

Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Dept.

# *Keeping You Safe*



## Step up

*Joining Precinct 4 VFD opens the door to many benefits*

Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department welcomes candidates to become firefighters.

As with all the current firefighters, the motivation for joining is doing something to help people in the community.

But there are other benefits if you join the VFD.

Firefighters are eligible for the dormitory program. If accepted, they can live at a fire station rent-free, with all bills paid.

Firefighters receive a \$50,000 off-duty life insurance policy. They also receive free membership in the National Volunteer Fire Council and the highly respected State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association (SFFMA).

SFFMA membership alone offers many benefits including:

- An opportunity to connect with more than 22,000 Texas firefighters.
- Discounts on many training opportunities and educational materials.
- The monthly e-InfoFire Newsletter and annual Texas Firemen Magazine and InfoFire.

**Continued on Page 3, "Benefits"**



Precinct 4 VFD brush trucks carry a wide array of tools including fire rakes, chainsaws, backpack pumps and drip torches (for controlled burns or back fires). Other tools include a special axe/adz combination called a pulaski and a fire flapper, a rake/broom combination.

## Brush with greatness

*ESD4 vehicles offer power, agility to combat wildland fires*

Brazos County ESD No. 4 is a little bit country and a little bit urban. We're in what's called the "wildland urban interface," and that requires special tools to provide fire protection.

ESD4 funds the Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department, and ESD funds have purchased specially equipped "brush trucks" to reduce the damage that wildland fires cause in our area. Another brush truck is currently on order and expected in the next few months.

Brush trucks have much of the same capability of larger fire engines, including a pump to get water onto the fire. But the off-road brush truck can be dispatched and operated with fewer personnel.

"Our latest brush trucks are outfitted with bumper nozzles that are controlled from the cab," said Chief Joe Dannenbaum. "Even if a firefighter is alone, the fire can be attacked."

Brush trucks cost substantially less than traditional fire engines (they can run up to half-a-million dollars). Putting brush trucks in the field reduces the wear-and-tear on the more expensive vehicles in the fleet.

Brush trucks give speed and flexibility to Precinct 4 VFD, and that can reduce the damage of wildfires.

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## about your emergency services

### Q: Who provides our fire protection and emergency medical first response?

**A:** Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4 (ESD4) is the grassroots government responsible for fire protection and emergency medical first response in 120 square miles of western Brazos County. ESD4 provides services through a contract with Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department.

The ESD is overseen by five commissioners appointed by the Brazos County Commissioners Court.

### Q: What is an emergency services district (ESD)?

**A:** Emergency services districts are political subdivisions of the state of Texas, like school districts or municipalities. An ESD can provide fire protection, emergency medical response or both.

### Q: Where does our ESD4 get its money?

**A:** ESD4 was originally a Rural Fire Prevention District (RFPD), which had a maximum tax rate of 3 cents per \$100 of property value. All RFPDs were converted to ESDs in 2003, but were required to get voter approval to go above the old RFPD ceiling.

Voters in ESD4 approved a new maximum tax rate of 8 cents per \$100 in May of 2017, but ESD4 commissioners promised that, barring a financial emergency, they would not go above a 6 cent rate for two years.

