



Montgomery County ESD No. 10 Update- June 25, 2021

The new fire chief reported to Montgomery County Emergency Services District No.10 (ESD No. 10) Board of Commissioners that necessary steps are underway to move the district forward as the direct provider of fire and rescue services. Chief Jeff Hevey, whom the ESD No. 10 board appointed in March to permanently lead the Magnolia Fire Department, provided an update on professional and transparent policies and procedures being developed for ESD No. 10. Those measures will ensure the district can successfully direct fire and rescue services for Magnolia residents.

Under the leadership of Chief Hevey, the ESD No. 10 Board is confident these controls will result in a qualified and well-equipped department that will successfully protect property and people throughout the 175 square-mile service area.

Since becoming Fire Chief, Hevey has prioritized identifying opportunities to change and improve practices involving ESD No. 10. Several changes have already been implemented by Chief Hevey and Magnolia Fire Department senior staff under the watchful eye of the ESD No. 10 Board. These include:

- All nine ESD No. 10 Fire Stations have been open and fully staffed since May
- Implementation of regular maintenance and repairs of trucks, including tires and lifts
- Facilities assessment performed by Assistant Chief Chuck Grant
- Repairs to facilities recommended by Assistant Chief Grant's report
- Establish a professional employment process
 - Mandatory background checks for all new employees
 - U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission approved hiring practices

- Job descriptions created for all positions
- Shift requirements over given time period for improved accountability

Chief Hevey has identified numerous other changes that he plans to implement in the coming months and years to improve accountability and development of a professional fire department.

- Creation of employee handbook
- Physical ability and psychological evaluations for hires (included in EEOC approval)
- Advertisement and application process for new jobs
- Double-time pay incentive for holidays
- Expansion of benefits package
- Improved communication among employees

Actions taken by Chief Hevey and the ESD No. 10 Board are part of a larger mission to protect people and property, while being good stewards of taxpayer money. As ESD No. 10 moves closer toward being the direct provider of fire services in Magnolia and the surrounding area, more changes will be made to improve practices and procedures.

The ESD No. 10 board and Chief Hevey recognize that a collaborative effort between leadership and current employees, and the community is necessary to create a leading Emergency Services District. The ESD No. 10 board is committed to partnership and open communication and will share more details about the transition and policies implemented to improve services and better utilize funds.

As part of that commitment, the board has doubled the number of meetings to twice each month to receive updates and take necessary actions on plans to improve life-saving services to community members, increase the desirability of working for ESD No.10, and improve accountability of the district.