



# Crighton Ridge

## Community Newsletter

October 2008

### Toxic Well Update

by Lisa Howard

The TCEQ has delayed the hearing date for the 4 Class I injection wells to be located on Crighton Road. The new hearing date is November 19, 2008. It is **IMPERATIVE** that Crighton Ridge Residents participate en-mass to show our strong opposition to these wells.

There will be two buses leaving Lone Star Convention Center at 9:00 am on the 19<sup>th</sup>. We should be returning just after dinner time.

We have the support of the Woodlands, Lone Star Underground Water Conservation Group, the County of Montgomery and the cities of Conroe, Shenandoah, Montgomery, Tomball, Oak Ridge, Willis, Spring and many other municipalities and communities. Julie Stewart, Attorney for Montgomery County is quoted as saying, "If these wells are approved, it will be against the express wishes of 400,000 Montgomery County residents."

It is easy to believe that with such a united front, TCEQ could not possibly approve these injection wells. However, they have already tentatively approved all 4 wells to begin operations *this year*, with a **30 year permit**.

The health risk is too great to risk. Experts in the fields of geology, hydrogeology, toxicology and engineering have all gone on record as saying the safety of the water supply cannot be assured if these wells are permitted. Geologists for Exxon, who owned and operated the field from the 1920's to the

*continued on back - see Toxic Well*

### ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 23

**QUORUM of 25% REQUIRED**

**Drainage Presentation Planned**

The annual meeting of the Crighton Ridge Homeowners Association will take place on Thursday, October 23, at 7 p.m., at the River Plantation Country Club. You should already have received your notification and ballot by mail. If you have not received your ballot, please contact ACMI (866-380-2292).

In order for business to be conducted, at least 25% of the homeowners must be present, or must have sent in a proxy ballot received by ACMI no later than 5 pm, Wednesday, October 22. The first item on the agenda will be a count of proxies and those present. If less than 25% of the lots are represented, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled, requiring extra expense to the association.

One board member's term of office will be expiring at the end of this year, and an election for that position will be part of the agenda. Larry Knigge currently holds that position, and plans to run for re-election. Any Crighton Ridge homeowner who wishes to run for the office of board member should contact ACMI to declare his or her candidacy. Candidates should be prepared to give a short talk at the meeting, to present themselves to the voters.

Other items on the agenda will include a financial report and an overview of the past year's progress. Copies of next year's budget are included in this publication. (See page 3) In addition, Dodson and Associates will make a presentation analyzing the drainage situation in our neighborhood.

At the meeting, the board will be open to hear suggestions from residents for items to be addressed as special projects during the coming year. All suggestions should be submitted in writing for accurate representation in the minutes, preferably in advance.

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### What HAS your Board been doing?

Your Homeowners Association Board consists of three members: John Dale, Larry Knigge, and Wayne Pyle. Some of the responsibilities they undertake include: direction and oversight of the management company, deed restriction decisions and architectural review of property improvements.

Since our last annual meeting, the Board has also taken the following actions:

- Replaced the cedar split rail fence around the park and removed broken down fence along Crighton Road.
- Designed and implemented a new neighborhood website, [www.crightonridge.org](http://www.crightonridge.org).
- Instituted regular trash and debris pick-up along Crighton and Kidd Road.
- Authorized a drainage study, to be presented at annual meeting.
- Represented Crighton Ridge at a meeting about future widening of Crighton Road, which is projected to begin around 2010.
- Executed new 3 year garbage contract, with only a 5% increase.

# Interest Groups

Do you have an interest group you would like to see get started? It won't take much to find others with your interest – call Judy Weidner and let's get the ball rolling!

**Book Club:** A women's book club meets the third or fourth Thursday evening of the month at 7 p.m. Discussions range from the sublime to the ridiculous! Call Renee Vandivere if you love to read.

**Bunco Group:** Bunco is a fun, fast paced, Yatzee-type game that meets one night a month. Sorry, ladies only, you guys will have to start your own group! If you want to know what all the hilarity is about, call Carrie Semrad.

