



GENERAL ORDINANCE

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

The proposed General Ordinance represents a comprehensive modernization of the District's regulatory framework, with notable additions of definitions, structured permit/licensing/enforcement processes, explicit new rules for modern issues (e.g., drones, invasive species, critical infrastructure), clarified district manager authority, and clearer cross-references to external law. Permit processes are far more detailed and provide for administrative and technical review, amendments, revocations, hearings, and appeals. Guidelines are now included for all permit and license types, providing standardized procedures outside the main ordinance text, allowing for ease of future amendments or updates to permit and license requirements and processes. The scope of regulation is clarified to explicitly cover all District land and water, and introduces new sections addressing events, advertisements, recreational facilities, motor vehicles, and a comprehensive list of prohibited activities. Environmental and public health protections are strengthened, with more robust provisions on pollution, sanitation, and water conservation. Prohibited acts, use area regulation, and animal/waste rules are much more extensive with clear enforcement and remedies. Legal and operational procedures for emergencies, enforcement, commercial activity, and restricted areas/critical infrastructure are clarified and expanded, incorporating recent statutory authority and regulatory needs. Overall, the 2025 general ordinance is more detailed, user-friendly, and adaptable, reflecting best practices in public resource management and regulatory compliance.

Topic / Section	Current General Ordinance	Proposed General Ordinance
Title and Scope	Caption and preamble describe scope; applies to District water and land but lacks standalone title/scope section.	Explicit title; detailed scope applies to all present and future District Land and Water; includes broad language referencing District authority and includes all District-owned/control land/water.
Authority and Legal Basis	Relies on Texas Constitution, Texas Water Code, Parks and Wildlife Code (cited in preamble/authority). Assumes preeminence unless superseded by a more restrictive regulation; penal provisions require notice.	Cites current statutes explicitly; clarifies application except where “primary/exclusive control” of another authority; specifies “more restrictive” rules prevail unless inconsistent, then District rule governs; penal provisions await statutory notice; broader incorporation of guidelines and Board powers.
Purpose Statement	Stated in preamble; focused on protection/regulation of water, land, improvements; no mention of review/revision schedule.	Dedicated section lists four primary objectives (water supply, flood risk, resource sustainment, recreation); includes requirement for revision at least every six years.
Prior Ordinance Superseded	Repeals earlier regulations only at time of 2002 adoption and amendments. No standing section for future repeals.	Dedicated section repeals both the current General Ordinance (as revised) and Commercial Facilities Ordinance completely at new adoption date.
Definitions	40 defined terms; less detailed and technical.	78 defined terms, detailed section; transparent and technical definitions; interpretive clause guides usage throughout.
Permit, License Types & Requirements	Improvement Permit, Commercial Activity permit, OSSF permit; requirements spread through ordinance but less detail; leaves more to referenced external guidelines/ordinances.	Transparent, detailed framework; explicit uniform processes for numerous permit/license, including renewal, revocation, appeals, and waivers.
Permit, License Application Procedures	Requirements and processes are less formalized, reside mostly in referenced guidelines; limited detail on timelines, amendments, appeals.	Clearly defined application procedure—application, review, notice, amendments, extensions, appeal; guidelines specific to each permit/license; more transparent responsibilities, deadlines, applicant rights; permit/license issuance/denial.
Permit, License Enforcement & Compliance	Breach or noncompliance leads to revocation/removal by District at owner’s expense; basic right to notice/cure; limited explicit appeal or inspection detail.	Detailed grounds/process for revocation/suspension, appeals, inspection, right of entry, stop work orders, written records, specific timelines, cost recovery, owner risk; greater enforcement discretion and transparency.

