

January / February 2020



# *The Castle Hills* **Reporter**

HAPPY  
NEW YEAR  
2020

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Message from the Mayor.....p.2-4  
City Manager.....p.4-5  
City Council Comments.....p.6-8  
Code Compliance.....p.8

Castle Hills Fire Department ..... p.9  
Police Department News..... p.10  
City Snapshots..... p.11  
Oak Wilt Education ..... p.13  
Castle Hills Woman's Club..... p.13  
Space Heater Safety Tips ..... p.15

A bi-monthly newsletter for the residents of the City of Castle Hills published by Neighborhood News, Inc.

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



In the midst of the recent turmoil in Castle Hills, I was quoted by a local media outlet indicating “I had been serving as Mayor for five months but it felt like five years.” Perhaps the comment should have been “I have been serving as Mayor for five months but it felt like five years’ worth of experiences.” In my short seven months as Mayor of Castle Hills, we have been through a whirlwind of situations in the City. I am extremely proud to say that the City has prevailed and to some extent the City, employees, and residents have been galvanized by recent struggles.

One of the legal terms that I became quite familiar with as Mayor was “a case of first impression.” A case of first impression is defined as – “a case in which a question of interpretation of law is presented which has never arisen before in any reported case.” Many of the issues we came across put City Council, the City’s legal counsel, and your Mayor into uncharted territory. In simple terms, there was no Council or Mayoral handbook on how to proceed. Instead, the City relied on multiple partners; such as Texas Secretary of State, Texas Municipal League, Bexar County Tax Assessor, and the City’s legal counsel. Although the preference would have been a less tumultuous desire in the first one hundred days in office, I am a firm believer that pressure makes or breaks. In the City’s situation, the pressure has proven my commitment to serve the City of Castle Hills with integrity, honesty, and transparency which the position demands and that the residents rightfully deserve.

One of my campaign promises was leveraging my personal, professional, and business relationships to benefit the City of Castle Hills. In previous reporter articles, the City had the “Stop the Bleed” training for all City employees for FREE; done in cooperation with the great people over at the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council. As a matter of fact, the Texas House of Representatives passed House Bill No. 496 “each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall develop and annually make available a protocol for school employees and volunteers to follow in the event of a traumatic injury.” The City of Castle Hills was able to be a pioneer in this regard.

In November, Fire Chief James Ladewig, City Manager Ryan Rapelye, and I coordinated the City’s first “Sound the Alarm” event in cooperation with The Red Cross of South-

(Continued on page 3)

*“The statements and facts contained in newsletter articles from the Mayor and City Council Members are their own personal views and should not be considered official city sponsored statements or facts and should not be relied upon as such.”*

## CITY COUNCIL

**JR Trevino**  
Mayor

**Joe Izbrand**  
Place 1

**Mark F. Sanderson**  
Place 2

**Kurt May**  
Place 3

**Lesley Wenger,**  
Mayor Pro-Tem, Place 4

**Douglas Gregory**  
Place 5

## CITY STAFF

**Ryan Rapelye**  
City Manager, (210) 293-9673

**Vacant**  
City Secretary, (210) 293-9681

**Lara Feagins**  
Finance, (210) 293-9674

**James “Jim” Ladewig**  
Fire Department Chief  
(210) 342-2341, ext. 217

**Johnny Siemens**  
Police Department Chief  
(210) 342-2341

**Rick Harada**  
Public Works & Animal Control  
Department Director  
(210) 293-9676

**ALL EMERGENCIES, EMT, FIRE  
& POLICE CALL 911**

Non-emergency (210) 342-2341

## Monthly Meetings

All meetings are held at  
City Hall unless otherwise posted.

### City Council

2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

### Architectural Review Committee

1st Wednesday, 7:00pm  
Upon Request

**Board of Adjustment**  
4th Monday, 5:30 p.m.  
Upon Request

**Zoning Commission**  
1st Tuesday, 7:00pm  
Upon Request

**Crime Control & Prevention  
District**

3rd Monday, 5:30pm  
Quarterly or as needed

### Residential and Commercial Service and Repair

## Gallos Plumbing Service Co.

**Call 210-679-0000**

[GallosPlumbing@yahoo.com](mailto:GallosPlumbing@yahoo.com)

M-36478 Licensed and Insured

- Sewer Camera Inspections • Excavation
- Foundation Leak Repair • Yard Leaks
- Hydrojet Sewer Drain Cleaning
- Water Heaters + Tankless

**Ask Us About Smart Leak Prevention  
Technology To Protect Your Home  
From Water Damage**



## ADVERTISE HERE



- Multiple AD Sizes
- Discounts

Ask about other news-  
letters in your area

[sales@neighborhoodnews.com](mailto:sales@neighborhoodnews.com)  
210-558-3160



Central Texas. Also, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority showed up in numbers and they showed up to work! Together with the Ladies of Delta Sigma Theta, Castle Hills Police and Fire Department we all knocked on doors on the Southwest corner of Castle Hills; inside the loop and the area between Honeysuckle and Jackson Keller. As volunteers, we went door to door to remind residents about the dangers of fire safety; the officers that joined offered home security assessments. Aside from talking about fire safety, we checked to make sure fire alarms were functioning.

