

# Special Services Division

## Protecting our environmental resources, public health and safety

**Special Services: Regulating Commercial & Industrial Wastewater Discharge; Ensuring Compliance with Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control; Managing Utility Wastes Responsibly.**

### **Pretreatment (Industrial Waste Control)**

- Liquid Waste Hauler (LWH) Program
- Surcharge Program
- One Stop Shop

### **Water Protection (Cross Connection Control)**

- Backflow Prevention
- Private Fire Hydrant (PFH) Program
- Water Wells Program

### **Environmental Management**

**Special Services Division  
0.54% of AWU Budget  
21% of Environmental Affairs and Conservation Budget**

Draft Proposed Budget for FY2014 is \$2,902,970

95% is Personnel

3% is Contractual

2% is Commodities

**Pretreatment (Industrial Waste Control):** This program ensures that local, state, and federal regulations are met regarding the quality of wastewater discharged by industrial users (IUs) into the City's wastewater system. We currently permit 2889 IUs, which are required to install, operate and adequately maintain pretreatment devices and/or systems to remove pollutants that could otherwise damage or obstruct the wastewater collection system or interfere with the wastewater treatment process. Examples of these pollutants include heavy metals, fluoride, cyanides, toxic organics, and acidic or basic wastes from industrial operations. Fats, oils and greases from commercial kitchens are also a major concern due to their ability to cause back-ups and overflows from sewage piping.



Each regulatory program includes strict enforcement requirements; however, our primary purpose is promoting consistent compliance to help our customers eliminate or reduce pollutants; minimize waste and liability; and protect the public health and safety, environment, and City's utility infrastructure.

For more information about any of these regulatory programs, please call (512) 972-1060 or visit our Website at:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/special-services-division>



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- **Surcharge Program** - IUs that discharge wastewater exceeding “normal” wastewater standards are charged more for such discharges as part of the surcharge program. We currently have 2943 IUs being surcharged. This allows the utility to recover costs associated with treating wastewater that is more heavily concentrated with solids and organic matter than residential wastewater.
- **One Stop Shop** - As part of the City of Austin’s One Stop Shop, the SSD also conducts plan reviews to help make sure that all projects involving potential plumbing changes will not adversely affect the quality of wastewater received in the City's wastewater collection system. We’re projecting to review approximately 633 building and site plans for commercial projects in FY2014.
- **Liquid Waste Haulers:** This program regulates liquid waste transportation for the City of Austin to protect public health, safety, and water quality. The hauled liquid waste subject to these requirements includes sewage, water and wastewater treatment sludge, septic tank waste, grit trap waste, grease trap waste and portable toilet waste. Proper liquid waste disposal protects the wastewater collection system and reduces sanitary sewer overflows caused by overloaded pretreatment devices. We currently permit 64 LWHs and track 192 LWH vehicles.



**Water Protection (Cross-Connection Control):** This program administers local, state and federal regulations to protect health and safety of the public water supply. Backflow is the undesirable reverse flow of non-potable (non-drinkable) water or other substances that can contaminate the potable water system due to a cross connection in the piping. Preventing backflows is important for protecting drinking water quality. Our program works to prevent cross connections by ensuring safeguards are in place to protect the public water system from contamination hazards. We’re currently tracking 52,598 backflow prevention assemblies for customers on the City’s potable water system.

- **Private Fire Hydrant:** This program ensures that owners of privately-owned fire hydrants (PFHs) meet necessary testing and maintenance requirements. We also work to prevent unauthorized use or damage to these PFHs. We coordinate with Austin Water Utility customers, private contractors, and the Austin Fire Department to keep the 7,800+ PFHs working correctly and keep the City of Austin as safe as possible.
- **Water Wells Program:** The City of Austin recently adopted a new ordinance regulating water wells (Ordinance No. 20121011-005). This ordinance includes registration requirements that apply in conjunction with the drilling of water wells, the installation of water well pumps, and other closely related activities. Three new FTEs are proposed for this new program for FY2014.



**Environmental Management:** This program manages and oversees the Austin Water Utility's mission to minimize its impact on the environment and conduct operations in an environmentally responsible manner. As a minimum requirement, this program is committed to ensuring the utility's compliance with all environmental laws and regulations. This program shall identify all waste generated by utility operations and implement waste minimization strategies to prevent pollution whenever it is possible. When it is not possible, the program will establish mitigation programs to minimize the environmental impact. The ultimate goal is to continually improve environmental performance in a manner consistent with a best managed city. Two new FTEs are proposed for this new program for FY2014.