



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Contact: Ryan Greenfeld
Sr. Comm. & P.R. Coordinator
(956) 983-6271

Hot Weather Causing Water Line Breaks

BROWNSVILLE, Texas – The hot temperatures that the Rio Grande Valley has experienced over the last couple of months don't just take a toll on residents' lawns; they also can have an effect on underground water lines. The Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB) reports an increase in water line breaks during this recent hot spell that has seen temperatures in the 90s and 100s.

There were 187 water line breaks in May this year, 150 in June and 217 in July, as compared to 99 in May last year, 113 in June and 142 in July. These water line breaks caused by the weather conditions are not unique to BPUB. Many other utilities report similar findings during the hot summer months. This is because of the shifting soil caused by the hot weather. The clay-filled soil of the Rio Grande Valley acts similar to a sponge. When there is moisture present, the sponge will expand or keep its normal size and shape, but the sponge will contract and get harder without water.

This same effect can be seen in this region's soil. Cooking under the summer sun, the soil contracts, often forming cracks seen on the surface. This soil shift can place strain on underground pipes, either by soil collapsing onto the pipe or contracting onto it. This pressure can often result in broken pipes.

While recent rains might offer some relief, the problem will persist once hot and dry conditions return. To reduce water loss and low water pressure, BPUB leak detection crews proactively check on the 672 miles of water pipeline in Brownsville. Using visual cues, underground water leak detection equipment and public reports, the crew works this problem daily.

BPUB urges customers to report water line breaks so that crews can make necessary repairs. To report a broken pipe or a water service interruption, please call 956-983-6300, visit the BPUB website at www.brownsville-pub.com or use the BPUB mobile application.

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The Brownsville Public Utilities Board is a full-service, locally owned and operated utility providing electric, water and wastewater service. It has more than 550 dedicated and responsive employees that provide reliable utility service for the City of Brownsville.