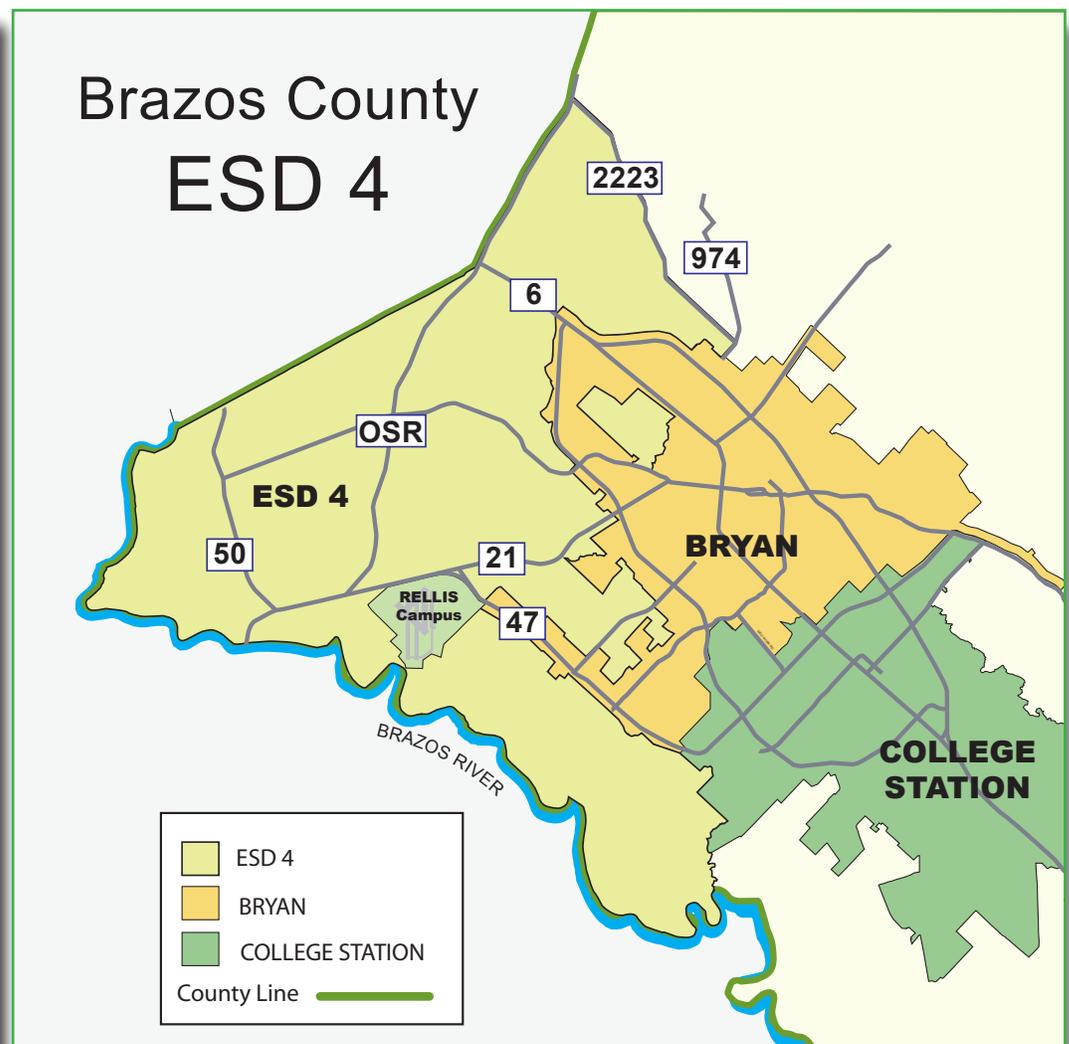
ESD4 set its property tax rate at 5.7772 cents per \$100 of property value. That means that the owner of a home valued at \$200,000 on the tax rolls pays less than \$10 a month to know that trained firefighters with specialized equipment will be at the door within minutes when there's an emergency. Under the Texas Constitution, no ESD may set a tax rate more than 10 cents per \$100 property value.

## Need a speaker? We can help

If your church, club, civic group or youth group needs a speaker, ESD4 and the Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Dept. can help.

We'll be happy to tell you about the services we provide at less than half the cost of many municipal fire departments. We can explain the challenges we face.

To arrange a speaker, please email Chief Joe Dannenbaum at [chief@precinct4.com](mailto:chief@precinct4.com).



# ESD Board needs commissioners to provide oversight

Brazos County ESD No. 4 is overseen by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the Brazos County commissioners court.

ESD commissioners serve two-year terms and are eligible for reappointment. There is no limit on the number of terms one can serve.

ESD4 commissioners serve without pay. They attend monthly meetings and may serve on committees of the Board.

ESD commissioners must be at least 18 years old and a registered voter or property owner in the district.

ESD commissioners need not be former firefighters. The county commissioners court may

consider a prospective appointee's experience in business and other public service.

For more information or to be considered, contact ESD Commissioner Joe Ondrasek at [joeondrasek@gmail.com](mailto:joeondrasek@gmail.com).

## Benefits

*From Page 1*

- Opportunity to attend the SFFMA Annual Training Conference and Convention.
- Exemption from college fees for Advanced Firefighter Certification
- Discounts on dental/vision insurance and on supplemental insurance.
- Discounts on EMS supplies and equipment.
- Special rates on insurance policies for auto, umbrella, RV/motorhome, motorcycle, boat, trailer and flood insurance.
- Automatic \$3,000 accidental death and dismemberment insurance policy and a \$5,000 immediate line-of-duty-death benefit.
- Optional extended policies available through VFIS and NVFC affiliation.
- Discounts on home security systems and on cellular phone service through several providers.
- Discounts on hotel lodging.

