



WCID No. 17 Announces Updates to the Apache shores and River Ridge Service Fees

On September 19, 2024 Travis County Water Control and Improvement District (WCID) No. 17 approved its Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget. As part of this process, the Out of District, Capacity Buy-In, and Debt Service fees were reviewed.

The Capacity Buy-In and Debt Service fees are collected to repay the debt the District incurred on the behalf of the Apache Shores and River Ridge service areas at the time the District took over their respective water systems. The Capacity Buy-In fee was created to repay the debt that was incurred due to paying the District Water system capacity impact fees for all existing homes at the time the fee was created. This fee is only applicable to homes that were built prior to March 20, 1997, in Apache Shores, or January 1, 2004, in River Ridge.

The Debt Service fee was created to repay the debt that was incurred from completed improvements made to these service areas. These improvements were necessary to meet the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality minimum standards and to enable WCID No. 17 to service these areas. This fee applies to every property receiving water service within the service area.

The Out of District fee is a separate fee set by the WCID No. 17 Board of Directors, which is designed to pay each Service Area's fair share of District operations as well as to set aside capital improvement funds to pay for needed improvements within the service areas. Neither Apache Shores nor River Ridge has elected to join the District and therefore do not pay District taxes as do the other neighborhoods in the WCID No. 17 service area.

Both Apache Shores and River Ridge contain a significant number of water line improvements that are necessary to ensure that services can be reliably provided while ensuring fire flow needs can be met throughout the service area. These line improvements, in many cases, date back to the original community water system lines that are now in need of being replaced and upgraded.

Unfortunately, the cost of replacing these lines has risen significantly over the years. Although the Board of Directors has been steadily increasing the Out-of-District fee over the past five years, the number of lines needing replacement remains substantial. Due to historically low fees and escalating construction costs, the funds set aside for these projects have only allowed the District to complete a few of the necessary line replacements.

To address this, more funds are needed to expedite these repairs. WCID No. 17 will work with both communities to explore options for accelerating the necessary improvements. In the meantime, the Board of Directors has decided to increase the Out-of-District fee to \$80 per month effective January 1, 2025.