

***From the Mayor's Desk:***

Covid-19 has our nation and city doing things that I never thought I would see. Oh, we have all heard stories throughout the years about the great depression, polio, flu epidemic, 911 terrorist attack, and 2009 ice storm, and even though we were emotionally stressed through these times, our country came through. We did not give up and we are not about to start now. It is not going to be easy but together we can! Our city motto while I have been mayor is TOGETHER, WE CAN, and WE WILL pull through. It's not going to be easy but remember we are in this together.

On March 12, 2020 I held an employee meeting and immediately placed all city departments on a purchasing freeze, except for necessary items to operate on. We will continue to monitor the situation and make changes as needed to keep our departments operational.

Employees are still in the office, but Covid-19 regulations mandate that we must operate differently. The city hall lobby is closed to the public. All nonessential business will be conducted at the drive through window or by phone. If an issue cannot be resolved by phone, citizens can still come to city hall. They will need to come to the double doors to the meeting room or call from the parking lot, and someone will let them in. Once inside questions will be asked concerning health and wellbeing and their

temperature will be taken. If everything is okay, citizens can proceed after sanitizing their hands.

Also, to prevent spread of the Coronavirus, our spring clean sweep and city-wide yard sale has been canceled and to keep our senior citizen's safe, all senior citizen potlucks have been canceled for the next three months. We thank you for your patience as we work through this trying time.

As we move forward, we want everyone to know that we are here to help our utility customers during this time. However, our utility department is still a business. While we don't want to add further hardship to families during this tough time, we still have financial commitments to suppliers also. So, if you are affected because of a temporary layoff, due to the Covid-19 virus, we want to help. Please call (870) 935-0538 to speak with office personnel, and they will work with customers to keep their water on during this time. Though we can't waive the water bill fees, we realize the need to be flexible and will set up payment options. Please contact the utility office before or on the 26<sup>th</sup> before 4:30pm for payment arrangements. Shut off day is 27<sup>th</sup> of each month.

2020 Census starts April 1, 2020 and I figure most residents have received their 2020 Census documents in the mail. I received mine and it took me about twenty minutes (20) to fill it out and send it in

online. Participants have the option to complete the census online or fill out the paper document and return it in the mail. You will receive additional census documents if you fail to complete the first form. If the census bureau does not receive your information, their last effort to get a count of your residence is to send an enumerator to your home to collect the information. I know this is the last thing on your mind presently, but I ask that you HELP your city by being counted.

Once again, let's remember to wash our hands in hot soapy water for 20 seconds; practice social distancing by staying 6 feet apart when out in public; and no gatherings of more than ten (10) people to help to stop this tragic Coronavirus from continuing to spread.

It is spring and soon the weather will be warming up and citizens will be outside walking and jogging and kids will be out playing. Remember to obey speed limit and think about safety first while driving on our street.

Prayers for our city, county, state and country and also prayers for our Troops at home and abroad. God Bless America!

***Mayor Jones***

**Brookland  
Storm Shelter  
is located at 407  
Holman, beside  
Brookland Police  
Department**

# 2020 Spring City Wide



**CANCELED TO  
REDUCE SPREAD OF  
COVID-19 VIRUS**



## Brookland Utilities Online Bill Pay

Brookland Utilities (BU) has partnered with Nexbillpay to give residents the option to pay their bill by phone or online. There is a \$2 or 2.75% fee associated with online pay.

However, due to problems with receiving utility bills from post office in a timely manner, BU is encouraging residents to set up their accounts with Nexbillpay, so they can receive notification of the amount of the new bill each month by free text and/or email (standard message and data rates may apply). To sign up, each resident must have their account number. The online pay can be accessed through our website [cityofbrookland.com](http://cityofbrookland.com). **Hopefully this will eliminate the water bill delivery issue.**

Customers do not have to actually pay their bills online, but having an account established allows them to receive electronic notification of the amount they owe. The phone number to call in your payment is 1-844-293-9814.

### **DOXO Bill Payment Warning:**

Several customers have used a search engine, such as google to pay their bills online and often end up on the DOXO online

payment website. **DO NOT USE DOXO TO PAY YOUR BU BILL!** The website appears to be affiliated with the water system or municipality, but it is not. "doxo.com" may charge extra or higher fees, and BU cannot control when our utility will receive payments from doxo.com, because they come in the form of a check. This could result in late payment fees or disconnection due to non payment. Therefore, **BU advises customers to ONLY utilize the ONLINE PAYMENT link on our website for online bill pay.**

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## **SWIMMING POOL REGULATIONS**

The weather is getting warmer and everyone is starting to think about filling their pools for the summer.