If the alarm was not working, we replaced it and if the batteries were bad, these were also replaced. Best of all, if you didn't have smoke alarms, we installed up to 3 alarms per house! We are grateful to the Red Cross for their partnership and service in helping make Castle Hill homes a little safer! It was important to have this event before the winter months when people start using their heaters. As a result, of these efforts, over 33 alarms were installed and countless batteries, for FREE! If we didn't get a chance to stop by your house and you're interested in this life saving opportunity, please contact the San Antonio Red Cross (210) 224- 5151 or the Castle Hills Fire Department 210-293-9677.



In knocking on doors, I heard frustration about code compliance violations and miscellaneous small issues around the City. In my opinion, one of the problems is the City has limited personnel to observe, report, and process all the issues which exist. Aside from that, issues that come into the City regarding code compliance complaints must follow be followed with administrative documentation and allow the property owner the due diligence to respond and remediate the potential violation. The administrative documentation is necessary and essential to protect not only the City but the homeowners. However, having the right tools to report is key and this is part of the biggest and most exciting project in which we have been working on and it is the first of its kind for a City like Castle Hills.

When elected as an Alderman in 2016, I contacted a friend of mine who is the CEO and Co-Founder for City Flag, Alberto Altamirano. If you aren't familiar with City Flag, it is one of the first of its kind. City Flag is an interactive phone application that "gamifies" the typical 311 process; i.e. reporting potholes, code compliance issues, and graffiti. The user gets "points" by reporting an issue, you also get additional points when the issue is successfully addressed. The beauty of this software is that aside from letting the user provide a geotagged (an address) location, they can attach a picture, and provide additional details to help or aid in reporting an issue. If that wasn't enough of a selling point, the backend of the software is where it truly shines. All 311

complaints are provided on a "dashboard" that allows City staff to view and keep track of issues received by departments. Not only can the City staff keep track of the reports but you can also see the status of the reports once you submitted to the application.

This software can be complex, time consuming, and ultimately expensive; especially for a small City like Castle Hills with infrastructure needs. However, the City of Castle Hills could benefit from an application like City Flag but the initial investment would be challenging. The City could benefit and we could try it, residents would love being able to manage their requests for service. Apart, from the residents enjoying this reporting tool but would also help increase the efficacy of our Code Compliance Officer by having the entire City pitch in and having the software to aid in the automation of some of the processes. After being elected Mayor, Beto and I sat down once again, only this meeting ended a little differently. Beto and City Flag agreed to do a one-off pilot program for the City of Castle Hills at NO EXPENSE and without committing the City to any future expenses! Essentially, it was a try before any future expenses to the City.

Over the past several months, City Manager, Ryan Rapelye, and other department heads have met and collaborated on how to fully maximize the value of the City Flag app for the City of Castle Hills. The even better news is that to some extent, we will have the ability to tailor the app as necessary to fit the City of Castle Hills. Fire, Police, and Public works have all been working to include some of the most frequent requests from residents as a part of this application. The ultimate goal is to make the City services more visible, accessible, and transparent for all residents.

As Mayor, my goal is to continue to strengthen and grow these types of relationships throughout the area to help our City. For many years it seems like we have thought and to some extent acted like the City of San Antonio is our adversary. The truth of the matter is that the City of San Antonio is an ally for Castle Hills and all other municipalities in and around Bexar County. Much like any other ally, the goal should be to start and foster these partnerships with better relationships for the City of Castle Hills. In working with Mr. Rapelye, we as a City need to meet with City of San Antonio and Bexar County in January of 2020 to see how we can collaborate on our flooding issues.

*(Continued on page 4)*



**PHYLLIS BROWNING CO.**  
THE VERY BEST™

**NORMA MCCLELLAND**  
ABR, CHMS, GRI, SRES, REALTOR®  
4372 N. Loop 1604 West, Ste. 102  
San Antonio, Texas 78249  
C (210) 912-3090  
nmcclelland@phyllisbrowning.com  
www.normamc.com

Castle Hills Resident

("Mayor's Message" continued from page 3)

Lastly, one of my goals for 2020 is to provide much needed operating structure for our City. I have learned that much of what we do is because "we have always done it that way." As many of you all know, that is one of the most expensive phrases in businesses. Moving forward, this New Year I have optimism of a less turbulent time which would us to focus on establishing more efficient operating procedures for the City. One item of interest is how the council agendas are established.

My first intent is to alleviate the time constraint that staff has to research and produce the agenda packets which is 3 days. This is from the deadline in which council submissions are due from the day of posting the final agenda for proper notice of the meeting. Please keep in mind that the City Attorney is active in reviewing all items so we must allow time for that interchange as well. Councilmembers should have more time to review their packets. Currently, councilmembers have four days to review their packets before agendas go out on Friday for the following Tuesday's council meeting. Ideally, councilmembers and the residents should have at least five days to review materials about issues on the agenda.

Finally, I would like to consider making it a requirement that agenda items submitted have some basic supporting information, for council, staff, and the residents. Often, staff receives agenda requests with little or no background information. If the requesting councilmember can provide some basic information, this will make submitting the item much easier and allow everyone to have a better understanding of the purpose of the submitted agenda item. While these are a few ideas, as always, I welcome your input because we are here to serve you, the residents of Castle Hills.

