



## Quality Water = Quality Life

Planet Earth is called the “Blue Planet” because of all of the water that is on the planet. About 70 percent of the planet is covered with water; however only about one percent of this water is available for human use and consumption. The remaining water is frozen, located in the oceans, or polluted to the point where it is not safe to use or drink. Did you know that the United Nations estimates that more people die each year from polluted water than war, pestilence, or any other cause?

So what does Dallas do to address water quality? Dallas, like every other large community in Texas, is required to make sure that the water in our creeks and waterways meets certain water quality standards. These standards are outlined in the Texas Water Code, and form the foundation of all water pollution control programs. City employees in the Stormwater Management section and the Dallas Water Utilities Department perform regular sampling of the Trinity River, and the tributaries to the Trinity River to assess how well we are doing with respect to meeting these water quality standards. Sampling is performed during dry weather to make sure that what is in the storm drain is water and not something that should not go into the storm drains. Sampling is also performed when it rains, as a “wet weather event”. When it rains, the stormwater runoff washes the watershed, and carries whatever trash and pollutants are present into our creeks and rivers. So by sampling the stormwater runoff when it rains, it provides a “worse-case scenario” with respect to overall water quality, and the levels of pollutants that are entering the drainage system.

What this sampling tells us is that during low flow and dry weather periods, the water quality in our streams and creeks is generally good. In addition, the sampling also shows a general improvement for most parameters over the last 10 years. However, ongoing monitoring during storm events indicates that during periods of higher flow, the creeks, channels and the Trinity River in Dallas can sometimes carry a heavier load of pollutants. So, there may be times during these higher flow periods, when the water quality does not meet these standards. Bacteria are currently a concern in many of our water bodies; however, scientists have found that only a very small percentage of the identified bacteria are associated with human waste. Identified sources include birds, dogs, farm animals, and other wildlife; so diligently addressing proper disposal of pet waste becomes increasingly more important.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is currently establishing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Upper Trinity River and larger tributaries like the West Fork Trinity River that set forth how much improvement is necessary so that these water bodies meet these criteria year-round. TMDLs are calculated as the sum of the estimated waste loads from runoff from industries, factories, treatment plants, and everyday stormwater discharges, along with a margin of safety.

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## My Connection with the Trinity River: The Phil Irwin Story

Phil Erwin has been the Chief Arborist for the City of Dallas for a number of years. He works closely with the public and private sectors, keeping the City of Dallas and the Trinity River connected with native habitat and plant life.



*Phil Irwin*

**What is your connection to the Trinity River?**

As the Chief Arborist, my sole responsibility for the Trinity River is the protection of City trees surrounding it and within the Great Trinity Forest.

**What do you think of when you hear someone say, “the Trinity River?”**

My first instinct is to imagine the natural beauty of the forest that surrounds the river in southern Dallas. Although we continue to try to tame this Texas waterway, the forest is a reminder that in the end, nature always reclaims its interest from us.

**In your experience, what are people’s reactions to spending part of their day on the Trinity River?**

For many, the river and forest initially conjures up fear of the unknown and of the unpredictable. In time, there is a sense of peacefulness in the nature that encompasses them. If people have actually spent time on the river by canoe, they are in admiration of the natural beauty and tranquility it offers.

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## Quality Water *Cont. from page 1*

The City of Dallas is working with the other cities in north Texas, along with the North Central Texas Council of Governments to develop a plan to improve the water quality in the Upper Trinity River, the Lower West Fork Trinity River, Cottonwood Branch, and Grapevine Creek. This will be a one to two year process that involves building consensus with all of the stakeholders in these watersheds.

# Tips & Drops

## Upcoming Events

### April

- 7-10** Dallas Auto Show  
<http://www.dallasautoshow.org/>
- 15-16** Dallas Community Outreach Conference  
Dallas Convention Center  
[www.dallascommunityoutreach.com](http://www.dallascommunityoutreach.com)
- 16** Strut Your Mutt  
<http://www.strutyourmutt.info>
- 17** Dog Bowl at the Cotton Bowl  
<http://www.fairpark.org>  
Oak Cliff Earth Day Celebration  
Founders Park
- 20** Stormwater Rules & Regs: Industrial Workshop  
@ City of Dallas Eco Park  
<http://www.wheredoesitgo.com/business-industries.html>
- 21-22** Earth Day Celebration  
Trinity River Audubon Center
- 22-23** Earth Day  
<http://www.epa.gov>
- 30-5/1** Dallas Dog & Disc Regional Tournament  
Exall Park *all day*

### May

- 14** The Trinity River Wind Festival  
Trammel Crow Park  
12 noon - 6 p.m.  
<http://www.greendallas.net>
- 25** Stormwater Rules & Regs: Construction Workshop  
@ City of Dallas Eco Park  
<http://www.wheredoesitgo.com/business-industries.html>

### June

- 4** Water Wise Landscape Tours  
<http://www.savedallaswater.com>

If you are interested in participating, more information on these efforts can be found at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/implementation/water/tmdl/66-trinitybacteria.html>

The City is also constructing wetlands and other improvements to help clean up the stormwater using natural filtration and other biological treatment methods. In the meantime, you should know that everything you throw...goes with the flow. Please do your part to help the Trinity River stay healthy year-round!

