

Your Help Needed with Locating Breaks

See a break or back-up? Call 704-SAWS fast!

SAWS is asking for the public's help in locating water and sewer breaks.

"In the last few weeks, there have been several significant line breaks that have gone undetected," said SAWS spokesman Greg Flores. "SAWS crews are constantly in the field working to maintain our infrastructure, but we still need the public's assistance to promptly and accurately identify these kind of breaks throughout the city."

While temperatures haven't heated up to summertime highs, continued dry weather is already causing soils to shift. That will only get worse as the weather gets warmer. In January of this year, there were 112 water main breaks compared to 39 breaks last January. In dry summer weather, record water main breaks have hit a high of 482 in August 2000. In addition to water main breaks, SAWS experienced 655 sewer-related problems in 2005.

When reporting a problem, it's important to gather the following information:

- What kind of problem is it? (water or sewer)
- The address or nearest cross street and intersection
- How much is flowing? (heavy or minimal)
- Is it adversely affecting the public? (traffic or location)

Construction, vandalism, weather, and even wear and tear all factor into breaks and sewer backups. But effect of spills can be minimized by prompt reporting to **704-SAWS (704-7297)**, press 1 for Emergency Situations. (Or press 4 at 704-SAWS if you see water waste.)



Most main breaks are not as spectacular as this one that occurred in June, 2004 at Bandera and Loop 410, snarling traffic for hours; water or wastewater system breaks are occurring all over town at record-high numbers because of the dry weather. Call 704-SAWS if you see one.

Final Ties to Lower Guadalupe Project Cut

Contract Ended; looming payment avoided

SAWS, in conjunction with its partner the San Antonio River Authority (SARA), has signed and submitted a notice of termination to the



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), formally ending an agreement to develop the controversial Lower Guadalupe Water Supply Project.

The agreement – which named SAWS and SARA as purchasers of water supply rights and GBRA as the seller – would have required SAWS to make an \$813,000 payment to GBRA in May if notice of termination was not given by March 31. Savings from termination of the project will amount to approximately \$6 million for SAWS ratepayers in 2006. Long-term savings to rate payers are \$971 million in capital funding.

"When reviewing the Water Resource Plan last year, our internal SAWS task force re-evaluated all of our projects in terms of diversification, cost, risks, and technical feasibility," said SAWS President and CEO David Chardavoyne. "The Lower Guadalupe Project consistently ranked among the poorest for cost, risk, environmental impact, and technical feasibility. Feedback from both our Board and public meetings confirmed that we should withdraw from the project, and our Board directed its discontinuance."

Among the concerns of the task force were the potential impact to the endangered whooping crane and the statutory restrictions on water availability for the project.

Spring Into Full Bloom at Free Landscaping Event

What: SAWS Spring Bloom
When: Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.
Where: SAWS Headquarters, 2800 U.S Hwy. 281 N.

Get a head start on this year's planting season at SAWS Spring Bloom. Attend one of the mini-workshops covering a variety of landscape topics and receive our exciting new 50-page Landscape Care Guide absolutely free.

Free xeriscape plants will be given away. Others will be available for sale. For more information contact SAWS Conservation at 704-SAVE or conserve@saws.org.



2006 WaterSaver Landscape Contest

Are your salvias sensational? Does your permeable ground cover sing! Is your low-water landscape a thing of beauty?

Enter the WaterSaver Landscape contest to show others why your yard is terrific. Deadline for entries is March 31. Call 522-9220 for more information.

Legal Watering Hours Reminder



Year-round, landscape watering is only allowed after 8 p.m. or before 10 a.m., except with a hand-held hose or five-gallon bucket.

Charity car washes are permitted only at certified commercial car wash facilities. Water waste is prohibited at all time.

Call 704-SAWS (704-7297) to report water waste violations.

With everybody's help, we're working to keep the Edwards aquifer level above critical stages.

A Note About Winter Averaging

The January issue of Water News included an article titled "Saving Water Now Reduces Sewer Bills for 2006," which indicated that Winter Averaging is based on three consecutive billing cycles from about mid-November through mid-February. The correct timeframe is three complete billing cycles between November 15th and March 15th.

There has been some confusion on lawn dormancy and watering. To clarify: lawns are usually dormant during this time of year and SAWS encourages customers to minimize or avoid landscape water to ensure their sewer bills won't be affected.

If you would like to find out when your particular Winter Averaging timeframe is, contact our Customer Service department at 704-SAWS.



Drinking, bathing, cleaning, cooking....

Many people take water for granted. But everyday, families risk losing water service because they can't afford to pay their water bill. If you'd like to help keep water flowing to our neighbors in need, you can contribute to Project Agua, a non-profit program from SAWS helping customers pay their water bill. It's simple and no contribution is too small to help. Just look for the donation box on the return portion of your SAWS bill.

Are You Sure Your Lawn Needs Watering?

Take the Guesswork Out of Irrigation with SIP

The amount of water your lawn needs is probably less than you think. But exactly how much water is needed to keep your grass healthy? To find out, visit www.saws.org and follow the Seasonal Irrigation Program (SIP) advice.



The weekly SIP of water for your lawn is based on a concept called evapotranspiration – ET for short.

It's a way of measuring the amount of moisture a plant loses through its leaves and soil. It is calculated from weather data each day and adjusted for your type of grass and sun exposure.

The ET/SIP concept has been thoroughly tested in San Antonio and has been proven to save the average homeowner more than 5,000 gallons a month.

SIP advice is available each Saturday in the Home & Garden section of the San Antonio Express-News. Or, you can even register online at www.saws.org to receive a weekly e-mail or phone message with SIP advice personalized for your grass type, sun exposure and watering day.

The SIP program is made possible through a partnership between SAWS and the Texas Cooperative Extension.

Water News is published for customers of the San Antonio Water System. For more information regarding Water News, contact the Communications Department at (210) 233-3622.

Numbers to Know	
Business Office	704-SAWS (704-7297)
Customer Account Information	704-SAWS
Jobline	704-SAWS
T.D.D.	233-3153
CleanStream Hotline	212-5326
24-Hour Emergency	
Customer Service/	
Water Waste Reporting	704-SAWS
Visit our web site at www.saws.org	