

INSIDE WILLOW FORK DRAINAGE DISTRICT



Enhancing Our Community
through Drainage, Parks & Trails

July 2020



Is Your Home Hurricane Ready?

Living near the Gulf Coast, residents know it doesn't take a major hurricane to wreak havoc, especially when storms hover, dropping rain for days. With attention also focused on personal safety amid COVID, it remains critically important that residents also remember to prepare for hurricane season, which runs through November 30.

Simple steps can help strengthen your property, including:

- Cleaning and securing loose gutters and downspouts
- Clearing debris that could slow drainage
- Trimming trees, especially those dead or damaged

Additionally, when a storm's predicted:

- Secure patio furniture and outdoor items
- Move vehicles to a safe location off the street
- Avoid placing trash and recycling bins in the street
- Cover windows

Streets are part of the drainage system designed to move water away from homes to detention areas, so it's important to keep streets clear during heavy rains to prevent potential flooding of your vehicle. When preparing for hurricane season, follow the latest guidelines from local officials. [Visit WFDD's Emergency Information website page](#) for links to emergency information from local and regional entities and national resources on preparedness and the important of flood insurance.

[Emergency Resources](#)



Mid-Block Crossings to Improve Resident Safety

While residential developments within WFDD were originally designed for walkability, population and commercial growth has led to increased traffic as well as heightened concern for pedestrians crossing mid-block. According to the Federal Highway Administration, pedestrian crashes account for approximately 15 percent of all traffic fatalities annually, and more than 75 percent of these occur at non-intersection locations. Recognizing that District trails often intersect busy streets like S. Mason Road and Westheimer Parkway, and that pedestrians and cyclists often cross mid-block rather than take sidewalks to the nearest intersection, WFDD is installing 11 mid-block crossings. Mid-block crossings create a safer situation for pedestrians and drivers. Pedestrians may endanger themselves if they misjudge the speed of oncoming vehicles or the time it takes to safely cross. Drivers may be startled by a pedestrian crossing where they are not expected, causing them to slam on the brakes. [View WFDD Parks Master Plan map with mid-block crossing locations.](#)

[View Map](#)



Motor Vehicles Along District Channels

WFDD welcomes recreational use of its trails and channel rights-of-way in most cases, and while much District property is designed for safe pedestrian and bicycle use, it is not intended for motor vehicles of any kind, including dirt bikes, ATVs or golf carts. Off-road vehicles tear up embankment walls, slopes and vegetation designed to ensure proper performance of drainage infrastructure that is costly to repair. "We're also concerned about public safety," said Andrew Dunn of On-Site Protection, who oversees District security. "Other districts have witnessed serious injuries, deaths and once had to call Life Flight when an ATV driving multiple family members flipped—we don't want this to happen in WFDD." When driven on uneven terrain or channel side slopes, even golf carts can become unsafe and easily roll over. Stepped up enforcement, including additional patrols and issuing of citations with fines up to \$5,000, has helped discourage a recent uptick in off-road motor vehicle activity. To report unauthorized vehicles, call the Fort Bend County Sheriff's non-emergency number at [281-341-4665](tel:281-341-4665). In an emergency, call 9-1-1. [Read more on WFDD security](#) on our website.

[Read More](#)

Park Facilities Update Re: COVID-19

Since fully reopening mid-June, with physical distancing and mask wearing guidelines that reflect county, state and CDC guidelines, WFDD is continuing the following measures to help keep our community safe:

- Providing sanitizing stations at Willow Fork, Central Green and Exploration parks
- Cleaning of restrooms at Willow Fork and Central Green parks three times daily
- Cleaning of pavilion areas, picnic tables, benches, and playground equipment daily
- Signage with distancing and mask wearing recommendations
- Requiring employees to wear masks and gloves when interacting with the public
- Limiting events at Central Green to meet state attendance requirements



The WFDD board continues to reevaluate these steps monthly. Please check the [Central Green](#) and [Willow Fork Park](#) Facebook pages for the latest information.

If you find this information helpful, please forward to your neighbors.

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