*For more information you can contact Stormwater Management at 214-948-4022 or [Stormwater@dallascityhall.com](mailto:Stormwater@dallascityhall.com).*

## Two Great Parks

Deep Ellum has two great parks, Bark Park Central and Pillar Park. Bark Park Central (intersection of Good Latimer Expressway and Commerce Street) is a place to take your dogs to run free and socialize with other dogs. While at the park, remember to pick up pet waste with a plastic bag and place it in a trash can. Proper disposal will prevent bacteria, viruses, and parasites in pet waste from polluting stormwater. Polluted stormwater flows onto the street, into the nearest storm drain inlet, and then flows through underground pipes until it discharges into the nearest water body. Since stormwater is not treated, any contaminated stormwater will eventually end up in our local creeks, lakes, and the Trinity River.

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*Tree Pillars - Group effort by Deep Ellum artists group*

## Phil Irwin Story *Cont. from page 1*

How have you seen the Trinity River change during your time on it?

The Trinity River resists time, but the efforts of containment are limited by it. We are continually reminded with each severe storm of the importance of nature's demand for diligence in sustainable management of our river protection system and the forest around it. New recreational uses like the Trinity River Audubon Center and miles of new and planned trails are bringing people together with the river, the forest, and the wildlife in greater frequency. With greater access comes greater demands for proper management of these resources to protect our human visitors.

What do you want people to know about the Trinity River?

The Trinity River is a long river with great natural beauty found in places rarely seen by the common traveler. The river and its tributaries through Dallas are a part of a functioning living system that works to protect water quality, sustain wildlife, and enhance our quality of life. The Great Trinity Forest surrounding the river is an important part of the quality of the river system in this region for wildlife and public recreation and it should be properly managed alongside the rest of our great urban forest infrastructure.

What do you want the citizens of Dallas and North Central Texas to know about the Trinity River?

The Trinity River is a place of natural beauty that has only been partially altered to protect our developments. The Great Trinity Forest that surrounds the river can be an attraction of great beauty and importance for generations to come if given proper management and care. The forest and the river function together as a giver of life for the community's wildlife. Considerations for how the wildlife and human populations interact as we gather at the river will become more important to us over time as we attempt to share this vast woodland for competing purposes. Management of this river and the forest resources it sustains is critical for it to become widely accepted for the safe and enjoyable recreational potentials within it.

*This is the fourth in a series of articles that features Dallasites and their connections to the Trinity River. If you or someone you know wants to be considered as an interview subject in this series, contact us at 214.948.4022 or email [stormwater@dallascityhall.com](mailto:stormwater@dallascityhall.com).*

# JUST FOR KIDS. . . big and small



Ask me, Trinity Trudy!

Hey Trinity Trudy, can pet waste be used to fertilize a yard?



No, pet waste is not a fertilizer. There are a large number of bacteria and viruses that can be found in pet waste that can be very harmful to humans, other pets, and even me, Trinity Trudy. As the pet waste breaks down the bacteria and viruses spread to the surrounding areas where they continue to thrive. Pet waste also has a high concentration of nitrogen. While nitrogen is in most fertilizers, too much nitrogen can harm vegetation.

To ensure that the bacteria and viruses in pet waste do not pollute our waterways or make us sick, we should dispose of our pet waste properly. There are a couple of ways to dispose of pet waste. You can throw the pet waste into the trash can or flush the pet waste down the toilet. If you flush the pet waste in the toilet, be sure not to flush the bag the waste was in. All pet waste on public or private property should be properly disposed of to help prevent the spread of disease and pollution.

**DO NOT LEAVE IT ON THE LAWN!**

If you have a stormwater question for Trinity Trudy, email her at [stormwater@dallascityhall.com](mailto:stormwater@dallascityhall.com). Look for her responses in future issues of "Inside the Inlet."

