

Health Wise Quarterly

Brought to you by the friendly staff at your

Environmental Health Services Division

Transitions in EHSD Leadership

Environmental Health Services Division (EHSD) would like to announce several leadership level changes in our division. Mr. Don Hastings, Assistant Director for Environmental Health, has retired from the city. We want to wish him well as he seeks out new cycling and hiking adventures. In the interim, Marcel Elizondo took over as the Interim Assistant Director. He has extensive leadership experience, serving as supervisor and program manager in the past nine years with Austin Public Health. He has been with Austin Public Health for over 18 years.

Donald Todd Mers will move up from supervisor and serve as Interim Program Manager over the Special Permitting, Travis County/Interlocal, and Consumer (Food) Health units. He has more than twenty-five years of experience in the field of environmental and consumer health. Todd has been with the City of Austin for over a year. He was previously with the State of Ohio for twelve years in a leadership capacity.

Robert Lee Kelley will serve in dual roles as Environmental Health supervisor over Environmental Vector Control (which includes pools in the City of Austin) and Interim Program Manager over the Health Building Inspection and Consumer Health units. He has more than twenty-seven years of experience with Austin Public Health, the past three years in a leadership capacity.

During Todd Mers' interim assignment, Michelle Mellor will serve as Acting Environmental Health Supervisor over the Special Permitting Unit (mobile food, special events, farmers markets). She has over ten years of public health experience, nine of which have been with the EHSD. Her previous experience includes environmental health officer assignments with consumer health, special permitting, and most recently, Travis County/Interlocal.

During this transition, the staff at EHSD will continue to serve with integrity and provide outstanding customer service to our business owners and residents of Austin/Travis County.

We are Hiring!! City of Austin is Recruiting Consumer & Environmental Health Professionals

Current and Upcoming Postings in Environmental Health Services Division:

- ◆ Customer Service Representative
- ◆ Environmental Health Officer I or II
- ◆ Environmental Health Officer III
- ◆ Program Manager II
- ◆ Assistant Director

The City of Austin offers great benefits for regular employees, including paid holidays, medical and dental insurance, 5 year vesting period, retirement plans and pension with COA matching pension funds, public service student loan forgiveness, tuition reimbursement, and more!

For more information:

[City of Austin Job Search](#)

[EHSD's main Webpage](#)

[City of Austin Job Descriptions](#)

[Regular Employee Benefits](#)

Or call 512-978-0339



NEW FEE SCHEDULE: EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2021

City of Austin/Inter-Locals

Cash, check, money orders, MasterCard, Visa, American Express, & Discover Card

Travis County

Cash, check or money orders payments accepted.

FOOD PROTECTION FEES

Food Establishment Operating Permit Fees

Food Service, Retail Food, Food Processing Plant or Warehouse

Fees marked with **** are not applicable to Charitable Feeding Organizations

Risk Categories:

- 1 (low risk)
- 2 (medium risk)
- 3 (high risk)

Size Categories:

- A (>50 employees)
- B (26-50 employees)
- C (1-25 employees)

Low Risk/Small - 1C****	\$359
Low Risk/Medium - 1B****	\$378
Low Risk/Large - 1A****	\$416
Medium Risk/Small - 2C****	\$532
Medium Risk/Medium - 2B****	\$608
Medium Risk/Large - 2A****	\$684
High Risk/Small - 3C****	\$601
High Risk/Medium - 3B****	\$782
High Risk/Large - 3A****	\$896

Child Care Facility	\$359
Qualified High Quality Child Care Facility	\$0

Food Service, Retail Food

Risk Categories:

- 1 (low risk)
- 2 (medium risk)
- 3 (high risk)

Size Categories:

- A (>50 employees)
- B (26-50 employees)
- C (1-25 employees)

Low Risk/Small - 1C	\$250
Low Risk/Medium - 1B	\$275
Low Risk/Large - 1A	\$300
Medium Risk/Small - 2C	\$275
Medium Risk/Medium - 2B	\$300
Medium Risk/Large - 2A	\$300
High Risk/Small - 3C	\$275
High Risk/Medium - 3B	\$300
High Risk/Large - 3A	\$300