**Dining Out Group:** Members meet monthly on the third Saturday night at the home of the host/hostess for drinks and socializing. We then go to a pre-designated restaurant for dinner. Some months the restaurants are casual and some more upscale. For more information, call Karla Riddick.

**Neighborhood Watch:** Our original planning committee of Neighborhood Watch has dwindled as people have moved or felt that they couldn't continue, so we're trying to reorganize this committee again. If you are/were interested in helping or continuing to be a block captain for a small number of houses in section 1, 2 or 3 please contact Meg Mendeck and let her know. We want to get this program going again, since it is a very effective way to make our community safer. Thank-you for your prompt response and remember it takes all of us to make this program successful, not just a hand full. Stickers for your cars are also available through Meg.

**Stitchery, Crafts, Gardening & Antiques:** The Crighton Crafters (the "Thursday" ladies) meet weekly, usually on a Thursday, to share ideas and a cup of coffee, learn new skills, take field trips or go out to lunch, and have a great time! Come join us. Call Judy Weidner at to find out where we'll be meeting next.

**Running, jogging, walking:** Approximate distances in Section 3 are: Big loop (Willow Springs from Canyon Crest in Section 2 to Crighton Crossing, then back to Canyon Crest) - 1.1 miles; Small loop (Glade Meadow from Crighton Crossing, and Royal Ridge back to Crighton Crossing) - .5 miles; Argonne Stone from Canyon Crest to Willow Springs - .4 miles; Autumn Mist Lane (both cul-de-sacs) - .45 miles. The Section 2 main loop (Summerdale to Meadow Creek to Sunset Park to Canyon Crest) - 1.1 miles. Cul-de-sacs (Chappel Wood, Brookfield, Fallsbrook) double that mileage to about 2.2 miles. The Section 1 main loop (Crighton Ridge Drive to Ridgewater Way to Sunset Heights to Skyline) – 1 mile. With cul-de-sacs (Skycrest, Overlook, the end of Sunset Heights, Headland Ct) - 2.1 miles.

**WANTED: GARDENERS!** If you would be interested in forming a gardening group or in writing gardening tips for the newsletter, please contact Judy Weidner.

## BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR!

### Control your animals.

Don't let them run loose or "dirty" another's yard.

### Slow down!

School has started again - watch out for kids who are waiting for or leaving the bus. Speed limits of 25 protect children and pets.

### Share the space.

Leave room for others to park behind you at mailboxes.

### Keep it clean.

Enjoy the common areas, but be sure to pick up all your trash before you go home.

### Noise pollutes, too.

Be considerate with yard work, construction, parties & other noisy activities.

### Smile.

It's great to have you as a neighbor!

## DID YOU KNOW?

Crighton Ridge has a website full of useful information!

Go to [www.crightonridge.org](http://www.crightonridge.org) to find the following:

- Deed Restrictions
- Bylaws
- ARC forms
- Contact information for ACMI
- Contact information for Board members
- Pictures of Board members
- Pictures of neighborhood activities
- Maps of the subdivision
- FAQ and answers

and a wealth of other information!

**BUDGET**

	Year to Date	2008	2009
	Actual, \$	Budget, \$	Budget, \$

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>August 2008</b>		<b>\$550/yr</b>
Prior Year Assessments	115	1,000	1,000
Assessments In 08	159,094	159,980	160,622
Interest Income	3,055	6,000	4,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>162,264</b>	<b>166,980</b>	<b>165,622</b>

**EXPENSES****Administration**

Basic Mgt. Services	9,194	15,000	15,000
Collections/Legal	(320)	2,500	2,500
Bank Charges	2	300	300
Audit	0	3,000	0
Other Admin.	185	250	250
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>9,061</b>	<b>21,050</b>	<b>18,050</b>

**Association Activities**

Newsletter/Web site	1,300	2,000	2,000
Social Events	47	1,000	300
Holiday Decorations	300	1,000	400
Homeowners/Board Meetings	0	500	500
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>3,200</b>

