HARRIS-GALVESTON SUBSIDENCE DISTRICT

DISTRICT NEWS
BIANNUAL E-NEWSLETTER

The Harris-Galveston Subsidence District's 50th Anniversary

In 1975, the Texas Legislature established the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District to safeguard the lives and property of residents in Harris and Galveston counties from the devastating effects of subsidence. Since then, the District has successfully paved the way to achieve this mission through its internationally recognized regulatory planning, advanced science and research, dedication to regional collaboration, and award-winning water conservation programs.

We take great pride in the progress already achieved; however, there is still much work to do to prevent further subsidence. As Texas' Gulf Coast population grows, the demand for water increases. Our goal is to support this growth by protecting our groundwater resources with reasonable and effective groundwater regulations backed by the best available science, and ensuring a sustainable water future free from the impacts of subsidence.

50th Anniversary Celebration Reception

On September 18, 2025, the District held a reception to celebrate this monumental achievement, featuring delicious bites, nostalgia, networking, and a speaking program highlighting progress over the past five decades. Learn more by clicking here!

SUBSIDENCE IN THE MEDIA

HGSD Featured in Waterloop's "How Science Saved Houston from Sinking" Episode

The District was featured in Waterloop's episode, "How Science Saved Houston From Sinking." Waterloop is an award-winning nonprofit news outlet for sustainability and equity in water. Watch the full episode to discover more about our region's history of subsidence and the progress made to prevent further subsidence through insightful interviews with local experts.

HGSD Featured on H2O and Beyond Podcast

The District was featured on the H2O and Beyond podcast, which covers the science, systems, and stories behind the water we use every day. This episode features HGSD's General Manager, Michael Turco, for a discussion about subsidence, groundwater regulation, data collection, and strategies to prevent subsidence in Harris and Galveston counties.

Blast from the Past - An Article from HGSD's Archives

Check out this "Subsidence Update" from 1985

Industries' Efforts to Control Subsidence Commended

In August, the Subsidence District Board of Directors approved awarding Resolutions of Commendations to seven industries in Galveston County for accomplishing surface-water conversions of 90% or more. Pictured below are representatives of six of those companies receiving their commendations. Not pictured is Monsanto Company.

that shares the struggle that turned into success in converting to surface water to meet regulatory requirements. What once seemed like a difficult task—transitioning from groundwater as a primary water source to an alternative—was ultimately achieved, and the District awarded Resolutions of Commendation to those who accomplished surface-water conversions of 90% or more.

While this took place 40 years ago, it serves as an important reminder as we continue to reduce reliance on groundwater through additional conversion requirements. As of today, Regulatory Area 1's groundwater pumpage must remain no more than 10% of its total water demand; coincidentally, this regulatory area continuously shows stabilized subsidence rates.

2025 marks an important year because further reductions in groundwater pumpage are applied in Regulatory Area 3, with additional conversion requirements in 2035. Learn more about HGSD's Regulatory Plan by clicking here.

HGSD Recognized in TAGD's Monthly Feature

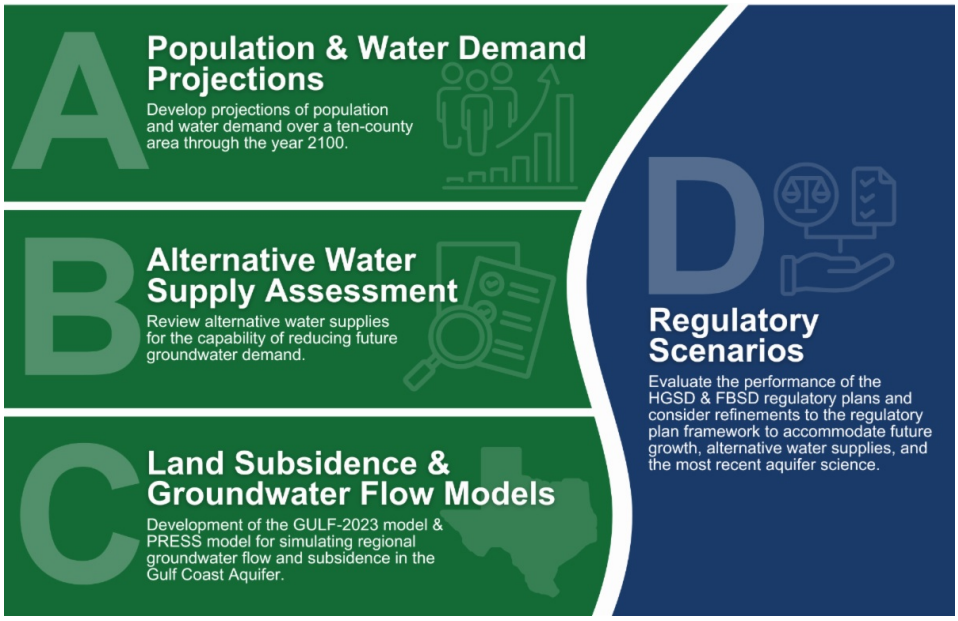
The District was recently recognized in Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts' (TAGD) monthly feature.