This is a reminder that Ordinance 2008-17 requires that all swimming pools, 15" or more in depth, have a fence of not less than four feet in height. Said enclosure shall be a minimum of four feet from any edge of the pool. A copy of this ordinance can be obtained at City Hall.

## **Mowing around your Water Meter Reminder:**

Brookland Utilities wants to remind everyone to pay attention to your water meters as you start mowing your yards this spring.

The new radio read meters that were installed in the summer of 2016, sit up higher than the older style, and running a lawn mower over the top of them with the deck too low can damage the radio, cord, meter box and/or other meter components.

The City Council enacted ordinance 2016-02, which states that repairs to damaged water meters is the responsibility of the owner/occupant, and lists the fees that will be invoiced to repair the damaged components. Remember to check your yard after it is mowed, and immediately report any meter damage to the lawn care provider. (A copy of this ordinance can be viewed on the city website [cityofbrookland.com](http://cityofbrookland.com).) The office will receive an alarm notification when the meter is not communicating with the billing software, and city workers will notify residents of any damage that is found. Please be proactive and inform your mowing service of the location of your meter box, when you hire them; so they won't damage the meter while mowing your yard.



### **Fireworks Ordinance**

#### **Reminder**

Fireworks may be discharged between the hours of 10am & 10pm on June 29, June 30, July 1, July 2, July 3, and July 5. Fireworks may be discharged between the hours of 10am and will be

extended until 12:30am  
(of the following day) on  
July 4.



**SPRING CLEAN**

∞ SWEEP ∞



**\*\*\*CANCELED to prevent  
spread of Coronavirus**



**RECYCLE &  
WIN!**

The following residents' names were drawn and they won \$25 in the Bluebag Recycle Program sponsored by the City of Brookland. The following items can be recycled: all metal cans, all colors of glass and all grades of plastics. Everything goes in the same bag together. Bluebags are available at City Hall. Just fill out the attached tag and your name will be entered in the weekly drawing.

Citizens who live in the county and bring their blue bags to put them in the recycle trailer need to remove the name tags and bring them into City Hall or leave them in the drop box. Please remember to tie your bluebags before you place them in the trailer.

Newspapers, junk mail, old magazines and other paper products are to be placed in a separate bag and

placed on the curb with your bluebag.

Corrugated cardboard boxes are to be flattened out and put in the green dumpster behind City Hall.

**Bluebag Winners:**

- 1/3/20 - Paula Adkins
- 1/10/20 - Linda Reed
- 1/17/20 - Diane Powell
- 1/24/20 - Sandra Platz
- 1/31/20 - Kathy Ferguson
- 2/7/20- Jamie Shirley
- 2/14/20- Jerry Eldridge
- 2/21/20- Crystal Shepherd
- 2/28/20- JD McHalfey
- 3/6/20 - Sarah L Williams
- 3/13/20 - Shelby Hastings
- 3/20/20 - Billy Dacus
- 3/27/20 - Eric Mathis

**Thanks for making  
Brookland a "GREENER"  
place to live.**

**Community Calendar:**



04/07 - Planning Commission Meeting \*\*\*CANCELED

04/10 - City offices closed for Good Friday Holiday

04/12 - Easter Sunday

04/13 - City Council Meeting \*\*\*CANCELED

04/21 - Senior Citizen's Potluck \*\*\*CANCELED

04/29 - Noon deadline for Planning Commission agenda



05/05 - Planning Commission meeting at 7pm

05/06 - Noon deadline for City Council agenda

05/10 - Happy Mother's Day!

05/11 - City Council meeting at 7pm

05/19 - Senior Citizens potluck \*\*\*CANCELED

05/25 - City offices will be closed for Memorial Day holiday

5/27 - Noon deadline for Planning Commission agenda



06/02 - Planning Commission meeting at 7pm

06/03 - Noon deadline for City Council agenda

06/08 - City Council meeting at 7pm

06/16 - Senior Citizens potluck \*\*\*\*CANCELED

06/21 - Happy Father's Day!

06/21-25 - VBS at New Antioch Baptist Church; 5:55pm - 8:30pm; Theme: "Concrete & Cranes".