**Utilities**

Streetlights	6,642	11,000	12,500
Electricity-Other	3,968	7,000	7,500
Water-Sewer	13,772	16,500	16,500
Trash Collection	28,677	45,000	45,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>53,059</b>	<b>79,500</b>	<b>81,500</b>

**Maintenance**

Landscape Contract	20,330	30,000	30,000
Landscape-Extras	5,206	3,000	7,000
Irrigation Repairs	1,044	1,880	1,880
Lake Maint.	4,262	7,500	7,500
Lake Pump/Equipment	0	1,500	1,500
Pest Control	700	1,500	1,500
Playground Equipment	2,873	4,500	4,500
Lighting	500	1,500	1,442
Signs-Message Centers	1,452	0	0
Other/Fencing	11,958	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>48,325</b>	<b>51,380</b>	<b>55,322</b>

**Other Expenses**

Insurance	6,803	6,700	7,000
Taxes	0	500	200
Tax Related	175	350	350
Contingency/Projects	0	3,000	0
Reserve	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,978</b>	<b>10,550</b>	<b>7,550</b>

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>119,070</b>	<b>166,980</b>	<b>165,622</b>
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<b>NET</b>	<b>\$43,194</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
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**THE WASTELAND**

by Judy Weidner

Imagine hauling that cumbersome push mower out to the ditch in front of your house, the one that is too steep to accommodate the riding mower. That's bad enough, but now you're out in front, and before you can even start the job, you have to clean up after someone else's pet, or worse, you get a face full of filth from a "deposit" that you missed. The worst part? You don't even own a dog! This sad scenario has become all too common for some homeowners.

Let's read "The Montgomery County Animal Restraint Ordinance." Section L states, "Public Nuisance' shall describe any animal that," paragraph number 2: "soils, defiles or defecates on a public walk or recreation area and the owner does not immediately remove such waste." While we don't have sidewalks in our neighborhood, the border of the yard closest to the street is considered a public area. Homeowners are responsible for maintenance of this area, but there are rules and restrictions for its use.

The good news is that there are a number of products to help dog owners keep up with their animals. Petco has a large variety of scoopers and bags. There is even a snazzy little pouch you can attach to your leash to hold the bags, so you won't have to carry them separately. Homeowners without pets can consider using various repellents on their yards and around their trash cans, although labels on the can warn that these chemicals can be hazardous, and not nearly as effective as training the dog properly.

So dog lovers, how about it? Can you help us out? If you don't want to bother with bags and such, just make sure your animal "does his business" on your property before you continue your walk. Your neighbors will appreciate your thoughtfulness and good manners.

*Crighton Ridge**Community Newsletter*

*published for residents of the  
Crighton Ridge subdivision*

*Please send comments, questions, &  
submissions to  
Judy Weidner*

## HURRICANE STORIES: IT'S AN ILL WIND . . .

by Lisa Howard

Sometimes, in our busy lives, it takes a calamity to remind us what is really important. Hurricane Ike reminded me how great all of our neighbors are and how lucky I am to live in Crighton Ridge.

After Ike finally blew through our neighborhood, Carson and I went out to tour our neighborhood. What a disaster. Trees blocked the entrance at Crighton Road. Sunset Heights was blocked by huge trees at both corners, parts of Section 2 were severely flooded and several good neighbors had trees on their roofs.

Before it quit raining and with the wind still gusting, one of our neighbors, Jesse Pacheco, was out with his two sons and chain saws clearing the streets. They cleared all of Crighton Road as well as the streets in our neighborhood. If you are grateful that we had our power restored in the first week after Ike, thank Jesse. Because of him and his boys, the power crews did not have to clear our roads before power could be restored.

Neighbor Bob Wilson and his wife, Nancy, took their two young children to Austin before Ike. After Ike, on Sunday, he bought as many generators as his van could hold and drove from Austin to Crighton Ridge, passing them out to his neighbors. He drove back and forth every day purchasing and delivering generators until Wednesday. He bought generators for Crighton Ridge neighbors he had never met. He hauled gas and gas cans, food, batteries and any provisions he could fit into the van. He did it just because he is a good neighbor.