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Use Designation on Land, Water	District manager may designate areas for swimming, boating, fishing, or limit vessel types; focused on water activities; marking by buoys/signs required.	Continued District manager discretion to designate a broad array of uses—land or water, vehicles, animals, hours, fires; expanded authority to restrict/prohibit, clarify boundaries, exceptions, and enforcement; explicit marking and appeals.
Abandonment of Personal Property	Abandonment time limit; District can impound, dispose after 90 days; fees stated; does not reference motor vehicles or Texas Transportation Code.	Abandonment time limit; covers motor vehicles; allows delegation to other entities; cross-references Texas Transportation Code; impoundment fee reimbursement; more transparent scope and process.
Destruction of District Property	Unlawful unless authorized by prior written District approval.	Unlawful; explicitly covers a wider range of property, facilities, improvements.
Modification of Land, Water	Prohibits unpermitted modification of land (topography/terrain); water and vegetation not explicitly covered; permit required; only restoration obligation if contrary to approved plan.	Explicitly covers both land and water modifications, including vegetation; requires permit or District manager authorization; responsibility for restoration; broader definitions and cross-reference to permitting sections.
Obstruction of Navigation, Water Flow	Scattered prohibitions in articles on boats and improvements; no explicit section; prohibits hazards/nuisances; less detail on water flow, device types, marking.	Dedicated section; prohibits anchoring or structures impeding navigation/water flow; bans devices and fences interfering with current; marking and lighted structure requirements to prevent safety hazards.
Commercial Activities	Regulated via reference to external Commercial Facilities Ordinance; broad District discretion; exceptions for some docks; less explicit process in body of ordinance.	Comprehensive, explicit process for commercial permits/licenses; guidelines incorporated; mandatory inspections; transparent compliance/enforcement.
Recreational Facilities	Covered piecemeal or in park-specific addenda; less centralized or uniform.	Dedicated section—District-wide process for rules, hours, supervision, camping, wildlife, vegetation; clear District manager authority; applies structure to all District Parks/recreational areas.
Events Regulation	No dedicated section; no permit threshold; handled under general permits/commercial activity; site selection by District not explicit.	Threshold of >100 participants triggers Event Permit; under 100 participants only requires notice; more structured and formalized permit, fees, guidelines; District manager may designate site.

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Advertisements and Signage	Distributed guidance; no explicit standalone section on private/commercial signage District-wide; relies on park-specific rules or general damage/alteration rules.	Consolidated section with rules on private/commercial signs/ads on/in District land or water with District manager's written permission.
Boating, Vessels, Watercraft Rules	State and federal law incorporated; prescriptive for water safety but less detail; abodes on watercraft banned; airboats/parasailing by special permit.	Detailed law list; expands definitions and references; airboats prohibited without special permit; District manager can designate/codify more restrictions, distances, fees, and inspection requirements; allows abodes with special permit.
Surface Water Sports and Similar Activities	Minimum approach distance: 100 feet; only some activities explicitly listed; Marine Creek Lake by special permit; general flotation device requirement.	Minimum approach distance: 200 feet; expanded, updated activity list (including newer activities); Marked/no-go areas by District manager; expands water sport/activity coverage.
Warning Signs and Buoys	Authorization and requirements, including marking and tampering prohibitions, spread across definition and substantive sections; no administrative rulemaking.	Explicit, consolidated rule: only the District manager or District officers or employees may place/mark/alter; linked to restricted activity enforcement.
Diving and Swimming Regulations	Proximity limits (100 ft from ramps, shoreline unless with boat or in buoyed area); narrower focus; applies only to swimming and wading.	Unified section: applies to swimming, diving, snorkeling, etc.; 100 ft distance rules, but with more explicit requirements for compliance with signs, buoys, posted regulations; broader coverage.
Firearms, Weapons, Explosives, Fireworks	Firearm/explosive/weapon/fireworks use generally forbidden except shotguns for waterfowl hunting in designated seasons/areas (with steel shot); special permits required for exceptions.	Broadened prohibited list; specific exceptions for District/TPWD in official duties; District manager may issue Special Permit or written authorization; explicit inclusion of bow fishing equipment as exception; all weapons, fireworks, explosives, firearms governed by more detailed rule/permit structure.
Fishing/Hunting Regulations	Defers fully to TPWD/state law; allows hunting with shotguns (steel shot) in designated areas/times; lead shot prohibited.	Full adoption of state (TPWD)/federal rules, restricts hunting to designated areas/times, steel shot only; lead shot always prohibited; more explicit language for both fishing and hunting.
Motor Vehicles on District Land	No unified section; off-road/unlicensed vehicles banned without permission; less detail District-wide regarding licensing and speed.	Dedicated section for all District Land; requires street-licensed vehicles, valid license; District manager can permit ATVs/UTVs/golf carts; operation must be prudent and within posted speed limits; prohibition below conservation pool.