**New Antioch  
Baptist Church  
429 CR 950-Goobertown  
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New Antioch Baptist Church will have Vacation Bible School June 21-25 from 5:55pm - 8:30pm The theme is "Concrete and Cranes".

Kids will have a fun time learning to build their faith on Jesus as they uncover the truth that He who began a good work will be faithful to carry it on to

completion. There will be music, crafts, and supper will be provided each night for kids. Classes are available from Kindergarten to Youth.

Elmer Ash is the new pastor and will begin his ministry at New Antioch on May 3, 2020. Everyone in the community is invited to the above mentioned events. For more information and times of events, please call the church office at 870-972-0339, email at [newantiochbc@gmail.com](mailto:newantiochbc@gmail.com), or check them out on their Facebook page at New Antioch Baptist Church. The church website is [newantiochbaptistchurch.com](http://newantiochbaptistchurch.com).

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## Water Wastewater Info

Brookland Utilities wants to remind residents, that due to people staying at home more while "socially distancing" their families to aid preventing the spread of the Coronavirus, water usage will be increasing; thus causing a rise in the amount of your utility bill. If you have been laid off due to your workplace closing under the orders of the governor, and are struggling to pay your utility bill, please contact city hall at (870)935-0538 to make payment arrangements.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people are purchasing massive amounts of disinfecting and cleansing wipes to clean and sanitize their homes and themselves. These products along with paper towels should be disposed of in a trash can and not flushed down toilets.

These products do not easily breakdown and can create many problems. They cause blockages in pipes that result in raw wastewater overflows that could enter streams and rivers or possibly flow down the street in front of your house. These products can also clog and damage pumps in the collection

system and at the wastewater treatment plant. Repairing and replacing pumps and other components is expensive and could result in the cost being passed down to the customers. Manufacturers may advertise these products as flushable, but just because you can doesn't mean you should.

Cooking oil and grease is an issue. Residents need to be aware of the consequences of putting cooking grease/oil down the sink drain. It could clog up your sewer service lines, and the build up from several residences that pour grease down the drain causes the city sewer mains to become clogged, thus causing sewage to back up in several homes in your neighborhood. This creates an extra expense for the utility department to have to treat the grease buildup and flush out the sewer mains. A suggestion to eliminate this problem would be to let your grease or oil cool down and then place it into a Ziploc bag and simply put it in the trash. Also, another problem is residents flushing kitty litter down the toilet. This gets into the pumps at our lift stations and causes them to malfunction or fail. It is very expensive to replace the pumps and creates an additional burden on our wastewater system.

Inflow is another issue at our wastewater treatment plant. This occurs when rainwater gets into the sewer system through a sewer clean out plug that has been removed or broken off or when a sewer service line has been broken and over time, dirt will cave in the surface of the pipe allowing rainwater to flow into the line. All this additional rainwater has to be treated with chemicals, the same as the sewer water, before it is discharged. The usage of additional chemicals to treat the rainwater is another expense incurred by the utility department. If you have any broken pipes or sinkholes in your yard, please notify our office and have one of

the utility workers come and inspect the area.

*Tim Harrington*

## Water/Wastewater Supt.

### **Mayor's Update on 3/28/20 Tornado:**

On Saturday, March 28 around 5 pm Brookland went under a tornado warning. A tornado was tearing through Jonesboro headed northeast with Brookland in its line. After destroying businesses in Farville Curve area the tornado crossed HWY 49 entering Brookland City Limits at Cotter Cox Seed and Busch Agriculture. After crossing many farm fields, the tornado took aim at Brookland's eastern city limits edge. Several homes had damage, trees down, power lines down. Thankfully no one had any serious injuries. For the first time since we built the tornado storm shelter, Brookland had a place for its residents to go during a warning. We estimated around 150 to 175 people were in the shelter. Though we hoped we would never have a need for its use, it was there. When I arrived at shelter after watching the KAIT's live coverage of the tornado tear through Gateway Tire, people were standing outside looking around. I started directing people to enter the storm shelter that a tornado was on the ground in Jonesboro headed our way. People were great! As we entered, we lost electric. People were still coming to the shelter. We waited until the last possible minute, got everyone in and shut the door. It seemed like forever, but it was just a few minutes and it had passed. As we left, citizens came up to me and city employees and said they were very grateful the city had built the shelter. I told citizens that storm shelter was open during a severe thunderstorm event just in case of a situation like this.