Child Care Facility	\$250
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Food Processing Plant or Warehouse	n/a
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Certified Farmers Market Permit Fees

Class A	\$100	Class A	n/a
Class B	\$100	Class B	n/a

Mobile Food Vendor Fees

Mobile Food Vendor Application Fee	\$105	Unrestricted/Unit	\$273
Unrestricted Permit/Unit	\$290	Restricted/Unit	\$198
Restricted Permit/Unit	\$212	Mobile Food Vendor TC Fire Inspection	\$125
Mobile Food Vendor Re-inspection	\$130	Mobile Food Vendor TC Fire Re-inspection	\$125
Mobile Food Vendor AFD Fire Inspection*	\$265	First TC Fire Re-inspection at no cost.	
Mobile Food Vendor AFD Fire Re-inspection*	\$265		
Mobile Food Vendor AFD Cancellation Fee**	\$150		

*Fees are assessed by COA Fire Department.

First AFD Fire Re-inspection at no cost.

** Cancellation Fees may be assessed for No Shows

Temporary Food Permit Fees

1 booth, 1 calendar day	\$57/booth	1-5 calendar days	\$98/booth
1-5 calendar days	\$114/booth	6-14 calendar days	\$145/booth
6-14 calendar days	\$172/booth	Expedited/Late Permit Application Fee	n/a
Expedited/Late Permit Application Fee	\$100		

Vending Machine Fees

Vending Machine Application Fee	\$120	Vending Machine Application and Permit Fee	n/a
Permit Fee (per machine)	\$25		

Food Enterprise Inspection Fees and Variance Request Fee

Pre-Opening Inspection	\$178	Pre-Opening Inspection	n/a
Variance Request/HACCP Review	\$337	Variance Request/HACCP Review	n/a
Food Re-inspection	\$109	Food Re-inspection	n/a
Central Preparation Facility Registration	\$150		

Food Enterprise Plan Review Fees

New Construction	\$312	New Construction	\$10
Remodel of Permitted Facility		Remodel of Permitted Facility	
>10,000 sq. ft.	\$312	>10,000 sq. ft.	\$10
2,500-10,000 sq. ft.	\$266	2,500-10,000 sq. ft.	\$10
<2,500 sq. ft.	\$221	<2,500 sq. ft.	\$10

Food Manager Certificate (FMC) Fees - City Only

FMC Reciprocity Certificate	\$31
FMC Duplicate Certificate	\$16

OTHER FEES

Custodial Inspection	\$110	Custodial Inspection	n/a
Qualified High Quality Child Care Facility	\$0		
Junk Yard, Auto Wrecking & Salvage Yard	n/a	Junk Yard, Auto Wrecking & Salvage Yard	\$25
Slop and Swill Permits (per vehicle)	\$128	Slop and Swill Permits (per vehicle)	n/a
Tourist Court Permits	\$150	Tourist Court Permits	n/a
Food/Pool Inspection outside of normal work hours	\$173	Food/Pool Inspection outside of normal work hours	n/a
Permit Late Fee	\$100	Permit Late Fee	n/a

SWIMMING POOL/SPA FEES

Swimming Pool Permit	\$221	Swimming Pool Permit	\$95
Spa Permit	\$221	Spa Permit	\$95
Additional Spa Permit	\$151	Additional Spa Permit	\$95
Pool/Spa Plan Review (New or Remodel)	\$312	Pool/Spa Plan Review (New or Remodel)	\$50
Certificate of Occupancy Inspection	\$224	Certificate of Occupancy Inspection	n/a
Change of Ownership Inspection	\$224	Change of Ownership Inspection	n/a
Pool/Spa Re-inspection	\$150	Pool/Spa Re-inspection	n/a

Effective October 1, 2021



October 2021—December 2021



Congratulations to New and Promoted EHSD Staff!

BE SO GOOD THEY CAN'T IGNORE YOU. ~Steve Martin~



Jose Castelan: Customer Service Supervisor

Jose Castelan has been with the City of Austin for 8 years. He started with the Austin Water Utility and then moved to EHSD, where he was hired as a Customer Service Representative. After two years, in 2016, he was promoted to Customer Service Representative Senior. Last month, Jose was promoted to Customer Service Supervisor. He has an accumulated 20 years of customer service experience. He holds a Dual Bachelor's Degree from the University of Texas in History and Political Science, and he will graduate in December of this year with a Master's in Public Administration from Texas State University. Jose is an Army Veteran and is married with two children.

