



MARY ESTHER CITY REVIEW

www.cityofmaryesther.com

December 2005

Comments or questions? Call 243-3566.

CITY ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The Transportation Committee extends their invitation for interested individuals who would like to serve on the Committee. The Transportation Committee addresses issues involving the City of Mary Esther roadways, speeding, speed bumps, roadway signage, etc. The Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month. Interested parties please attend the next meeting Tuesday, January 10, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of Mary Esther Council Chambers or for more information call the Deputy City Clerk at 243-3566 ext. 11.

WATER DEPARTMENT

The City of Mary Esther is seeking your cooperation in eliminating sewer line backups caused by household cooking grease.

The City is working with food establishments in a cooperative effort to reduce the amount of fats, oils and greases entering the City's sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant.

But many of the sewer line blockages in the City are not located in areas where there are food establishments but are caused by grease entering the system from single family residences. These blockages can be at the minimum a nuisance but can lead to sewage spills into our environmentally sensitive waterways.

We as a community are responsible for our City's infrastructure and our environment. It will take all the citizens of Mary Esther to maintain our quality of life.

Please join us in our effort to protect our environment and to maintain our City sewer lines and wastewater treatment plant. Please find listed some tips on how you can contribute to this effort.

Most sewer backups are preventable. Many blockages occur in your sewer line between your home and the City's

sewer line. No Greasy Stuff. Do not pour kitchen grease, fat, and oil down the drain. Running hot water afterward will not prevent problems.

Grease collects in the sewer pipes, which can cause wastewater to flow back into your home.

Correctly dispose of grease/oil/fat. Let it cool. Pour into a container.

Wipe solidified grease from pans and utensils and place in your trash.

Dispose of cooled solidified grease, fat, or oil into your trash. Take cooled liquid vegetable or peanut oils to our Household Hazardous Waste Facility (Okaloosa County) Don't Flush Trash Items such as diapers, paper towels, personal hygiene products, and Q-tips often contribute to sewer blockages.

Dispose of these materials in your trash. Never use the toilet as a wastebasket! **Please remind your family and friends.**

Questions? Please contact us at (850) 243-3566 X 21

From all the associates of OMI who operate and maintain the City's Water and Wastewater Treatment Systems we would like take this opportunity to wish all of you a safe and Happy Holiday Season!

MAINTENANCE

We continue to clean and sweep the curbs and cutters. We are working FRDAP Grants for South Bryn Mawr and Oak Tree Nature Park. And the City Pier has finally been reconstructed and is usable.

"Storm Water"...What is it and where does it go?

Storm water is rainwater that washes through our property and streets, taking with it any debris that may be in its path. The mixture of rain, debris, oil and waste is known as "runoff". In the past municipalities, as well as other public and private agencies, worked to get storm water off the roads as quickly as possible to avoid flooding. Today these same agencies are working to not only

reduce and often eliminate flooding, but to prevent pollution by the elements picked up by runoff. When you pass a storm inlet, do you know where the water goes? Do you think it is channeled to a treatment plant the way sewage is? Think again! Up north, there may still be some existing combined sewer systems, where both sewage and storm water are channeled to the local sewage treatment plant. Here in Florida, we do not have combined systems. Sewage treatment costs money, and treating large amounts of added storm water would be very expensive. The next time you pass an inlet, remember that it most likely discharges into a body of water that may be near where you live, swim or fish! Do not add to the pollution problem by pouring anything down the storm drain, and remember that the drain is for storm water only! Learn more about storm water, and support your storm water assessment program. This program is working for all of us and will enable our future generations to enjoy cleaner water. Please visit www.florida-stormwater.org for some great and helpful information.

Community Development Department/Code Compliance/ Planning and Zoning Division

Using Water Efficiently: Ideas for Residences

Efficient water use can have major environmental, public health, and economic benefits by helping to improve water quality, maintain aquatic ecosystems, and protect drinking water resources. Efficient use of water, through behavioral, operational, or equipment changes, if practiced broadly can help mitigate the effects of drought. Efficiency measures can also save the homeowner money on their water and energy bills. This list of measures is not meant to be comprehensive, but

rather a starting point. Other sources of information on water efficiency are available through EPA web site (<http://www.epa.gov/OWM/genwave.htm>), and innumerable other sources, some of which may be accessed through the EPA web site, or through WaterWiser, The Water Efficiency Clearinghouse

<http://www.waterwiser.org>).