I hope that you and your families had a great holiday season and that 2020 may be the best year yet!



*Quality Service Since 1989*

**ARTISTIC TREES INC.**

Certified Arborist #TX-3713A

**PROFESSIONAL TREE & LANDSCAPING SERVICE**

**(210) 561-0155**

[www.artistictrees.net](http://www.artistictrees.net)

BBB A+ Rating

*"Experienced and Dependable"*



## MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

By Ryan D. Rapelye, City Manager

### 2020 and Beyond!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. As we begin the new year, 2020, there is much to look forward to in our community as we continue to progress and build upon what has been done in 2019. As City Manager, I am excited about what has been achieved, planned, and yet to come in 2020 for the City of Castle Hills. Over the last year, the City finalized the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which provides a road map for addressing infrastructure issues for streets and drainage needs. This CIP serves as a planning tool to help the City forecast the timing and funding of future capital projects. Eventually, the City will need to find another conduit for funding capital improvement projects outlined in the CIP.

Throughout 2019, we have been able to address necessary building improvements at City hall both externally and internally. We have enhanced audio and video features for our council chambers and security improvements around City Hall. We move forward a multi-million dollar capital project in conjunction with SAWS to improve the street and utility infrastructure with additional sidewalks along Antler. Also, in 2019, one major capital project was designed and another is in the process of being designed to focus on drainage in the community. Over the last year, we have worked on a number of positive projects, which includes working with NEISD for residents to utilize the playground after hours/weekends. The City also partnered with NEISD to construct the first phase of sidewalks along honeysuckle from 410.

As we look towards 2020, work has been planned and identified over the last year which entails the design for the Banyan/Glentower drainage project. This project has been bid out and hopeful we will be able to move forward to address a street which has been in dire need for full-depth reconstruction. This will include concreting the roadway along with the installation of drainage culverts to channel stormwater to the outfall to Loop 410. In the FY 2020 Adopted Budget, we have also defined and outlined additional capital projects to address drainage and we will look to began our street maintenance plan in early Spring.

Another project will require a partnership and laying the ground to work with the City of San Antonio towards their 2022 bond program. This project would address the need to improve the drainage along Lockhill-Selma to reduce

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

the conveyance of stormwater through Castle Hills and improve drainage on many of the streets within the City of Castle Hills especially Carolwood and North Manton which are prone to flooding. Potentially planning for this project with San Antonio would need to take place in 2020 and I remain enthusiastic that we can collectively work together for the benefit of both communities. We as the City need to leverage and/or partner to address these needs though intergovernmental cooperation with our regional partners like San Antonio and Bexar County. The City of Castle Hills needs to be connected to the larger community and we can't continue to be isolated and alone on an island.

In 2020, we will continue to work with the Ad HOC Project Committee to develop a plan for the Commons to enhance quality of life improvements in Castle Hills such as lighting, shade area, playscape and additional landscaping. These enhancements will create additional amenities for families and promote additional seasonal events for the community. In 2020, we need to develop our brand and distinguish the City of Castle Hills. I am hopeful we can develop this brand to attract positive attention to create pride and showcase the community as a benefit to our residents, businesses and visitors. As far as economic development enhancements, we look to improve the NW Military corridor in order to stimulate and possibly expand our business community which would aid in bolstering our sales tax. Moving forward, we will look to updating our City's master plan which was originally done in 1997 to address long-term comprehensive planning for Castle Hills.

The FY 2020 adopted budget provides funding for our core services such as Public Safety (Fire, Police and Dispatch), sanitation/streets within our Public Works, Municipal Court and Administration are addressed to make certain exemplary city services continue to work for residents of Castle Hills. This past year, we are reminded of the risk to our first responders. In June, our police officers were working an accident and injured in the line of duty. This incident

alone serves as why we need to ensure we are addressing first responders needs for our organization and the community. Castle Hills is fortunate to have a dedicated public safety team encompassing police, fire and dispatch where response time is the key in any situation.

Our City staff has remained dedicated over the last year to the quality of service for residents in Castle Hills. More than ever, over the last year, I have utilized my experience to assess and address operational needs and ultimately, we have been working to enhance our organization and the community as a whole. With the assistance of staff and as a team we have we have recognized the need to continually review best practices for operations and services, monitor the budget for fiscal efficiency, the need to develop a better communication platform, review and work towards improvement of the personnel policy manual. As we progress, we have created a culture for the organization which is dependent on team work and customer service.

We have identified the need to improve our website, social media and overall information as it relates to the City for better transparency and allow the community to become more informed on events, projects and City related services. A plan with a timeline and benchmarks has already been developed to re-launch our website in late Spring. We have also recognized the need to educate our citizenry on code compliance and the procedures behind enforcement.

In 2020, as City Manager I will continue to work with City Council on short and long-term goals for the City to address infrastructure needs, promote quality of life projects, economic development improvements and ensure we retain and attract good employees for our organization.

Finally, thank you to all our employees and I appreciate all they do for the City of Castle Hills and our organization on a daily basis. Please contact me at [rrapelye@castlehills-tx.gov](mailto:rrapelye@castlehills-tx.gov) or at the office at 210.293.9673 if you have any questions on projects or need assistance with services from the City of Castle Hills.