## Stormwater Sudoku

Fill out the grid so that each symbol and its correlatiing numbe appears one time in each row, column, and box. Once you have completed the puzzle check the symbols/numbers to make sure that there is only one of each in the row, column, and 3x3 box. If there is one symbol/number in each row, column, and 3x3 box, you have solved the puzzle correctly.




## Two Great Parks *Cont. from page 2*

Adjacent to the dog park is the newly created Pillar Park. Pillar Park was created as part of the Deep Ellum Beautification Project. The Deep Ellum Foundation had local mural artists add artwork to 30 of the TXDOT highway columns under I-75 along Good Latimer Expressway, Canton Street, and Commerce Street. The artwork incorporates images that display musical, industrial, historical, artistic, and futuristic elements of Deep Ellum, as well as a special mural by the Dallas Police Department painted by a Dallas Police Officer. Make time to see these inspiring works during your next visit to Deep Ellum.



*Unknown Artist*

## Volunteer Spotlight: Southwest Airlines



Marking storm drain inlets is an important part of our stormwater management program. A permanent marker can remind citizens that stormwater is not treated, and the storm drain inlets are not trash cans.

The Southwest Airlines Environmental group took part in marking over 100 storm drains around Love Field airport.

We spoke with Lana Robinson, a member of SWA's Environmental team about participating in our Storm Drain Marking program.



### What was the motivation for the Environmental Services group at Southwest Airlines to mark storm drains?

Our department participates in volunteer projects each year and we had a goal for 2010 to participate in a volunteer project that was related to our line of work. The Storm Drain Marking program sponsored by the City of Dallas was perfect for our department.

### Why does Southwest Airlines care about preventing stormwater pollution in Dallas?

It is the right thing to do. SWA is a corporation that makes its home in the Dallas area and we all want to preserve the environment where we live and work. We educate our employees on the importance of proper maintenance of materials not only here, but at all our 69 locations nationwide. It is important to us to protect the integrity of the stormwater systems at our facilities throughout the country.

### What do you want our readers to know about Southwest Airlines and the Environmental Services group?

Southwest Airlines believes that giving back to our communities and protecting our environment are part of our responsibilities as a good corporate citizen. At Southwest, we are committed to being a good neighbor to the communities we serve and our department supports that commitment.

*Stormwater Management extends a big thank you to Southwest Airlines Environmental team for their participation in spreading our message.*

To inquire about marking storm drain inlets in your neighborhood, contact an Outreach team member at 214.948.4022 or email us at [stormwater@dallascityhall.com](mailto:stormwater@dallascityhall.com).

## Enforcement Activities

Stormwater Management conducts construction site inspections and offers education to site operators to...

- Promote stormwater compliance with the Clean Water Act
- Correct and modify behavior
- Enhance water quality

If after inspections and education, sites remain non-compliant, Stormwater's Enforcement team issues Notice of Violations (NOVs) and Citations. Outside complaints will also be filed by the City Attorney. These complaints have associated fines and penalties up to \$2000 per violation if the sites are not brought into compliance.

The adjacent table lists some of Stormwater's pending enforcement settlements.

*If you see any violations, please call 311.*

## Saying Good-Bye to a Member of Stormwater



Frances Ockles

On October 26th, Stormwater said good-bye to team member Frances Ockles. Frances began working for Stormwater Management as a Water Quality Specialist collecting water and bug samples. She then used these samples to determine the water quality of the sample area. In 2008, Frances accepted a promotion to the Outreach Team where she coordinated events, and the Used Oil, and Toxic Materials program. Frances was a large part of our Outreach Team and she will be greatly missed.

Frances made a lot of friends during her time here with Stormwater Management that she will miss. In Frances's sabbatical, she will enjoy spending time with her husband and the new addition to their family.

## Enforcement Results

Projects	Violations	Fines
Construction - Mountain Creek Plkwy	• Best Management Practices • Erosion Control • Sediment Discharge	Pending
Demolition - Bickers & King-bridge	• Vegetation removal	Pending
Demolition - Walton Walker & Anderson Ave	• Vegetation, erosion & sediment controls. • Best Management Practices maintenance.	Pending

**Cases Pending**

## City of Dallas Stormwater Outreach Leadership

**Kelly High**  
Director  
Trinity Watershed Management

**Rebecca Rasor, P.E.**  
Assistant Director  
Trinity Watershed Management

**Susan Alvarez, P.E.**  
Senior Program Manager

**Sonya Batts**  
Outreach Program Coordinator

### FYI Readers:

Stormwater Management is here to serve and meet the needs of our valued readers. For additional information regarding the following:

- General stormwater information
- Construction and Industrial workshops
- Presentations about stormwater pollution prevention or permitting requirements

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