adopted new rules in September 2020; therefore, the administrative fee schedule needed to be updated to reflect new changes and remove fees associated with forms and applications that were no longer appropriate.

Additionally, and in keeping with the Board’s mission of government transparency, Resolution #21-009 was also approved. The resolution authorizes the District to continue to offer the public the option to participate at District board meetings by videoconference on a permanent basis unless changed by a future resolution. The District’s Communications Committee felt that even with the Texas Governor’s lift of pandemic-related Open Meetings Act suspensions, public participation via all authorized mediums should be available on a regular basis. The Montgomery County public can rest assured the District remains committed to transparency and appreciates

and encourages public input remotely, in person, or otherwise. The Open Meetings Act gives governmental entities the option to allow the public to participate in meetings via videoconferencing. During suspension of certain provisions of the Act, the District was authorized to also offer teleconferencing; however, once the suspension is lifted on September 1, the District can no longer offer teleconferencing because the statute does not authorize public participation by teleconference. Beginning September 1, the District will provide the zoom videoconference link but will no longer be providing a dial-in option since participation by teleconference is not authorized. If in person or remote videoconferencing participation does not work for any person, the District also accepts written comments.

More information on the Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District can be found at [www.LoneStarGCD.org](http://www.LoneStarGCD.org) or follow us on [www.Facebook.com/LoneStarWater](https://www.Facebook.com/LoneStarWater). For questions, please contact the District.

***About LSGCD:*** *LSGCD is led by a seven-member elected board of directors, whose primary interests are to regulate and conserve groundwater in Montgomery County while protecting the property rights and economic interests of the citizens who own the groundwater.*

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