**ALAMO HANDYMAN**  
**No Job Is Too Small. We Do It All!**  
 Residential | Commercial  
**(210) 684-8500**

License TECL #30576  
 Insured & Bonded

VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express

2018 Angie's List SUPER SERVICE AWARD  
 2008 to 2017

BBB A+ Rating

@alamohandyman tx  
[www.alamohandyman tx.com](http://www.alamohandyman tx.com)



**E. L. Smith Plumbing**  
**We Stop Leaks**  
 M-8217

**[www.elsmith.com](http://www.elsmith.com)**  
**210-736-1605**



# COUNCIL COMMENTS



**JOE IZBRAND**  
PLACE 1

It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve as your Place 1 Alderman for these past several months and to continue building on the positive momentum and pride that is flourishing in our city.

We are already seeing the results that come from good governance, responsible leadership and a stable, professional city staff.

In the past few months business interest in our city has been active. Several new restaurants have either opened or are in the process, and more professional office space is being developed in previously vacant locations. These activities are signs that word is spreading that Castle Hills is a great place to live, work, shop and send our kids to school. Our reputation is on the rise.

The Ad Hoc Projects Committee has been discussing the 'rebranding' of Castle Hills and how that can help attract the right businesses to the right areas of the city, draw new families to our neighborhoods and celebrate the rich history created by our longest-residing neighbors. As a public relations and marketing professional in my career, I know first-hand the benefits that can come from telling Castle Hills' positive stories.

In 2020, one of my top priorities will be on helping the city develop the tools and channels to better communicate with its residents. In this age of digital communication there is an expectation of instant access to information and our neighbors want to be kept well informed. By focusing on resident communication, we can ensure that our community is more engaged and is participating in our elections, our government, our service organizations and our community activities.

DOUBLE PANE WINDOWS • MIRRORING WALLS  
REPLACEMENT GLASS • SHOWER ENCLOSURES  
GLASS TABLE TOPS

*Free Estimates*

## B&T Glass & Mirror

TOMMY MOON  
BRIAN MOON

**656-8507**

Step one in the process will be addressing the city's web site, making it more 'user friendly,' providing relevant and timely content, and allocating the staff resources to maintain it. I have had several conversations with city manager Ryan Rapelye, who is assessing best practices from other municipalities, and he shares my strong belief in the importance of addressing web site improvements and effective communication.

Next, I would like to see the city establish a monthly e-newsletter, whereby residents and businesses can sign up to receive regular emails with updates on city projects and priorities, and other information that helps to keep our community informed. Mr. Rapelye already prepares an excellent monthly report for City Council that can easily be adapted, and other timely updates included, for community sharing.

Aligned to both the web site improvements and an e-newsletter, another step toward effective communication is greater use of social media channels including Facebook and Twitter. I personally have found social media to be the easiest and fastest way to connect with neighbors and believe that by providing dedicated staff time to social media, the city can create better levels of engagement throughout our city.

At the same time, we need to recognize that some of our neighbors may not participate in social media or even have an email address. For them, printed publications are the most effective way of communicating. Magazines like the Castle Hills Reporter can provide real value. However, with very early publication deadlines, content can quickly become outdated and it is important to align resources for effectively planning the publication's content.

I recognize that these efforts will take time to complete. Yet, by investing in an effort to communicate well, we can make Castle Hills an even more connected, engaged community – proud of where we live and working together for the common good.

I post regular updates on city news and activities at [www.facebook.com/IzbrandPlace1](https://www.facebook.com/IzbrandPlace1) and invite you to connect with me there. You can also share your thoughts, ideas and concerns with me at [IzbrandPlace1@gmail.com](mailto:IzbrandPlace1@gmail.com). Thank you, again, for the opportunity to be of service to our community.



**KURT MAY**  
PLACE 3

With the New Year, comes continued work to provide representative governance of Castle Hills which reflects the citizen's best interests.

I along with other members of the City Council, wish to prioritize streets and drainage projects improving the functional infrastructure of our city. With the direction of John Squire, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Projects Committee, and support of the

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 6)*

Mayor, and City Manager, these projects should take shape in 2020. Citizen input will be crucial in defining these projects, and with the contribution of fresh ideas, I'm confident progress will be made.

To enhance citizen input, I'm beginning a monthly invitation to Castle Hills residents to meet me on the first Tuesday evening of the month. The first such meeting, "Office Hours for Alderman, Place 3", is slated for Sushihana Restaurant on NW Military Highway, between 6:00 and 8:00pm., January 7, 2020. The Sushihana manager has space in the bar and back area for citizens to meet, discuss, and have dinner. The second monthly meeting place will be Pet's Barn, also on NW Military Highway, on Tuesday, February 4, 2020, between 6:00 and 7:30pm.

I invite all citizens to be involved in their local Government, by serving on the standing Committees, Commissions, attending Council meetings and/or contacting their members of City Council. Let's all join in supporting Castle Hills' local business, work together, and help plan the City we wish to have.



**DOUGLAS GREGORY**  
PLACE 5

Many years ago, I was a member of a City Council that was viewed so favorably that no one had an opponent in the general election. The reason for this was, that Council, acted like a Business Council or Board of Directors in which serious City business was addressed and action was forthcoming in order to strengthen Castle Hills. The past election was a yell from citizens that they want everyone to be civil and focus on the business of the city, I am optimistic that the message has been heard.

