



April 2009 Newsletter

Fire & EMS improvements for District residents since voters created ESD #2 in 2000

Midlothian FD:

Addition of two (2) additional staffed ambulances for a total of three (3) full time ambulances.

Opened two (2) new stations (South: FM 663 & East: FM 1387) that have reduced response times.

Increased on duty shift staffing from 3 firefighters per shift to 15 firefighters per shift.

Six (6) of these additional firefighters are a result of a SAFER grant from FEMA that will save taxpayers \$650,000.00.

Increased staffing allows for five (5) apparatus to respond to major fires, an increase from one (1) staffed fire apparatus in 2000.

Homeowner/Fire insurance reduction of 5% by lowering the Public Protection Class (PPC) from a 5 to a 4 (lowest of any ESD in Ellis County) in a large area of the District.

New firefighting technology including compressed air foam and thermal imaging cameras.

Ovilla FD:

Increased staffing to three (3) full time firefighters during workweek and weekend staffing and increased volunteer staffing.

New fire department annex completed in March 2009 that will allow 24/7 staffing by part time & volunteer firefighters.

A 2000 gallon tanker/pumper for fires in non-hydrant areas purchased with ESD #2 funds.

An air/light/rehab special operations vehicle purchased with \$350,000 in grant funds from FEMA.

New firefighting technology including compressed air foam and thermal imaging cameras.

Your tax dollars helped make these improvements happen!

New Fire Station Annex Completed and Six (6) Additional Firefighters Hired With Funds From Your ESD

Last month, the new Ovilla Fire Station annex was completed and the City of Midlothian approved the hiring of six (6) additional firefighters hired from a Homeland Security grant program. Both of these additions will increase the Fire and EMS service to ESD #2.

The new Ovilla Fire Station annex was constructed with funds from ESD #2. This fire department annex will provide a much needed training room, quarters for 24/7 staffing from part time and volunteer firefighter/EMT-P/B & First Responders, wellness area, Emergency Operations Center, and additional office areas.

ESD #2 has also agreed to fund the City of Midlothian's portion of the cost, for the first three years, of hiring six (6) additional firefighters under FEMA's "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency

and Emergency Response" (SAFER) Homeland Security grant. This SAFER grant will provide \$650,000 over four years toward the salary and benefits of these six (6) additional firefighters.

These two improvements are the latest improvements in Fire & EMS service for the residents and taxpayers in ESD #2.

In October of 2000, the former Ellis County Rural Fire Prevention District #3 fire commissioners asked the voters of the District to convert the District to an Emergency Services District. Voters approved the creation of ESD #2 by a vote of 9 to 1. This change would allow the ad valorem tax rate cap to increase from 3 cents per \$100 valuation to 10 cents per \$100 valuation. **(Continued on Page 2)**

Ellis County ESD #2 FAQ

Q: What is an ESD?

A: An Emergency Service District (ESD) is a political subdivision created by the voters of an area to create a District to provide Fire and/or EMS service. There is a five member Board of Emergency Commissioners appointed by the Ellis County Commissioners to 2-year terms. Section 775 of the Texas Health and Safety Code governs the Board.

Q: What does the ESD #2 Board do?

A: Insure residents receive the best Fire and EMS services available. The Board also promotes fire prevention, safety and emergency preparedness.

Q: Who lives in ESD #2?

A: Any resident that lives in the Midlothian ISD but does not live in an incorporated city (Midlothian, Ovilla, Cedar Hill, Grand Prairie, Mansfield, Venus, or Waxahachie).

Q: How do the Fire and EMS services the residents of ESD #2 receive compare to the other ESD's in Ellis County?

A: ESD #2 residents receive the only fire department EMS service in the County. Only ESD #2 and one other ESD have 24/7 firefighters and paramedics that respond to Fire and EMS calls.

Q: How can I contact the ESD #2 Board?

A: E-mail us at: info@ecesd2.org, or write to us at the address on page 4, or come to our monthly meetings. Go to www.ecesd2.org for meeting dates and times.

(Continued from Page 1) New Fire Station Annex Completed and Six (6) Additional Firefighters Hired With Funds from Your ESD #2

With a commitment by the commissioners to limit the tax rate to five cents for the first two tax years, District residents received increased full time paramedics and firefighters to staff an additional ambulance, new tanker/engine for fires in rural areas of the District, and decreased insurance rates in 2005. Since 2003, the annual tax rate increase has averaged less than one-half cent a year increase each year (\$4.50 per year for a \$100,000.00 home). District residents have received many Fire and EMS service upgrades with the additional tax dollars. **(See insert on Page 1)**

Since 1985, the District has contracted for Fire and EMS service with the Midlothian & Ovilla Fire Departments. The ESD provides funding to these departments for their responses to Fires and EMS incidents in ESD #2. The Board wants to continue this partnership with these departments since the ESD could only fund a fraction of the current budgets and assets of these two fire departments with the current ESD tax base.

An increase in service by either department results in an increase in service to the ESD. These departments are able to respond to incidents in the 115 square mile area of the District from four (4) fire stations that are staffed with 46 fulltime, 13 part time, and 20 volunteer firefighter/EMT-P/B & First Responders. These firefighter/EMT-P/B & First Responders staff 3 ambulances and 17 pieces of fire equipment.

The ESD #2 Board of Emergency Commissioners is committed to continue providing the highest level of service that will meet the needs and expectations of the ESD residents and taxpayers. An ESD service plan will be completed this summer that will include possible upgrades in service. One area of this service plan will be based on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard 1710. This standard is a national standard concerning response to Fire and EMS incidents recommending minimum staffing and response times.