Joyce Chen: Environmental Health Officer III

Joyce was born and raised in Taiwan, Taipei. She took a leap of faith and came to Maryland to fulfill her American Dream. She completed her undergraduate at the University of Maryland College Park with a degree in Food Science. She moved to Austin, Texas in 2007. After meeting an Environmental Health Officer in the field, she had an opportunity to start a career with Austin Public Health doing the same. She worked with EHSD from 2012-2017. After completing a cohort program with Texas A&M, in 2016, Joyce earned her Masters in Public Health. After leaving EHSD, Joyce transitioned to the construction industry as an industrial hygienist manager. EHSD welcomes her back as a Senior Environmental Health Officer. Joyce is expecting her first born daughter Jade to join the family in October. Joyce enjoys international travel and hiking adventures.

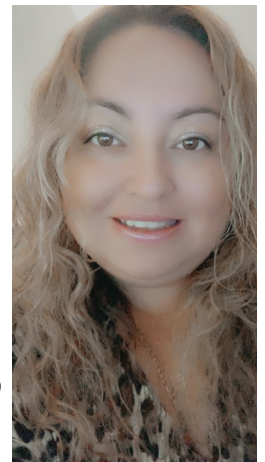


Myla Trevino: Environmental Health Officer I

Myla is a recent graduate from St. Edward's University with a degree in biology. During her time in college, she participated in volunteer work and was involved in researching organisms from various creeks around the city. In her free time she enjoys hanging out at the lake, watching scary movies, and spending time with family and friends. She was born and raised in Austin and is excited to begin her journey with Austin Public Health.

Viviana Zarco: Customer Service Representative

Viviana has worked for Austin Public Health for almost eight years, she began working for WIC and recently accepted a promotion at Environmental Health Services Division. She enjoys working for the City of Austin and is very happy with her new position. Viviana is married and a mother of three: two girls and one boy. Her older daughter applied to University of Texas and was capped. She is attending one year at UTEP and the rest at UT Austin. Viviana loves to travel with her family and loves to go to soccer and football games. She has always been a Dallas Cowboys and Longhorn Fan! Hook 'em!!



Charitable Food Organizations Virtual Information Session:

On September 24, the City of Austin hosted the first Charitable Food Organizations Virtual Information Session. Environmental Health Services Division was proud to lead the meeting. The power point presentations and the Zoom meeting recording from the information session are available on Environmental Health Services Division's Charitable Feeding Organizations webpage under recent news. Check it out!



austintexas.gov/page/charitable-feeding-organizations



Fill Out Your Recycling (or Organics) Plan Today

The City of Austin requires:

1. Commercial and multifamily properties of five units or more to fill out a recycling plan every year starting October 1.
2. Food-permitted businesses to fill out an organics plan every year starting October 1.

Commercial and multifamily properties:

Go to austintexas.gov/uro and choose the property type that describes your business. You'll need your Property ID and an invoice from your hauler for trash, recycling, and organics service to complete your recycling plan.

Food-permitted businesses:

Go to austintexas.gov/bizorganics to also fill out an organics plan. You'll need your Food Permit Number, an invoice from your hauler if they take away organic waste, and details about your organics program.

Reach out to Austin Resource Recovery at commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov with any questions about filling out your recycling or organics plan.



GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY: OCTOBER 15

October 15 is Global Handwashing Day, a global advocacy day dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding about the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

This unprecedented time provides a unique impetus to institutionalize hand hygiene as a fundamental component of health and safety. The learnings from the past year have emphasized the need for collective action to address the historic neglect of hand hygiene investments, policies, and programs once and for all. As we enter a new normal, beyond COVID-19, our future is at hand. This year's theme, **"Our Future is at Hand – Let's Move Forward Together,"** calls for coordinated action as we actively work toward universal hand hygiene.

No matter your role, you can celebrate Global Handwashing Day!

