**Top Questions...**

Q. What are the fees that show up on my water bill?
A. The NHCRWA “fee” is charged to the MUDs/Well Owners within the Authority’s boundaries based on the amount of groundwater pumped by their wells, and/or the amount of surface water they receive from the NHCRWA. The MUDs charge their individual customers for the water they use. The more water a customer uses, the higher the fee will be.

Q. How often does the Authority increase the fee?
A. Fee increases are imposed only as necessary. Without taxing authority, funding for construction projects must come from pumpage fees and water sales. There will be more rate increases in the future; however, the Authority is committed to keeping the price as low as possible...for as long as possible.

Q. What are the Authority’s current ground and surface water fees?
A. As of January 1, 2014, the current rates are:
- $1.75 per 1,000 gallons for groundwater.
- $2.20 per 1,000 gallons for surface water.

Q. When is the next increase and how much will it be?
A. The next increase – which will go into effect on April 1, 2014 – is $0.25 per 1,000 gallons. The new rates will be:
- $2.00/1000 gallons for groundwater, and
- $2.45/1000 gallons for surface water.

**Looking Forward...**

Q. Will we have enough water to be able to meet the needs of a growing population and to sustain economic growth and development for future generations?
A. The answer is a cautiously optimistic “Yes”...if we all make a commitment to use water as efficiently as possible and to end wasteful practices such as excessive residential turf irrigation. The recent drought provided compelling testimony that we cannot take our finite water supplies for granted. The Texas Water Development Board’s state water plan (WATER FOR TEXAS 2012) calls for 34% of our water supply to come from water conservation and reuse by 2060, when the population of Texas is expected to nearly double. If we have any chance of achieving that goal, the commitment to stop wasting water has to start today.

NHCRWA is a proud partner in the Save Water Texas Coalition. Please join us in this critical effort by visiting www.SaveWaterTexas.org. Learn how to start saving water – and money -- today!
Long before WATER became the global issue that it is today, the state of Texas began taking concerted measures to preserve and protect this finite natural resource. As far back as the 1950s and ‘60s, experts were studying the impact of excessive withdrawals of groundwater and the occurrence of subsidence.

The Gulf Coast Aquifers – the source we traditionally relied upon for our drinking water -- are made up of many layers of clay, rocks and sand. Over geologic time, these layers naturally compacted. Sadly, the area’s steadily increasing population and voracious demand for water sped up this natural process. Decades of aggressive groundwater pumping not only resulted in a decline of the aquifers, but also triggered land-surface elevation loss, or what is called subsidence.

The Harris-Galveston Subsidence District (HGSD) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1974, and soon began to develop and implement its first Groundwater Regulatory Plan. The District’s success in Galveston County in reigning in the advance of subsidence by conversion to surface water provided the impetus to extend similar groundwater reduction mandates into north and west Harris County, where increasing levels of subsidence had also been measured.

The North Harris County Regional Water Authority was created by the 76th Texas Legislature to represent the municipal utility districts (MUDs) within its boundaries in complying with the HGSD’s 1999 Plan mandates.

The new Authority successfully negotiated a 40-year water supply contract with the City of Houston in 2003. The Authority’s Groundwater Reduction Plan (GRP) was approved and accepted by the HGSD, and design and construction of the necessary transmission lines and facilities began.

Thanks to cooperation by the many MUDs within the Authority’s boundaries – and the imposition of pumpage fees that are passed through to all water users – the groundwater reduction goals of the initial 2010 mandate have been met. The challenge continues, however, with some of the biggest hurdles still ahead.

It will take an estimated one billion plus dollars to pay the Authority’s share of projects to meet the next (2025) conversion deadline. The Luce Bayou Project – to transfer water from the Trinity River to Lake Houston to help meet increasing demand – is now underway. The West Harris and Central Harris County Regional Water Authorities, the City of Houston, and the North Fort Bend Water Authority are the Authority’s partners in this project.

In addition to the cost of purchasing the surface water from the City of Houston, there are shared transmission, operations and maintenance expenses to be paid. Some routine water facility expenses – chemicals and energy, for example – have spiraled in recent years. All of these factors – coupled with the cost of constructing the 2025 system – will impact the cost of water.

The Authority is committed to efficient and conservative management of financial resources to minimize future cost increases as much as possible.