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Pollution Prohibited	Outlaws unpermitted chemical/garbage/sewage dumping; permit/report required for herbicides/pesticides at/below spillway; responsible party must remediate; less detail on reporting/upstream zones.	Covers land and water; bans discharging chemicals/pollutants within 5 stream miles upstream; permit/report for chemicals at/below spillway; immediate notification/removal/remediation, District may recover costs; references TCEQ and Water Quality Guidance Manual.
Prohibited Activities	Spread throughout ordinance and park-specific regs; less explicit, less consolidated; covers vandalism, trespass, unauthorized improvements, certain vehicles, chemicals, certain recreational activities.	Comprehensive, centralized section with detailed, specific prohibitions (e.g., unauthorized drones, glass containers, unlicensed vehicles, advertising, jumping/diving from structures, aviation, dumping, etc.); drone-specific rules and enforcement.
Sanitation Requirements	Regulated via OSSF Order (external, incorporated by reference); prohibits dumping/abandonment of various waste types; refuse must be properly contained/disposed; some details left to referenced documents.	Explicit incorporation of state/local/federal law; OSSF Permit Guidelines included as reference; broad, detailed set of prohibitions and requirements; all waste types addressed specifically, disposal of refuse/fish cleaning, commercial sanitation detailed.
Restricted Areas	Defined as areas marked by signs/buoys, District manager designates; trespassing/violating restriction prohibited; forbidden zones and hunting areas indicated with posted maps; critical infrastructure not singled out.	Covers critical infrastructure, associated water/land; only authorized personnel may enter; District manager can close/restrict activities, mark boundaries; rules for commercial filming (requires license).
Management Plan, Water Conservation, Drought Management	Requires compliance with Water Conservation and Drought Plan (as updated); no District manager authority or amendment/publication authority; no explicit enforcement or penalty clause; plan content not detailed.	Same requirement to comply; District manager may adopt, publish, enforce, amend related rules; incorporates plan by reference; explicit penalty for noncompliance (license/permit revocation); District manager may recommend similar measures to customers; greater transparency/clarity in authority and compliance.
Emergency Procedures	District manager may restrict access District-wide in emergencies to protect property/public welfare; authorized to act as necessary; section prevails over conflicting ordinances/laws; general immunity for civil liability.	Similar authority/purpose; detailed authority to District manager; identification of emergency/hazard are covered (obstruction, contamination, etc.); grant immunity for District and personnel; clarifies authority of section during emergencies.

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Enforcement Provisions	Board employs/contracts peace officers with powers under Water Code/Penal Code; Class C misdemeanor for violation; penalties per day; criminal/civil enforcement; less explicit on admin action timelines/appeal/waiver/cooperation; permit loss possible.	More transparent law enforcement authority, powers, citation process, written warnings, notification to appear, waivers, appeals, cooperation with other agencies; clearer timelines and written procedure for citations, permit/license suspension/revocation, and cost recovery.
Severability	Invalidity of part does not affect the whole as long as a workable plan remains; provision ensures continued effectiveness if not all sections invalidated.	Similar language: invalidity of any provision only affects that part; rest continues as long as Ordinance achieves its purposes.
Legal Notices Required	All non-penal provisions effective immediately; penal provisions after 2 newspaper publications and sixth day after second; aligns with TX Water Code; sets a specific timeline for penal effectiveness.	Non-penal provisions immediately effective; penal provisions suspended until 2-week publication occurs as required by Texas Water Code.
Application to Present, Future Land, Water	Provisions apply to all lakes/reservoirs now owned or later constructed; does not explicitly reference all District land.	Applies to all current and future District Land and Water, explicitly including newly constructed/acquired assets; broader coverage.
Relationship to Other Laws	Most restrictive law/ordinance applies, regardless of source—no caveat for inconsistency; always yields to stricter standard.	Most restrictive standard applies unless inconsistent, in which case District Ordinance prevails.