This feature highlights the success of HGSD's mission to prevent further subsidence in Harris and Galveston counties over the past 50 years.

Check out the full article here!

SCIENCE & RESEARCH PROGRAM

Joint Regulatory Plan Review



The District periodically reviews its regulatory plan to ensure that predictions of future water needs and subsidence are up to date and to confirm that the plan ultimately prevents subsidence in Harris and Galveston counties. The latest review was completed this year and includes estimated future changes in

population and water demand, an assessment of future water alternative supplies, updated predictive subsidence models, and evaluates planned regulatory requirements on future subsidence rates.

Click here to learn more about the review findings!

A Century (1906-2024) of Groundwater and Land Subsidence Studies in the Greater Houston Region

Our latest publication in collaboration with the University of Houston's Professor of Geophysics, Geodesy, and Geosensing Systems Engineering, Guoquan Wang, highlights a century of subsidence and groundwater-level monitoring, with a focus on regulations and sustainable groundwater management in the greater Houston region.

Click here to learn more about the paper!

WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

School Program

HGSD's water conservation school program, H2O Lab!, provides locally-based water education to 3rd through 6th-grade classrooms in Fort Bend, Galveston, and Harris counties at no cost to teachers or students—thanks to generous sponsorships from local water providers and businesses.

The TEKS-aligned lessons make it easy for teachers to integrate the program into their classrooms. Material and resources are available through the program's secure online web application, where teachers can access on-demand tutorials, download digital lesson plans in multiple languages, and track student activities and assessment data submitted through the portal. Both teachers and students have exciting opportunities to win cool prizes as they complete activities and also receive a free take-home water conservation kit filled with products that can be used to save water at home.

The goal of the program is to educate students to value water in our region, provide tools and resources to help families practice water-saving habits, and raise awareness of subsidence and ways to prevent it.

Learn more about the school program here!

Grant Program

Congratulations to HGSD's Water Conservation Grant Program recipient, Terranova West Municipal Utility District (TWMUD), for completing its smart irrigation replacement project utilizing reclaimed water. The estimated annual water savings is 3 million gallons and nearly $24,000 in savings on potable water

costs. TWMUD offered local businesses adjacent to the reclaimed lines the opportunity to connect and utilize them for irrigation. As of June 2025, three accounts will be connected to the reclaimed water line.

Being one of the first entities in the Houston region to use reclaimed water for irrigation, TWMUD Board President, Tom Lovell, shared, "We want to leave a legacy and hopefully be a model for other Districts."

Do you have a water conservation project that needs funding assistance? Learn about our water conservation grant program by clicking here!

Smarter About Water | Water Conservation Tools + Resources

HGSD recently updated its building's landscape to a water-smart garden and replaced Bermuda grass with a more sustainable turf called Cobalt® Hybrid St. Augustine Grass - developed by the turfgrass researchers at Texas A&M AgriLife using embryo rescue technology. With its superior drought persistence, Cobalt can save the average home up to 6,000 gallons of water per year, helping to conserve resources while maintaining a lush, green landscape. Perfect for warmer climates where St. Augustine is typically used, this grass combines beauty, functionality, and sustainability for an eco-friendly lawn solution.

A water-smart garden is a landscape designed and maintained to use water efficiently, minimizing waste while still supporting healthy plant growth. This approach involves selecting drought-tolerant plants, optimizing irrigation practices, and using water-conserving techniques.

Learn more about water-smart gardens here!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Join us in celebrating the following staff anniversaries:

August 2025
Yolanda Toledo (30 years)
Elizabeth Roach (10 years)
Robert Loveland (6 years)
Veronica Osegueda (3 years)

September 2025
Mike Turco (13 years)
Brian Ladd (12 years)

October 2025
Kino Rodriguez (17 years)

November 2025
Ronald Geesing (29 years)

December 2025
Karimah Hasan (4 years)
Denisse Lizama (1 year)

ABOUT THE DISTRICT

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