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY 2021 OUR FUTURE IS AT HAND—LET'S MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER



The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of handwashing for reducing the spread of disease and protecting health. As we move beyond the pandemic and into a new normal, it is crucial that we maintain momentum and move forward together toward universal hand hygiene.

THE PROBLEM



Access and Infrastructure

In the midst of the pandemic, 5 in 10 people worldwide did not have access to a hand hygiene facility in their home. This left over 2.5 billion people at increased risk of COVID-19 and other infections because they could not wash their hands. To achieve universal hygiene in these areas, progress must move at least four times faster.



Behavior Change

Educational programs alone are unlikely to lead to sustained behavior change. Behavior change programs must change priorities and focus on the determinants of handwashing rather than an education alone. Programs must be delivered over an extended period of time and combine a range of delivery mechanisms.



Enabling Environment

Hand hygiene is overlooked in many national policies. This leads to massive underfunding and lack of human resources to implement programs. While COVID-19 has brought unprecedented attention to the importance of hand hygiene, systems must become more resilient to sustain a culture of hand hygiene and prevent future outbreaks from occurring.

OUR FUTURE IS AT HAND

Sustainable Development Goal 6 includes striving towards universal hand hygiene by 2030.

At the current rate of progress, only



of people will have access to a hand hygiene facility by 2030, leaving approximately

1.9 billion people unable to wash their hands.

In order to achieve SDG 6 by 2030, global efforts towards universal hygiene must increase by at least

4x



LET'S MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER

We must take collective action to accelerate progress for hand hygiene.



Governments: Develop and fund country roadmaps toward universal hand hygiene, including a combination of policy, regulation, and awareness raising for hand hygiene.



General: Invest in programs that are hygiene sensitive, promote behavior change, and drive hand hygiene habits.



Businesses: Contribute toward resilient hand hygiene systems through partnerships, research, policies, financing, and innovation, and promote hand hygiene within your workforces.



Institutions: Prioritize hand hygiene infrastructure and policies within schools, healthcare facilities, workplaces, and public settings.



Researchers: Make hand hygiene research publicly available and translate complex findings into easy-to-use guidance or recommendations for implementers.



Advocates: Raise awareness on the importance of hand hygiene behavior change as an essential part of health and development to influence political buy in.

#GLOBALHANDWASHINGDAY #OURFUTUREATHAND



UPDATED FOOD CODE IN TEXAS

Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) have been amended. The NEW TFER became effective August 8, 2021.

- The updated TFER is a part of the Texas Administrative Code which is available here:
- The intent of the change is to incorporate references to the 2017 U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Code. [Click here](#) to access the FDA code.

The Texas Food Establishment Rules will continue to be referenced under the previous administrative code sections. Title number: 25 Chapter number: 228.

The existing 2017 FDA Food Code is available for viewing. Please contact your assigned Environmental Health Officer if you have any questions. You can also contact EHSD by phone or email, ask for the Supervisor of the day at 512-978-0300 or EHSD.Service@austintexas.gov.

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=25&pt=1&ch=228](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=25&pt=1&ch=228)

Online Schedule for Mobile Food Vendors

The Special Permitting Unit is excited to announce a new system to schedule appointments for mobile vending application reviews. The new system, called Bookings, goes live on October 1, 2021. Mobile Food Vendors can schedule, reschedule, and cancel their own appointments! Before scheduling your mobile food vendor permitting inspection, you will need to provide your name, your business name, phone number and email address. Appointments are available for 30 minute time slots from 8:00 AM to 10:30 AM on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Online Scheduler, Bookings, will automatically send you an appointment confirmation to your email. The confirmation email will include information on how you can reschedule or cancel your appointment. Each mobile food vendor permit requires their own appointment. Each person is limited to four appointments a day.

To schedule your mobile food vendor application review, go to the below links.

English:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/SpecialPermittingApplicationReviewCalendar@cityofaustin.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

Spanish:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/SpecialPermittingApplicationReviewCalendarSLV@cityofaustin.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

If you have any problems scheduling in Bookings, please call 512-978-0300 and tell them you need assistance scheduling your mobile food vendor application review appointment.