For more information, go to <http://www.precinct4.com/site/recruitment/> or contact Chief Joe Dannenbaum at [chief@precinct4.com](mailto:chief@precinct4.com).

**HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES**

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO DO
<b>HEAT STROKE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High body temperature (103°F or higher)</li> <li>• Hot, red, dry, or damp skin</li> <li>• Fast, strong pulse</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Losing consciousness (passing out)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 911 right away-heat stroke is a medical emergency</li> <li>• Move the person to a cooler place</li> <li>• Help lower the person's temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath</li> <li>• Do not give the person anything to drink</li> </ul>
<b>HEAT EXHAUSTION</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• Cold, pale, and clammy skin</li> <li>• Fast, weak pulse</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Muscle cramps</li> <li>• Tiredness or weakness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fainting (passing out)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cool place</li> <li>• Loosen your clothes</li> <li>• Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath</li> <li>• Sip water</li> </ul> <p><b>Get medical help right away if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are throwing up</li> <li>• Your symptoms get worse</li> <li>• Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour</li> </ul>
<b>HEAT CRAMPS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating during intense exercise</li> <li>• Muscle pain or spasms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop physical activity and move to a cool place</li> <li>• Drink water or a sports drink</li> <li>• Wait for cramps to go away before you do any more physical activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Get medical help right away if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cramps last longer than 1 hour</li> <li>• You're on a low-sodium diet</li> <li>• You have heart problems</li> </ul>
<b>SUNBURN</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful, red, and warm skin</li> <li>• Blisters on the skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay out of the sun until your sunburn heals</li> <li>• Put cool cloths on sunburned areas or take a cool bath</li> <li>• Put moisturizing lotion on sunburned areas</li> <li>• Do not break blisters</li> </ul>
<b>HEAT RASH</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples on the skin (usually on the neck, chest, groin, or in elbow creases)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay in a cool, dry place</li> <li>• Keep the rash dry</li> <li>• Use powder (like baby powder) to soothe the rash</li> </ul>



**BRAZOS COUNTY  
EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 4/  
BRAZOS COUNTY PRECINCT 4 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.**

P.O. Box 7102  
Bryan, Texas 77805

[www.precinct4.com](http://www.precinct4.com)

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**In this issue: • Brush trucks and wildland fires  
• Join Precinct 4 VFD • Spotting heat-related illnesses**

*Para obtener una copia de esta informacion traducida al español,  
favor llame a telefono (979) 255-9738*

## **In case you have to evacuate...**

*Here's hoping you never have to, but if you do, here are some tips*

All it takes is a major hurricane coming up the Brazos to require evacuation of our area. Here are a few guidelines from the Brazos County Local Emergency Planning Committee:

The decision to evacuate (as opposed to sheltering-in-place) is made by public officials, such as the county judge or even the fire chief. The notice to evacuate will come from radio or television stations using the Emergency Alert System, from emergency vehicles using public address loudspeakers or from door-to-door notifications.

### **WHAT TO PACK**

If you're forced to evacuate, quickly gather and pack the essentials:

- Eyeglasses, dentures, prescription drugs or other important medicines, and a first aid kit.
- Baby supplies (food, diapers etc.)
- Credit cards and checkbooks
- Portable radio and flashlight
- Drivers license and other identification documents
- Family pets (Some public shelters may not accept pets, but other arrangements can be made)

### **BEFORE YOU GO**

- When you're notified of the need to evacuate, you'll be told where to go. Generally, you travel upwind if a hazardous material release has occurred, to higher ground if there's a flash flood and out of the path of a fire.
- Before you leave, turn off lights, appliances and the heating/cooling system. Leave your refrigerator/freezer on.
- Lock your home.
- Use as few vehicles for your family as possible. If you have room, share your ride with neighbors. Fewer vehicles on the road will ease congestion and speed up the process for everyone.
- Do not go to your children's school to pick them up. This will cause severe congestion and hamper the schools' ability to move children to a safe, designated location. You'll be informed by radio or television where to pick up the children.
- Try to avoid making phone calls, landline or cell, to assure that emergency responders have access.