During the next few months, several multi-million-dollar infrastructure projects will be voted on. A possible bond issue may be considered. New monument signs will be considered (branding). Better visible street signs will be considered. Perhaps Christmas lights next year on N.W. Military. I will be pushing these and other issues forward for consideration and hopefully other members of the Council will come forth with thoughtful, positive proposals. Citizens want positive action, fairly debated in a professional and sober manner. If these things can be done, we can, once again, be a city on the move!

This is what we must have and what you overwhelmingly voted for.

Let's get moving: time is of the essence.

Happy New Year!



**LESLEY WENGER**  
Mayor Pro-Tem, PLACE 4

## VIA and SAWS vs. the Aquifer

Recent news stories have relayed a plan by San Antonio, supported by County Commissioner Nelson Wolff, to move a special 1/8 cent Edwards Aquifer Protection sales tax over to VIA. This tax, which expires in 2021, has been used to purchase land that, if it were otherwise purchased by developers to be built on, would adversely affect the Edwards Aquifer and, thereby, most of our water supply. The tax was approved and is paid by San Antonio residents and only they would be able to vote on it. All sales tax has a life-span and usually must be re-approved every few years as specified in the initial approval by voters. Interestingly, the 1/2 cent VIA tax, paid by most Bexar County residents, was passed 42 years ago on a County-wide vote and has never come up for renewal.

San Antonio residents already pay an additional 1/8 cent VIA tax that was supposed to be used for a street car plan which never happened because there is an aversion to rails in streets by most voters. Mayor Nirenberg, who squeaked into office last June with 51% of the vote, has renamed the effort to expand into rail transit

*(Continued on page 8)*

**SHAW**  
COMPANY  
**REMODELING**

Design • Bathrooms •  
Kitchens • Painting •  
Custom Cabinets

**Remodeling San Antonio for over 20 years**

**210-366-2380**

**ShawCoRemodeling.com**

**11943 Starcrest Dr. 78247**

**Visit Our Newly Designed Showroom!**

**Free Estimates & 100% Financing!**

(Continued from page 7)

as “multi-modal”. None of this would have anything to do with the rest of us, except for subsequent plans by the Mayor, and of course the Express-News, which always supports increased taxes. The first plan was for the San Antonio River Authority (SARA), already a taxing entity, to have voters approve an increase to their portion of our property tax bills that would have raised the average SARA tax paid by a Bexar County homeowner from \$38.64 to \$90.60 per year. You can take a look at your current tax bill and estimate what your increase would have been since most houses in Castle Hills are not “average”. However that plan went awry because the SARA board members are elected and they voted 7-5 to reject the proposal and not place the matter on the ballot.

Facing criticism from environmentalists who are a base of his support, and determined get more money for VIA and still protect the Aquifer, Nirenberg, who sits on the SAWS board, convinced the rest of the SAWS board members to take over the Aquifer program by funding and overseeing it themselves which would obviously add an additional charge to our water rates.

As it is, on January 1, 2020 everyone will see their SAWS bills increase substantially to pay for the Vista Ridge pipeline—something that only San Antonio City Council got to vote for, although the rest of SAWS customers in Bexar County pay for it as well. Any increase in SAWS bills benefits San Antonio because, as the owners of the utility, they alone get a percentage of each bill for their own budgetary needs. The cost of SAWS assuming the Aquifer Protection Program will add even more to the forthcoming rate hike and no one has specified how much that will be.

Lesley Wenger, Place 4  
(210) 377-3636  
wengertx@satx.rr.com

## Code Compliance

By Luis Zamarron

Happy 2020! As well as being the Code Officer and the Interim Assistant to the City Manager, I am also the 2020 Census point-of-contact person for the US Census Bureau. In that role, I would like to provide a very quick overview of the upcoming census and how it will work.

Information on the census can be found at <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/factsheets/2019/dec/how-census-invites-everyone.pdf>: “How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond. Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone. Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker. 95% of households will receive their census invitation in the mail. Almost 5% of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home’s physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).

Less than 1% of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.”

In the coming months, I will endeavor to keep you, the citizens, informed as to the timeline, process and even the look of the census forms. In the meantime, if you have any questions, I invite you to visit the following site as a good jumping-off point for further research - <https://2020census.gov/en.html>

Thanks for your time.



**KNOW WHAT'S  
BELOW.  
CALL BEFORE YOU DIG.**

ALWAYS CALL 811 BEFORE YOU BEGIN AN EXCAVATION PROJECT, EVEN SMALL ONES, SO THAT ALL UTILITIES CAN BE IDENTIFIED AND MARKED. DIG WITH CARE. DAMAGES ARE AVOIDED WHEN SAFE DIGGING PROCEDURES ARE FOLLOWED.

**SO CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG!**

**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**

**FREE  
FLU  
SHOTS!**

While supplies last.

**BEST CHOICE  
PRIMARY CARE**

**FREE  
Consult for  
Aesthetic Services**

Self pay clients and most  
insurance accepted!

