



Nichols Hills E-News

June 2009

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Inside this issue:

Fire Department	1
Police Department	3
City Hall	4
Public Works	5
Animal Rescue Friends (ARF)	6

Upcoming Meetings

- Planning Commission Meeting July 7th
5:30 pm at City Hall
- City Council Meeting July 14th
5:30 pm at City Hall
- Regular Meeting of the Nichols Hills Municipal Authority June 14th
5:45 pm at City Hall
- Environment, Health, & Sustainability Committee July 22nd
8:30 am at City Hall

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Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)

In previous articles I have mentioned Federal or State government mandates that affect local governments and departments within the local government such as the fire department. These are commonly referred to as “unfunded mandates” and they can significantly impact budgets that are normally already lean. One of those mandates is the requirement to have a RIT team in place before any interior fire fighting activity can take place. This requirement was originally written into the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards and subsequently included in the Federal OSHA Standards and Oklahoma’s PEOSH Standards. Some of the Standards refer to it as the “Two-In-Two-Out” rule.

There are slight variations between the different Standards but the requirement says that before a fire department can send any fire fighters inside a burning structure to fight a fire they **MUST** have a fully equipped team of fire fighters (at least two) just outside the point of entry ready to go in and rescue any fire fighters that need help. It makes sense and the intent is good but the problem for most departments is they don’t have two extra fire fighters to commit to this requirement. For example; in Nichols Hills we have four fire fighters on each shift. When a structure fire occurs the highest ranking officer assumes the role of Incident Commander, one fire fighter operates the pump on the fire engine that supplies water to the fire fighters, and the two remaining fire fighters take the hoseline and make an interior attack on the

FIRE DEPARTMENT

the fire. Even if all four are on duty we don't have enough personnel to meet the requirement and if one of our fire fighters is on vacation or sick leave it doesn't take a mathematician to see the bind we are in. This left us with only a few alternatives; one was to ignore the Standard and fight fires the way we always have, two was hire three more fire fighters per shift for a total of 12 new personnel which would almost double the size of our department, or three was to develop some other solution. There is one exception to the RIT Standard; if there is a "known" rescue on the fire departments arrival i.e. an occupant is trapped in the burning building, the RIT requirement can be ignored and an immediate entry/rescue attempt can be made.

The "other" solution we developed was to write and sign an Automatic Aid Agreement with our neighbor The Village. We already had a Mutual Aid Agreement with The Village which states if either city calls the other and requests help it will be sent and there will be no charge for any of the services rendered. It is a mutually beneficial agreement but it does NOT solve the manpower problems according to the Standards. An Automatic Aid Agreement means each city's fire department is automatically dispatched on every potential fire call in either city and this DOES satisfy the manpower requirements of the Standards. By dispatching both the Nichols Hills and Village Fire Departments on every fire call it essentially doubles the number of fire fighters we have on the fire scene. This enables us to make an immediate interior attack and adhere to the RIT requirement.

This is a brief and simplified version of the unfunded RIT mandate and the process we went through to meet the requirement. It took many weeks and multiple meetings with many city officials and attorneys to make this happen but it was the only practical solution and it has been a mutually beneficial solution to each city and their residents. I use the word "took" because this happened in the mid 1990's, long before the current economic troubles that all cities and most businesses are facing. City of Nichols Hills department heads have for many years used strategic planning and cooperative efforts to do more with less but still provide premier services to our residents. Under the leadership of our current City Manager I am confident this is a practice that will continue into the foreseeable future.

Terry Hamilton
Deputy Chief

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Nichols Hills Police Department believes in keeping its citizens informed on the status of criminal activity in the area. When it does not compromise a current investigation, the Police Department will send out an email to all interested parties relaying the information on a current case. The following email was originally sent out on June 22, 2009.

All Souls Church was the victim of a burglary on June 15th sometime after 10:30 p.m. Entry was made through a downstairs window. Employees discovered the break-in the next morning and Nichols Hills police were dispatched. In less than twenty-four hours, with the help of video from the church's surveillance cameras, Detective Cox was able to identify, locate and obtain a full confession from the burglar. James Dean Hollenbeck is currently in the Oklahoma County Jail on numerous felony charges. The church sustained damage but nothing was taken.