West Nile Virus: Fight the Bite

Austin Public Health has confirmed three human cases and five positive mosquito samples (pools) for West Nile Virus (WNV) in Travis County as of October 7, 2021.



Most people infected with WNV do not have any signs or symptoms, but if symptoms develop, seek medical attention. WNV symptoms begin with fever, headache, tiredness, body aches, an occasional skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands. While the illness can be as short as a few days, even healthy people have reported being sick for several weeks. Advanced age is by far the most significant risk factor for developing severe disease after infection. The risk of severe disease is greatest among people age 50 years and older.

It's important to remember that West Nile is endemic in our environment; in other words, it's here to stay. However, everyone can help reduce the mosquito population by preventing them from breeding. Mosquitoes can lay their larvae in as little as a teaspoon of water, so dump water from any containers outside your home such as flower pots and children's toys. It is also important to fix outdoor pipes and leaky faucets and clean roof gutters.

Austin Public Health also offers these tips to prevent mosquito bites.

- The best defense is with an EPA-approved insect repellent. Those with DEET are the most effective and proven to be safe, even for children and pregnant women. Follow directions and reapply as directed.
- Stay inside when mosquitos are active.
- If you have to be outside, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants that are light colored, since mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors.

For more information, click on the photo of mosquitos above to watch an informational video or visit:

www.austintexas.gov/westnile

www.austintexas.gov/zika

www.austintexas.gov/mosquito-and-rodent-control



GET YOUR FLU SHOT!

As the 2021-2022 Influenza season begins, Austin Public Health is calling for everyone to get vaccinated for both Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 to avoid further straining a health care system already pushed beyond capacity by caring for patients with COVID in addition to those with other illness and injuries.

Flu vaccinations are offered in many locations, including doctors' offices, clinics, retail stores, pharmacies, health centers, and through many employers and schools. To find a location near you to get your Flu or COVID-19 vaccine, visit [VaccineFinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org).

Both vaccines for the Flu and COVID-19 can be administered at the same time. Currently, there is no combined vaccine. Flu shots are also available at [Shots for Tots/Big Shots clinics](#) for children who are uninsured or Medicaid recipients and for uninsured adults. The flu vaccine costs \$25 for adults, \$10 for children, and is free for children with Medicaid. No one will be denied services if they are unable to pay. Please call (512) 972-5520 to make an appointment.

For more information on the Flu and surveillance information, visit AustinTexas.gov/Flu.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccinations, visit AustinTexas.gov/covid19-vaccines or call 3-1-1 or (512) 974-2000 to schedule an appointment. The full press release is located [here](#).



Extended Hot Tub And Spa Closures

Take steps to help keep *Legionella* and other bacteria from growing in hot tubs/spas

Extended closures of hot tubs/spas could create conditions favorable to *Legionella* and other bacterial growth in the hot tub/spa if:

- They are in a public aquatic facility that will be closed for weeks or months, and
- A qualified operator is unable to maintain water quality during the closure.
Check for existing regulations and guidelines from your local or state regulatory agency before using these recommendations. They do not replace:
- Existing regulations or guidelines from your local or state regulatory agency or
Consultation with a service company or the company or engineer that designed the aquatic facility.

Before reopening the hot tub/spa, refer to appropriate guidance on [building water systems](#). Check for existing regulations and guidelines from your local or state regulatory agency before using these recommendations. They do not replace:

- Existing regulations or guidelines from your local or state regulatory agency or
- Consultation with a service company or the company or engineer that designed the aquatic facility.

For more information:

[CDC Extended Hot Tub/Spa Closures](#)

[CDC Model Aquatic Health Code](#)

OFF SEASON TO DO LIST FOR POOL OPERATORS



It is that time of year for kids of all ages begin to go back to school and work. Pool operators may feel that they get a break too because the pool on their property does not need as much attention after the summer months are over. This is not entirely true; a pool is required to be properly maintained throughout the entire year.