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

Vivace  
Botox  
Vampire  
Facial  
Vampire  
Breastlift  
O-Shot/P-Shot  
Hair  
Restoration  
Platelet Rich  
Plasma (PRP)

**Call Today to  
Schedule your  
Appointment**

**210-372-8721**

Sick Visits  
Well Visits  
Annuals  
School  
Physicals  
Women's  
Health  
Trigger Point  
Injections  
Joint  
Injections

# Castle Hills Fire Department

By Chief Jim Ladewig

## Fire Department Training

The Castle Hills Fire Department had a very active month in specialized training for the department personnel. A new Live Fire Training Program, Leadership, Technical Training and a Neighborhood Smoke Alarm Program was just a few activities completed over the past month.

Live Fire Training was completed in coordination with our Mutual Aid Departments of Shavano Park and Balcones Heights Fire Department. The training was held over three separate days to ensure all personnel received the training. The training consisted of 3 training scenarios requiring crews to make interior attacks on live fires in rooms made up of wooden pallets and hay. This is invaluable training allowing firefighters experience in extinguishing fires in a controlled environment, which could not be achieved in any other process. These trainings were done at the Fort Sam Houston Burn Facility and will continue to be done in the future.

Technical and Leadership training in managing High Rise Incidents was also completed at the beginning of November, which was hosted by our department and attended by other firefighters from the surrounding areas. Additionally, 10 members of our department received advanced care and maintenance training as Technician to maintain our Scott SCBA Air Packs. This will

enable us to service some parts of the SCBA's in house reducing some of the maintenance cost for these units. Certain parts will still need to be serviced by the manufacturer due to liability requirements. There also was a safety class for First Responders hosted at the fire station conducted by representatives from City Public Service. The class reviewed safety practices for first responders and policies in handling incidents dealing with natural gas and electrical emergencies. This class was also attended by other surrounding agencies.

In coordination with the American Red Cross, the department assisted volunteers in the Sound the Alarm Program for the residents of Castle Hills. Individuals walked the streets going door to door offering to install smoke alarms to residents in need of new alarms, as well as firefighters evaluating resident's home for fire safety and having working smoke alarms. Any resident wishing to have their home evaluated for fire safety please do not hesitate to call the fire department to schedule an appointment.

The firefighters of Castle Hills Fire Department are dedicated to staying abreast of the latest firefighting technologies and look forward to continue advancing their skills whenever the classes are available. The department maintain a commitment to continue to sponsor additional classes and training throughout the upcoming year.



**10<sup>TH</sup> YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

**PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY!**

**LA Hacienda PRODUCTS**

**ORGANIC MASA**

**TAMALES**

**AUTHENTIC MEXICAN TAMALES**

Traditional, Lard-Free & Banana Leaf-Wrapped Tamales Available

6421 Blanco Rd, San Antonio ☎ +1 210-377-0808  
 © info@lahaciendaproducts.com www.lahaciendaproducts.com





## Castle Hills Police Department IN THE NEWS

By Police Chief Johnny Siemens

As 2019 comes to a close, the City of Castle Hills held its first annual Employee appreciation and Annual Awards Luncheon. During this event, each department was responsible for providing various items, which included turkey, ham, and all the fixins! The premise behind this luncheon was multi-faceted and included, but was not limited to, the following:



- appreciate the employees internally; from one employee to another if you will
- express gratitude for a job well done during a trying and tumultuous year or so
- recognize annual award winners
- reinforce a positive outlook for the future of Castle Hills
- and simply fellowship, camaraderie, and esprit de corps

We are fortunate to work with some of the most dedicated and professional employees in the business! Their collective dedication to

the citizens, the city, and their respective career fields is unparalleled. Afterall, the City of Castle Hills mission statement is "to provide unrivalled City services to a diverse and engaged community." This is our why...serving something greater than ourselves, and we are honored to do so!

As for the police department, we typically recognize an officer of the year annually, this year we expanded that to a civilian of the year, an officer of the year, and a supervisor of the year. Further, we issued two Police Purple Heart awards and recognized several officers for posting 90% or greater during our annual fitness assessment. Worth noting, the police department mission statement is "to provide unrivalled policing services to a diverse and engaged community."

The following employees were recognized as employees of the year in their respective categories:

**Travis Lowe** – civilian employee of the year, **Officer Nathan Alcala** – officer of the year, **Sgt. TJ Crawford** – supervisor of the year

The following employees were awarded the Police Purple Heart award for being injured in the line of duty, both of whom were injured when a DWI driver crashed through an accident scene killing one good Samaritan and forcing two civilians and these two officers to jump from the overpass.



As always, please report suspicious activity and don't forget to follow us on Facebook.



# SERVICE FIRST

## Air Conditioning & Heating

# 210-521-1500

### 20% OFF

### All Repairs

Must Mention this Ad.

Not Valid with Other offers.

Expires 2/29/2020

### \$500 OFF

### New Equipment

Must Mention this Ad.

Not Valid with Other offers.

Expires 2/29/2020

## EMERGENCY 24/7 SERVICE

### FAST RESPONSE!

- 20+ Years Experience
- Affordable & Dependable Estimates
- Affordable Preventative Maintenance Plans
- AC Financing & Installation Loans
- Service Warranties



## SERVICE FIRST

### AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING

# 830-256-0575

Residential - Commercial

24Hr. Emergency Service

"Quality And Comfort That You Deserve"

## www.servicefirstactx.com



# CITY SNAPSHOTS

## CPS Safety Training at the Fire Department



## Ribbon Cutting Events



## Go Green

LET'S DO OUR PART IN HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT!