If you are interested in signing up for crime alerts, you can do it on the front page of the Nichols Hills website. Just visit www.nicholshills.net, and click on the link that says "Notify Me By Email." The picture below will show you exactly where the link appears. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Robin Murray at 843-6170, and she will provide you with assistance.

The screenshot displays the City of Nichols Hills website homepage. The browser window title is "City of Nichols Hills - HOME - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows "http://www.nicholshills.net/". The website header includes the City of Nichols Hills logo and navigation links: Home, Web Services, Departments, Commissions & Committees, and Contact Us. A prominent red button in the top right corner says "NOTIFY ME BY EMAIL and keep me current! (click here)". A yellow arrow points to this button with the text "Click Here!". The main content area features sections for "E-News Monthly Newsletter!", "Lost or Missing Animals?", and "Subscribe and Receive E-Mail Reminders and Crime Alerts!". The right sidebar contains "Calendar Events" and "Quick Polls". The bottom of the browser window shows the Windows taskbar with the Start button and several open applications.

CITY HALL

NH Commission Seeks Citizen Participation in Focus Area Meetings

The City of Nichols Hills Environment, Health, and Sustainability Commission would like to involve the citizens of Nichols Hills in a series of dialogs scheduled every Thursday evening from 5:30-7:00PM at your Town Hall. These meetings will address focus areas suggested to the Commission by citizens interested in the environment and in making their community a healthier and better place to live. The EHS Commission needs significant input from a broad resident base to accurately reflect citizen values.

Focus area meeting dates through December 2009

ENERGY/POWER

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

AIR QUALITY AND NOISE POLLUTION

Fourth Thursday of the month:

June 25, July 23, August 27, September 24, October 22, and November 26

COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

First Thursday of the Month:

July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1, November 5, December 3

HEALTH/LOCAL FOOD

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

RECREATIONAL HARDSCAPE: BIKING AND WALKING

Second Thursday of the Month:

July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8, November 12, December 10

RECYCLING: SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

WATER

LANDSCAPING

Third Thursday of the month:

July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17

PUBLIC WORKS

Water Supply

The hot summer months are here and we are once again watching our water supply. The City of Nichols Hills is currently building a four million gallon ground water storage tank and a new booster house. Under these delicate conditions we must utilize our water in the most efficient manner. We are trying to keep the parks watered, meet the public's demand and fill our storage facilities. Please help us in conserving our precious water supply and keep lawn sprinklers to a minimum. Sprinklers use over half the water we pump. Thanks.

Animal Control

Animal Control would like all pet owners to make sure their pets are registered with the City of Nichols Hills. The City of Nichols Hills only sells a couple hundred tags per year. This means there are hundreds of dogs and cats that are not registered. These tags are very important in returning the animal to the appropriate owner. Pet owners may register the animals at 1009 N.W. 75th. You wouldn't believe the people who come in and claim their lost pet and say 'I don't register them because they never get out'. The fine for no tags is \$100.00, the price for a tag is \$5.00, so please register your pets.

Sanitation Division

Please make sure all tree limbs are cut to four foot lengths and bundled.

Code Division

Swimming pools must drain to a sanitary sewer and not in the street. Make sure your pool is safeguarded by the appropriate fence and self latching gate.

For more details contact Kelly Hurley, at 843-5222.

ANIMAL RESCUE FRIENDS

If anyone wants to assist ARF in it's mission of saving unclaimed, impounded pets in Nichols Hills, they can donate time, old collars, leashes, crates, dog beds, food, treats, toys and, of course, money by mailing checks to Animal Rescue Friends, Inc of Nichols Hills, C/O Public Works, 1009 N.W. 75th Street, Nichols Hills, OK 73116 or by calling 843-4222 about donating items. ARF will respond by sending a 501 c 3 tax deduction letter (and offering a cat or a dog!).

June's Featured Pet



The newest ARF dog is Sassy. She is about fifteen pounds and about 10 weeks old. She is vaccinated according to the vet's recommendations for a young puppy.

ARF is at an all-time high for the number of animals it is caring for. Please consider fostering an animal over the July 4th weekend. If you can help with time, funding, fostering, or donations, please call ARF at 843-4222.