Bathroom — where over half of all water use inside a house takes place: Do not let the water run while shaving or brushing teeth. Take short showers instead of tub baths. Turn off the water while soaping or shampooing. If you must use a tub, close the drain before turning on the water and fill the tub only half full. Bathe small children together. Never use your toilet as a waste basket. **Kitchen and Laundry** — simple practices that save a lot of water: Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cool. Wash fruits and vegetables in a basin. Use a vegetable brush. Do not use water to defrost frozen foods; thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Scrape, rather than rinse, dishes before loading into the dishwasher; wash only full loads. Add food wastes to your compost pile instead of using the garbage disposal. Wash only full loads of laundry or use the appropriate water level or load size selection on the washing machine.

Equipment — homes with high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and appliances save about 30% of indoor water use and yield substantial savings on water sewer, and energy bills:

Consider purchasing high-efficiency toilets, or place a plastic container filled with water in the tank of your conventional toilet. Be sure it does not interfere with operation of the toilet's flush mechanisms. Install low-flow faucet aerators and showerheads. Consider purchasing a high efficiency washing machine which can save over 50% in laundry water and energy use. Repair all leaks. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons per day. To detect leaks in the toilet, add food coloring to the tank water. If the colored water appears in the bowl, the toilet is

leaking. Toilet repair advice is available at www.toiletology.com/index.shtml. **Landscape Irrigation** — depending on climate, up to 75% of a home's total water use during the growing season is for outdoor purposes. (During drought conditions outdoor watering restrictions may be imposed, so some of the following tips will not apply.): Detect and repair all leaks in irrigation system. Use properly treated wastewater for irrigation where available. Water the lawn or garden during the coolest part of the day (early morning is best). Do not water on windy days. Water trees and shrubs, which have deep root systems, require longer and less frequent watering than shallow-rooted plants that require smaller amounts of water more often. Check with the local extension service for advice on watering needs in your area. Set sprinklers to water the lawn or garden only — not the street or sidewalk. Use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation systems for trees and shrubs. Install moisture sensors on sprinkler systems. Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth. Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage movement of water to the root zone. Raise your lawn mower cutting height — longer grass blades help shade each other, reduce evaporation, and inhibit weed growth. Minimize or eliminate fertilizing, which promotes new growth needing additional watering. When outdoor use of city or well water is restricted during a drought, use the water from the air conditioning condenser, dehumidifier, bath, or sink on plants or the garden. Don't use water that contains bleach, automatic-dishwashing detergent or fabric softener.

Other Outdoor Uses: Sweep driveways, sidewalks and steps rather than hosing off. Wash the car with water from a bucket, or consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water. When using a hose, control the flow with an automatic shut-off nozzle. Avoid purchasing recreational water toys which require a constant stream of water. Consider

purchasing a new water-saving swimming pool filter. Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation when pool is not being used. Do not install or use ornamental water features unless they recycle the water. Do not operate during a drought.

LIBRARY NEWS

The Mary Esther Library and Fort Walton Beach Library are partnering to bring you a very special event. Join us at the FWB Library on Saturday, January 14th at 2:00 for a celebration of Ben Franklin's 300th birthday. Don't be surprised if "Ben" himself shows up to have a little fun with the guests!

The Library expansion plans are coming along nicely. Get in on the action and sign up with the Friends of the Mary Esther Library and help with fundraising events! The next meeting will be January 17th at 6:30. Meetings will alternate monthly from day to evening times to give interested folks an opportunity to attend.

If you haven't been in your library lately, drop in and check out the latest in books, audios, videos, newspapers and our updated selection of magazines. Visit our special collections—a growing selection of the latest books for children, large print books, instructional materials, homeschool help, foreign language and much, much more. Remember, the Mary Esther Public Library is a member of the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative and if we don't have what you need, we'll be happy to request it from another member library.

You can visit the Library at 100 Hollywood Blvd, West in Mary Esther, or call 243-5731 for information.

Regular Meetings

Last Mon.	7 p.m.	Workshop
First Mon.	7 p.m.	Legislative
Last Wed.	5:30	OTNPMAC
First Tues.	5:30	Parks & Rec.
Third Mon.	5:30	Code Enforc.
Second Tue.	6 p.m.	Trans. Cmt.

Check online for latest postings at <http://calendar.yahoo.com/cityofmaryesther>