Some items to think about during the off season:

- ✓ Make sure you walk your pool fence enclosure to inspect for any opening greater than 4 inches, such as missing pickets or erosion of the ground beneath the fence
- ✓ Make sure your fence gates self-close and self-latch
- ✓ Make sure your pool chemistry is within proper range and you can see the drains at the bottom
- ✓ Make sure your safety equipment is present and in good condition for future use

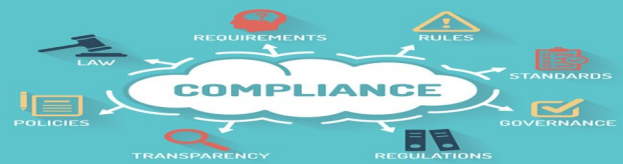
Check the [EHSD Pool website](#) for more information.

LEGAL COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

For City of Austin Food Enterprise Operators

Chapter 10-3-157

Hold Order and Condemnation of Food



- The health authority may place a hold order on food or may detain equipment after:
 - (1) determining that the food is stored, prepared, transported, or served in violation of applicable law;
 - (2) the detained equipment is not functioning properly or presents a health risk; and
 - (3) giving written notice to the permit holder or the person in charge.
- The health authority shall tag or otherwise identify food or equipment that is subject to a hold order. Unless authorized by the health authority, a person may not use, serve, sell, or move food or equipment that is subject to a hold order nor may the person remove a detained equipment sticker.
- The health authority shall immediately condemn food or render food unsalable as human food if the health authority determines that the food:
 - (1) contains a filthy, decomposed, or putrid substance;
 - (2) may be poisonous or deleterious to health; or
 - (3) is otherwise unsafe.
- The health authority may condemn equipment as unsafe for food storage or preparation if the health authority determines that the equipment:
 - (1) contains filthy, decomposed, or putrid substance(s);
 - (2) may be or is deleterious to health; or
 - (3) is otherwise unsafe
- Violation of this chapter is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,000.

For more information on the City of Austin Chapter 10-3-157, [click here](#).



OFFICES CLOSED! Plan Accordingly. EHSD will be CLOSED on:

- ◆ Thursday, November 11 for Veterans Day
- ◆ Thursday and Friday, November 25-26 for Thanksgiving Holiday
- ◆ Thursday and Friday, December 23-24 for Christmas Holiday
- ◆ Friday, December 31 for New Year's Day



Safer Ways to Celebrate Holidays

Attending gatherings to celebrate events and holidays increases your risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. The safest way to celebrate is virtually, with people who live with you, or outside and at least 6 feet apart from others. For information on what fully vaccinated people can do, see the [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated](#) page.

- Decorate your home with holiday themed items and banners.
- Host a video chat party with family and friends to share in the celebration.
- Plan a special meal with people who live with you inspired by the holiday or event.
- Have an outdoor celebration with everyone at least 6 feet apart and wearing masks.
- Watch virtual events and celebrations.
- [See how Everyone can make Holiday Celebrations Safer from the CDC.](#)

Environmental Health Services Division's Facebook Group



Be a member of our group and stay up to date!

Look for us on Facebook - ATX Environmental Health.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/atxenvironmentalhealth>



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION CUSTOMER WALK IN HOURS

Lobby Hours Rutherford Lane Campus 1520 Rutherford Lane by Appointment ONLY

Planning Development Center 6310 Wilhelmina Delco Drive Electronic Submissions ONLY

Mobile Vending Physical Permitting Inspections Rutherford Lane Campus
1520 Rutherford Lane 7:45 AM - 11:00AM Tuesday and Thursday by Appointment ONLY



EHSD partners with Austin 3-1-1 to handle all citizen complaints and environmental investigations. To request services, get general assistance or submit a citizen complaint, dial 3-1-1 or 512-974-2000 if you are calling from outside the Austin service area.

If you feel an inspection issue or complaint investigation has not been satisfactorily addressed, or to speak with a manager regarding administrative issues, please call us directly at 512-978-0300 between the hours of 7:45AM - 4:45PM Monday - Friday.

Mailing Address: EHSD Post Office Box 142529, Austin, TX 78714

Physical Address: Rutherford Lane Campus 1520 Rutherford Lane Building 1 Suite 205 Austin, TX 78754

Email Address: EHSD.service@austintexas.gov

Web Address: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/ehsd>

Feedback: Please complete our online survey to help us better serve our customers: www.surveymonkey.com/s/EHSDSurvey