In addition to providing a high level of Fire and EMS service, the Board also wants to insure District residents pay the lowest homeowner/fire insurance rates possible. The Public Protection Class (PPC) is a major factor in determining the annual homeowner/fire insurance premium District residents pay. District residents closest to Midlothian have a PPC of 4 and the District residents closest to Ovilla have a PPC of 5.

The Board is funding a consultant to make recommendations to the Ovilla Fire Department prior to an evaluation that will insure the lowest possible PPC. The Midlothian Fire Department was able to lower their PPC in 2005 from a 5 to a 4.

The service plan will include possible Fire Department improvements that will lower the PPC class of both departments.

The Board is also committed to insure the District taxpayers receive the best possible service for the tax dollars paid to the District. The Board is reviewing the current tax system to insure it is the fairest and most equitable tax system that will support the Fire and EMS service level required by the District.

Finally, the Board is also emphasizing communication with District residents and taxpayers. A newsletter will be mailed to all residents at least twice a year. The District is creating a website that will include meeting schedules, contact information, facility locations, fire safety and prevention information, changes in Fire and EMS services, PPC rate updates, burn bans, and any other issues and information that are affecting services.



ESD #2 RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM HOMELAND SECURITY FEMA GRANTS AWARDED

The "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response" (SAFER) grant allows the Midlothian Fire Department to hire six (6) additional needed firefighters saving the taxpayers \$650,000.00 over four years. The Ovilla and Midlothian Fire Departments have received multiple grants since 2001.

The Ovilla Fire Department has received FEMA grants for firefighting equipment, a fire prevention program, fire station vehicle exhaust system, fire station back up generator, and a \$350,000.00 air/light/rehab special operations

vehicle. The firefighting equipment includes firefighter safety equipment, firefighter training systems, radios, firefighter breathing apparatus, and a thermal imaging camera that allows firefighters to locate victims and fires through thick smoke. The fire prevention program included smoke detectors and stovetop fire extinguishers for high risk homes. The air/light/rehab special operations vehicle includes firefighter safety equipment, the ability to recharge firefighter breathing apparatus, and telescoping

lights that can light up emergency scenes.

The Midlothian Fire Department has also received FEMA grants for fire station vehicle exhaust systems and new firefighter breathing apparatus.

Both departments have also received grants from the Texas Forest Service for wildland fire equipment and brush trucks.

The total cost of these grants is in excess of **\$1.6 Million**. These are your tax dollars returning to your community.



Ovilla FD Air/Light/Rehab

DO YOU WANT TO BE A FIRST RESPONDER IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

ESD #2 IS ORGANIZING A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

The ESD Board is organizing a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members will receive disaster preparedness training for hazards that may impact ESD #2 and receive training in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, the CERT members will complement and enhance first-response capability in neighborhoods and workplaces by ensuring the safety of themselves and their families working outward to the neighborhood or office and beyond until first responders arrive. CERT members can then assist local and county first-response personnel as directed. CERT will also assist local and county emergency managers.

If you are interested in being a member of a CERT, please e-mail us at: info@ecsd2.org. We anticipate starting a class in late June/2009.



OVILLA FIRE DEPARTMENT SEEKS VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

The Ovilla Fire Department is accepting applications for volunteer firefighters. Volunteer firefighters must be 18 years old and live within five miles of the Ovilla Fire Station at 105 S. Cockrell Hill Rd.

New members will receive Fire and EMS first responder training during the first year. Firefighters may receive Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training after completing their fire training.

Members respond to over 700 calls annually in the most up to date Fire and EMS vehicles. Calls include mutual aid calls to Glenn Heights, Red Oak, Midlothian, Southern Dallas County, & Northern Ellis County areas.

Members are issued state of the art personnel protective equipment and members are insured through the City of Ovilla and receive financial incentives based on number of calls answered.

New firefighters are joining an organization with a history of service and innovation.

If interested, please go by the Ovilla Fire Station, and ask for an application.

ELLIS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2

Larry C. Marlow Fire Annex
105 S. Cockrell Hill Road #1
Ovilla, Texas 75154

www.ecesd2.org



Mailing Address Line 1

Mailing Address Line 2

Mailing Address Line 3

Mailing Address Line 4

Come Join Us for an Open House at the
New Larry C. Marlow Fire Annex – May
8, 2009, 3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. in
Ovilla, 105 S. Cockrell Hill Road

Information From the Organization That Provides Your Fire Protection and EMS

Before You Burn Outdoors:

Make sure there is not a burn ban in effect – go to our website:

www.ecesd2.org

Call the Fire Department's dispatch office at 9972/775-3333 and advise the fire department dispatcher you are going to burn.

Wind should be below 10 mph including gust.

Make sure you have water to control the burn, preferably a garden hose.

Make sure your burn pile is of a size you can control the fire.

Only burn organic material like leaves and brush – No tires or building materials (TCEQ regulations).

Call 911 if you are unable to control the burn.

Is Your Home Fire Safe?

Smoke Detectors

Test each smoke detector monthly and change batteries yearly unless a lithium battery. Change battery if detector begins to "chirp"

You should have a working smoke detector outside each sleeping area, inside each sleeping area, and on each level of your home.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Carbon monoxide poisoning is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, tasteless, invisible gas. You will not know you are in danger until you start feeling the effects of poisoning or you may become unconscious from the gas without warning.

Homes with gas appliances or attached garages have a high risk for carbon monoxide poisoning

You should have a detector on each floor of your home. Check and replace the batteries when you check and replace batteries in your smoke detectors.

Escape Plan

Have a fire escape plan with the members of your household and practice often.

Know two ways to exit from every room in your home. When exiting, crawl low and feel each door before opening. If hot, use another exit.

Identify a place to meet outside in case of fire. Never re-enter a burning building.

Escape first.

Call 911 after exiting.