



## Information about Williamson County Emergency Services District No. 8

### **Sales tax for ESD 8 on May 12 ballot**

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A 2-percent sales tax to provide funding for Williamson County Emergency Services District 8 is on the May 12, 2007 ballot for voters in ESD 8. City of Georgetown residents will not be able to vote in the sales tax election since the tax does not apply to them. The Williamson County Commissioners approved the ballot item to call the election at their meeting on February 13, 2007.

The sales tax would apply to goods and services sold within the ESD 8 area, which excludes the Georgetown City Limits. The 2-percent sales tax would provide revenue to fund fire protection in the ESD 8 area, including 24-hour fire response and medical first-responder services. The sales tax for those in ESD 8 would augment an existing 10-cent property tax that was enacted in 2005.

### **Formation of ESD 8**

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ESD 8 was formed as a result of a general election on May 7, 2005. In that election, a majority of voters in the ESD 8 area approved the formation of the district, supported by a property tax of 10 cents per \$100 valuation and governed by five commissioners. (Details on ESD 8 commissioners can be found below.)

An emergency services district, as authorized under the Texas Health and Safety Code, is a geographic area supported by taxes to provide emergency services within the area and governed by a county-appointed commission. The district is charged with the duty of providing protection of life and property from fire, hazardous materials, and disaster within its boundaries. Emergency service districts are created to allow for improvements in rural fire protection areas and intended to build a partnership with municipalities to ensure adequate service delivery is provided.

For decades prior to the 2005 election, the City of Georgetown provided fire protection in the County through a rural fire protection agreement for an annual amount \$60,000. The costs for services far exceed the contracted amount. The 2005 election forming ESD 8 was the result of a petition to the County Commissioners signed by 100 voters in the District.

### **ESD 8 area**

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The ESD 8 area is similar to, but not the same as, Georgetown's extra-territorial jurisdiction, which extends two miles beyond City Limits. Funds for service within the

City of Georgetown are provided through City property taxes and City sales taxes. City of Georgetown residents do not pay the 10 cent property tax for ESD 8 and may not vote in ESD 8 elections.

The geographic area for this district is Georgetown's Rural Fire Protection District. The boundaries were established by the Williamson County Fire Chief's Association, whose duty includes the determination of fire coverage districts. There are 10 emergency service districts in Williamson County, including Coupland, Florence, Georgetown, Hutto, Jarrell, Jollyville, Liberty Hill, Round Rock, Sam Bass, and Weir.

## **Contract Agreements for ESD 8**

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Fire protection services for residents in ESD 8 are provided through a contract with the City of Georgetown Fire Department. The contract provides for 24-hour response for fire protection and medical first responder services to support Williamson County Emergency Medical Services. The contract also includes for mutual aid agreements that would provide for assistance from other nearby fire departments, when needed, as well as an annual fire prevention workshop.

## **ISO rating of 4 or 9 in ESD 8**

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The Insurance Services Office rates fire protection for a given area on a 10 point scale. A 1 is the highest rating and a 10 is the lowest. The rating for fire protection in the ESD 8 area is a 4 or a 9. All property located within 1000 feet of a fire hydrant, and within five miles of a fire station, is rated at Class 4, which is the same as property within Georgetown City Limits. All property located more than 1000 feet from a fire hydrant, and more than five miles of a fire station, is rated at Class 9. Currently some insurance companies that are not regulated by ISO offer the same ratings to those in the rural fire protection area. Residents residing outside the five-mile service area of a Georgetown fire station are a Class 10 rating.

If a fire district improves its service coverage and response times, homeowners and businesses can save money on insurance premiums. For more information about ISO ratings, see the ISO website at [www.iso.com](http://www.iso.com).

## **Annexation and ESD 8**

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If properties in the ESD 8 area are annexed into the City Limits of Georgetown, then City property and sales taxes would apply, and the ESD 8 property tax of 10 cents is not applicable. Similarly, a 2-percent sales tax for ESD 8 would not apply to any areas once they become part of the City of Georgetown. If ESD 8 issues debt to fund fire service, and an area in ESD 8 is annexed by the City, then the City of Georgetown must buy out the ESD 8 debt for that property.

## **Commissioners for ESD 8**

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There are five ESD 8 commissioners that represent the District and meet on a regular basis to determine administrative policy and perform financial oversight. Commissioners are appointed for a two-year term by the Williamson County Commissioners Court.

**Don Smith - President**  
102 Snapper Cove  
Georgetown, TX 78628  
844-8951

**William "Wiggie" Carroll Shell - Vice Treasurer**  
817 Shady Hollow Dr  
Georgetown, TX 78628

**Bobby Bunte**  
2301 CR 152  
Georgetown, TX 78626

**Kim Schmidt - Vice President**  
211 Northcross Rd  
Georgetown, TX 78628

**Steven Grady - Secretary**  
101 Kyle Ln  
Georgetown, TX 78628

**Treasurer - vacant**

For additional information about ESD 8 and services provided by the Georgetown Fire Department, call 930-FIRE (3473).

## **Public Education**

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The Georgetown Fire Department in cooperation with Williamson County Emergency District No. 8 cordially invites you to a Fire Prevention workshop on April 23, 2007 at 6:30 P.M. at the Community Center located in San Gabriel Park at 445 E Morrow St., Georgetown, Texas.



**Emergency Services District No. 8**  
103 W 9th Street  
Georgetown, Texas 78626

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