In Section 1, the septic systems are power dependent. More than three or four days without power, and Section 1 has a bio-hazardous waste problem.

Neighbor Pete Rasmussen figured out he could wire a portable generator to the septic system and power it temporarily. He went from home to home in Section 1 operating the septic systems. He finally ran out of gas and was unable to even run his own refrigerator. Another neighbor brought Pete five gallons of gas, and Pete used it to power the septic systems for several other neighbors. Judy Weidner and her husband were lugging their generator

from house to house in Section 1 to power the septic systems as well.

Neighbors routinely spread the word about which gas stations were open or where to get food and water, and in many cases when they bought supplies for themselves, they brought back "extra" to share with those who could not get out because they were handling other problems at home.

These are just a few of the stories of how our community and neighbors came together after Ike. There are many more I could tell of neighbors helping neighbors pull trees off roofs, or cooking food on their gas cooktops or grills for those who needed to empty their freezers or whose food supplies had run out.

While I won't go so far as to say I am grateful for Hurricane Ike...I am thankful that I was reminded what great neighbors we have in Crighton Ridge.

Crighton Ridge is again a part of civilization. We have power; we have water; we have phone service and internet access. We now appreciate the simple pleasures of turning on a lamp or opening a refrigerator. We are also proud and glad to be part of a community that pulls together to help each other in a crisis.

## TOXIC WELL

- continued from front

1990's, say this site contains many, many faults, which could change the underground environs at any time.

Research in other Texas counties showed property values fell as much as 50% after Class I injection wells began operations. If you think you can't afford to take the day off of work to attend the hearing on November 19<sup>th</sup>, evaluate what a 50% home devaluation could cost if you don't attend.

To reserve your seat, call Jennifer Real at 936-499-7173. A \$10.00 donation is requested to help with bus costs. For more information go to [www.stopthetoxicwells.com](http://www.stopthetoxicwells.com).

### HOA Meeting Agenda:

1. Establish Quorum
2. Elect Board member
3. Financial Status & Budget
4. Dodson & Assoc. Drainage Presentation
5. Other business

## WATER RATE PROTEST UPDATE

In 2003, Philadelphia Suburban water company acquired 100% of the stock of Aquasource, Inc., the water provider for Crighton Ridge. Under the new owner, Aquasource was renamed Aqua Texas. On May 14, 2004, Aqua Texas submitted an application to raise its rates. Two options for the increased rates were proposed – a fixed rate increase, and a phased rate increase over 4 years. The phased rate increase raised rates at a slower rate but ended up at a higher rate than the fixed rate increase. Customers were not actually given a choice; the phased rate option was implemented in July of 2004. Within 60 days, at least 10 percent of Aqua Texas customers filed protests. Crighton Ridge customers were part of that protest.

Since that time, Crighton Ridge, in association with other homeowners associations in the SE and SW region, have battled with Aqua Texas in an effort to reduce the proposed water rate. During the last year, rates did not rise as it became evident that the entire rate increase would not be allowed, and that a phased rate would be denied in favor of a fixed rate.

The final decision has finally been rendered, and final rates and surcharges will begin in January of 2009. While it was brought out in the hearings that Aqua Texas' application had not been filed properly, and they had not followed the guidelines set out by Texas water code in determining the regions and rates, the decision of the Commissioners, as advised by TCEQ, was that the company had followed appropriate business policies and the regions and rates had been brought into substantial compliance to code at this time.

The monthly minimum water rate charge, beginning in January, will be \$20.84 (for 5/8" meter size). Minimum charge for sewer will be \$63.80. Both these charges include 0 gallons, and the gallonage cost will be \$2.95 per 1000 gallons. In addition, Aqua Texas has been allowed surcharges to recover its rate case expenses (\$2,751,170.50) and its deferred expenses (\$10,946,00.00). The surcharges (\$2.50 and \$9.94 per month, respectively) are to be collected for 24 months or until the total expenses are collected, whichever comes first. Crighton Ridge is investigating joining with the SE and SW regions to appeal collection of deferred expenses, since those expenses appear to be part of the phased rate which was denied.