

## Keeping Water out of Greatwood

Your levee district board consists of three Greatwood residents appointed by your Fort Bend County Commissioner Court. The board makes decisions necessary to protect the district (Greatwood) from rising water and flooding by providing and maintaining ditches, levees, and detention lakes and ponds. The district is comprised of approximately 46,100 feet of compacted levee with a 10-foot minimum width, 3:1 side slopes, varying ground elevation from level to 12 feet. The system includes detention lakes, drainage channels and two storm water pump stations. There is a large detention lake in the middle of Greatwood. There is a large dry detention area near Riverbrook and US 59 as well as one more small dry detention area in the back of Greatwood. The other lakes in Greatwood are amenities and serve no purpose in drainage or in the prevention of floods.

When it rains the water in yards drains into the streets, then into the storm water drains, and into one of the two large ditches that run throughout the neighborhood. If the ditch fills with water, the water backs up into the lake or dry detention area, which stores it so the ditch does not overflow and so streets far from the lake drain faster in a high rain event. So, it is normal for every part of the drainage system to hold water for some of the time during a rain event...the yards, the streets, the ditches, the lake, and the dry detention. Finally storm water flows into the Brazos River. This system protects more than one billion dollars in property values inside the district.

It has been 20+ years since the original bonds were authorized, and since then the district has completed many drainage and levee construction projects, from the original construction to the recent recertification project to raise the levee to new FEMA standards. Most of these projects are expensive and are financed by bonds, issued and sold only when needed, that spread the cost of projects over 20-30 years and are financed by the levee taxes residents pay. This means current residents do not have to pay all of the costs of needed drainage improvements; but, through the issuance of bonds, the cost is spread out so future residents pay for the projects that benefit them.

Recently, the district has been evaluating erosion at the shoreline of the large detention lake. Much of the 20+-year-old concrete retaining walls around the lake are failing. These failures became even more obvious after the district lowered the level of the lake approximately one foot in order to comply with new FEMA requirements for more detention inside Greatwood. More information about this repair will be forthcoming in the next few months. Any repair the district undertakes will be funded with bonds sold by the district.

Fort Bend County Levee Improvement District No.11 normally meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 2:30pm in the Houston Community Bank building conference room on the Highway 59 access road. Please call ABHR at 713-860-6400 with any questions or to confirm a meeting date.