**DID YOU KNOW...** YOU CAN "OPT IN" TO HAVE THIS NEWSLETTER DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

- 1) Visit [www.NeighborhoodNews.com](http://www.NeighborhoodNews.com)
- 2) Click on: "Let's do our part" and follow the instructions.

**WHAT WILL CHANGE?** NOTHING! You will begin receiving your newsletter by email on the next publication. We'll be sure to remove your address from the mailing list while you enjoy your digital copy.

Neighborhood News is pleased to be offering this free service! Questions: Feel free to contact us at (210) 558-3160 or [info@neighborhoodnews.com](mailto:info@neighborhoodnews.com)



**(210) 425-2640**  
**Michael Reynolds**

**Professional Cleaning - Affordable Prices**

**Call Today for a 15% Discount!**

**We Specialize in Mold/Mildew Removal on:**

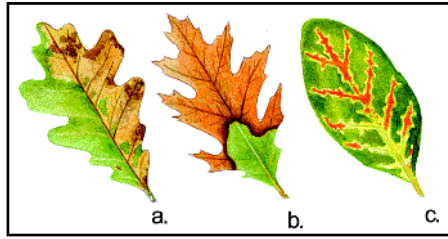
✓ Driveways	✓ Deck Restoration
✓ Patios	✓ Fencing
✓ Sidewalks	✓ Walls

**Hot-Water Pressure Cleaning!**

**NOW Working in YOUR Neighborhood!**

# OAK WILT EDUCATION

*By Rod Sanchez, Development Services Department*



Oak Wilt is a deadly fungal disease that infects and disables the water-conducting system in oak trees. All Oaks are susceptible to this disease, but some species more than others. With no known cure, methods to control are expensive and treatments are not always effective or guaranteed. Oak Wilt is prevalent in Central Texas and spreads both above and below ground. Fungal mats develop under the bark on the trunks and major branches of infected Red oak trees. When the fungal mat enlarges and cracks the bark of the tree, an odor is released that attracts sap-feeding beetles. The fungus is transmitted when these beetles feed on the fungal mats and carry fungal spores to fresh wounds or cuts on healthy oak trees. Because oak trees have interconnected roots, the disease can be spread below ground through grafted root systems, eventually killing great numbers of oak trees in the area. Trees are an important public resource that enhance the quality of life, add value to properties and reduce energy costs and pollutants. Our City Arborist has some tips you can follow to help prevent Oak Wilt in your neighborhood:

- **Minimize pruning oak trees between February 1 and July 1.** This is when the Oak Wilt fungus is most active.
- Best time to prune trees is either in the middle of the summer, when temperatures are the hottest, or in late fall/early winter months when temperatures can be the coldest.
- Paint all cuts and wounds on oak trees within 30 minutes.
- Remove Red Oaks identified with Oak Wilt.
- Know where your firewood comes from. Don't transport unseasoned firewood from diseased Red Oaks.
- Make sure contractors doing tree pruning have a valid, city issued tree maintenance license and proper training.

If you suspect Oak Wilt in your neighborhood, contact the Texas Forest Service at (210) 494-1742. For additional recommendations and information, please visit the following websites:

- **TFS Texas Oak Wilt** – <http://texasoakwilt.org/oakwilt/oak-wilt-management/>
- **Eight Step Program to Oak Wilt Management** – <http://plantdiseasehandbook.tamu.edu/landscaping/eight-step-program-to-oak-wilt-management/>

If you are new (*or not so new*) to Castle Hills...Welcome! The Castle Hills Woman's Club is beginning its 67th year and we are eagerly accepting new members. Our club is a multigenerational group of women who contribute their time and talents to civic, charitable, and social projects in the City. If you are interested or have any questions please email me and I would be happy to help you. Good Works, Good Friends, Good Times....The Castle Hills Woman's Club!

**Judy Crawford, President**  
Jcrawford4@satx.rr.com

## Bundle up for savings

When you choose Allstate to protect what matters most, you get expert agents who will make it easy for you to save. Like with bundling your insurance. It's the simplest way for you to save time and money, while getting protection for the things that matter most. Stop by or call today and let's get you bundled up.

**David Pfau Insurance**  
210-257-0117  
2211 NW Military Hwy.  
Castle Hills  
davidpfau@allstate.com

Call or stop by to see  
how much you can save.

Subject to terms, conditions & availability. Savings vary. Allstate Vehicle and Property Insurance Co., Allstate Fire and Casualty Insurance Co. © 2018 Allstate Insurance Co.



A liquid facelift is a great option for those looking to rejuvenate the face without surgery.

Mention you saw us in this ad to receive discounted pricing.

- /// Mild (3 syringes) - \$1,500
- /// Moderate (4 syringes) - \$2,000
- /// Severe (5 syringes) - \$2,500

\* \$150 up charge for premium fillers (i.e. Juverderm Voluma)

Young, healthy-looking skin contains an abundance of a naturally hydrating substance called hyaluronic acid (HA). As you age, time, sunlight, and other factors can reduce the amount of HA in your skin. The lack of HA causes your skin to lose structure and volume – creating unwanted facial wrinkles and folds, like those “parentheses” lines around your nose and mouth, the loss of volume in your cheeks, and the lips. All of our fillers contain lidocaine, and we utilize topical numbing agents to make your treatment a comfortable experience.



**Call us at**  
**(210) 804-0772**  
 to book your  
 appointment with one of  
 our expert injectors.

Offer good through February 29, 2020.



## Electrical Portable Space Heater Safety

When the weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our homes. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations:

### Heater Checklist:

- Purchase a heater that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off if it tips over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Keep children away from the space heater.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

### The following are some examples of the different types of space heaters:

- Oil or water-filled radiator – Heated oil or water travels through the heater
- Fan-forced heater – A fan blows warm air over metal coils.
- Ceramic heater – Air is warmed over a ceramic heating element.
- Infrared heaters – Heat is created by infrared bulbs.

As a matter of fact, did you know that nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters? With that said, please take care when using a portable space heater in your home, green house or storage areas and remember to follow these safety tips to keep you and your family safe.

## Need a Passport?

City of Castle Hills  
209 Lemonwood Dr.

[CityofCastleHills.com](http://CityofCastleHills.com)



The City of Castle Hills is accepting paperwork for U.S. passport applications at city hall. The passport application services are available on a walk-in basis:

- Monday: 8:30 am to 2 pm;
- Wednesday: 8:30 am to 4 pm;
- Friday: 10 am to 2 pm

Appointments are available for Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

To schedule an appointment call (210) 293-9675 or (210) 342-2341.

For more information regarding how to apply for or renew your passport, please visit the U.S. Department of State website at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>



### Were you denied life insurance benefits because your insurance company claims your loved one lied on the policy application?

While this is one of the tactics used by insurance companies to deny life insurance claims, the standard necessary to prove such misrepresentation is very high in Texas. Don't let a life insurance company take advantage of you. Contact us at **(210) 733-4177** to set up a free consultation on your life insurance denial claim. We will fight to get you the benefits you deserve.

### ¿Se le negó un reclamo de beneficios de seguro de vida porque la compañía de seguro insiste que su ser querido mintió en su aplicación?

Aunque ésta es una de las tácticas que usan las compañías de seguro de vida para negar reclamos, el nivel de evidencia necesario para probar una representación falsa es muy alto en Texas. No deje que una compañía de seguro de vida se aproveche de usted. Contáctenos al **(210) 733-4177** para fijar una cita de consulta gratis para discutir su reclamo de seguro de vida. Pelearemos por ayudarle a recuperar los beneficios que se merece.

### Law Offices of John F. Younger Jr.

900 NE Loop 410 Ste. D424 • San Antonio, TX 78209-1406

Board Certified in Personal Injury Trial Law by The Texas Board of

Legal Specialization since 1980

<http://www.youngerlaw.net>

# WE TAKE CARE OF OUR NEIGHBORS



**We know accidents and illnesses don't just happen from 9 to 5.**

Methodist Hospital | Texsan **offers 24/7 expert emergency care** without long waits-and our ER is right in your neighborhood. We are known for our heart program, Joint Replacement Academy, and Inpatient Rehabilitation Center, as well as our full-service emergency department that treats all levels of emergencies and pains.

**Text "ER" to 32222 for average ER wait times**



**Methodist**  
**HOSPITAL | TEXSAN**



City of Castle Hills  
209 Lemonwood Drive  
San Antonio, TX 78213

PRST. STD.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SAN ANTONIO, TX  
PERMIT NO. 1568

*Time Dated*

★ *Independence* **VILLAGE** ★  
RESORT STYLE HOMES FOR ACTIVE ADULTS 55+  
*at Stone Oak*

**Classic**  
**CAR SHOW**  
★ *and Tour of Homes* ★

Resort-style Neighborhood of  
Homes, Full Service Apartments,  
Assisted Living

**Saturday, March 28th**  
**10:00am – 2:00pm**



Music & Refreshments

*Please* RSVP  
by MARCH 26th

20550 Huebner Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78258  
**(210) 209-8404**  
[www.independencevillage.com](http://www.independencevillage.com)  
Lic #100102



Published and distributed by:  
**Neighborhood News, Inc.**  
3740 Colony Drive Suite LL100  
San Antonio, TX 78230  
(210) 558-3160 \* (210) 558-3163 fax

*Info@NeighborhoodNews.com • [www.NeighborhoodNews.com](http://www.NeighborhoodNews.com)*

**For advertising sales and information please call or send an email to [Sales@NeighborhoodNews.com](mailto:Sales@NeighborhoodNews.com)**

Articles that appear in the Castle Hills Reporter newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official position of Neighborhood News, Inc. and their publication does not constitute an endorsement therein. The appearance of any advertisement in the Castle Hills Reporter newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Neighborhood News, Inc. of the goods or services advertised. Neighborhood News, Inc. is not responsible for errors beyond the cost of the actual ad space. Any publication of Neighborhood News, Inc., whether draft or final, is the sole property of Neighborhood News, Inc. and cannot be reproduced or distributed in any way, whether in print or electronically, without the express written consent of Neighborhood News, Inc. ©Neighborhood News, Inc.