

March 2018



# *The Castle Hills* **Reporter**



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# Message From the Mayor



*Tim Howell  
Mayor*

For the past few months, the Boys Scouts have been attending the beginning of our council meetings for Posting of the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance. We are blessed to live in a country founded on "certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness". Seeing these young men stand before us reminds us of these unalienable Rights. The respectful confident manner in which they complete their tasks is a sign of hope for our future.

The Boy Scout Oath states "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

The Boy Scout Law states: "A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent."

The Girl Scouts are also guided by the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts strive to build members whose moral fibers are strengthened through confidence, character, courageousness, and the desire to make the world a better place.

Hopefully, we adults mentor and teach the youth that are in our lives. During this process we too must continue to grow and strengthen our moral and civic selves. When I place my hand across my heart and recite the powerful words "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United State of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all" I am filled with awe at the power of these words and the greatness of our form of democracy. I look forward to seeing the leaders of tomorrow at each council meeting as they lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I am excited and honored to welcome Ryan Rapelye to the helm at City Hall. Mr. Rapelye began his duties as City Manager on February 20th. He comes to us from Brenham, Texas where he served as Assistant City Manager – General Government. If you have not had a chance to meet Mr. Rapelye stop by City Hall and welcome him aboard.

I hope to see each and everyone of you at a Fiesta Castle Hills event. Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 21st. The 5K kicks off the morning at 8:00 am, the parade begins at 10:00 and the fair runs until 4:00 p.m. This year there is a band, food trucks, and evening festivities from 7:30 – 10:30 p.m. Fiesta offers fun for everyone!

Early voting begins April 23rd and concludes on May 1st. Election day is May 5th. In addition to the three council members seats that are up for election, there is a special election to renew the quarter cent sales tax dedicated to maintenance and repair of municipal streets. This tax is collected every time a retailer makes a taxable sale and provides an additional revenue stream for our streets. Visitors passing through Castle Hills who stop and make a taxable purchase help fund the streets on which they are driving. Please take time to vote and utilize your right to support our democratic way of life!

See you all at Fiesta and at the polls!

**Timothy A Howell**  
Mayor City of Castle Hills Texas  
210-535-9094  
mayortimhowell@gmail.com

## CITY COUNCIL

Tim Howell  
Mayor

JR Treviño  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Place 1

Maretta Scott  
Place 2

Amy McLin  
Place 3

Frank Paul  
Place 4

Douglas Gregory  
Place 5, Treasurer

## CITY STAFF

Ryan Rapelye  
City Manager, (210) 293-9673

Minerva Gonzales  
City Secretary, (210) 293-9681

TBD  
Finance, (210) 293-9674

Darrell Dover  
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

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Monthly Meetings  
All meetings are held at  
City Hall unless otherwise posted.

City Council  
2nd and 4th 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  
As Needed

# FIESTA & DWI

It's Fiesta time and I hope everyone is getting ready for some Fiesta fun. There will be a lot of Fiesta events in which to participate and awesome Fiesta medals to collect. If your Fiesta fun will include alcohol, the Castle Hills Municipal Court wants to remind you that you will need a designated driver. The best time to plan for a designated driver is before you head out to the Fiesta event. You can designate a friend who stays sober (does not drink alcohol) for the event, call for a taxi, or download a rideshare app and schedule a pick-up time. If you don't know what time your Fiesta fun will end, taxis and rideshare services are available at all hours - day or night.

Driving while intoxicated (DWI) is not only dangerous but can have deadly consequences. If you get caught drinking and driving, there are many negative effects that can happen to you and those consequence can affect your family too. \*The following information is from [www.dmv.org](http://www.dmv.org)

\* For your first offense of driving while intoxicated you could receive:

- A fine up to \$2000.00.
- Jail time between 3 to 180 days.
- License suspension for up to two years.
- Annual surcharge up to \$2000.00 for three years to keep your license.
- DWI intervention or education program.
- Possible ignition interlock device.

\* Second offense of driving while intoxicated you could receive:

- Up to a \$4000.00 fine.
- Jail time between one month and one year.
- License suspension up to two years.
- Annual surcharge of up to \$2000.00 for three years to keep your license.
- DWI intervention or education program.
- Possible ignition interlock device.

\* Third offense of driving while intoxicated you could receive:

- Up to a \$10,000.00 fine.
- State prison time between two and ten years.
- License suspension up to two years.
- Annual surcharge of up to \$2000.00 for three years to keep your license.
- DWI intervention or education program.
- Possible ignition interlock device.

\* DWI with a child passenger who is younger than fifteen years old you could receive:

- Up to a \$10,000.00 fine.
- Jail time up to two years.
- License suspension for 180 days.

\* If someone is injured as a result of your drinking and driving you could be charged with Intoxication Assault which is a third-degree felony. If someone is killed as a result of your drinking and driving you could be charged with Intoxication Manslaughter, which is a second-degree felony.

Being charged with a DWI offense can have severe consequences outside of the legal system:

- You could lose your job.
- Emotional impact your family will be put through from the stress of the situation.
- Financial strains of fines and fees from a DWI conviction. Attorney fees for a DWI can start around \$10,000.
- Your auto insurance company may no longer cover you as a driver on a policy they insure, or you may pay a much higher rate.
- Possible lawsuits from injured victims

When an individual drives intoxicated, they not only put themselves at risk of a collision but they risk the lives and safety of other drivers and passengers sharing the same road. Victims of a DWI collision do not always die from the injuries they receive, sometimes the injuries are life changing. Victim's may lose the ability to care for themselves or their family members, disfigurement, loss of self-esteem, loss of employment and be unable to support their family, as well as suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Remember when you go out for your Fiesta fun and you have consumed alcohol YOU have a choice to risk getting a DWI, or be responsible and plan for a designated driver. Don't forget - driving while intoxicated can change your life forever.

Drive safe,

Tina Zelenak, Court Clerk

Vicki Beaver, Deputy Clerk

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## Council Comments



*Maretta Scott,*  
**Place 2**

Election day is Saturday, May 5th. If you are not registered to vote or have moved recently, you will need to register to vote or change your address by April 5, 2018 to be eligible to vote in the May 5th Joint Election. For your convenience, voter registration cards are available at the permit window at city hall.

For additional information on voter registration and changes to your voter registration visit the Bexar County Elections Department at [www.bexar.org](http://www.bexar.org), or contact the elections administrator at (210) 335-VOTE (8683).

The Castle Hills Police Department is here to protect and serve. Please call (210) 342-2341 for drive-by checks if you and your family will be out of town during Spring Break. Be sure to have a trusted neighbor watch your home and collect your mail and newspapers daily. Have a safe and fun filled Spring Break!

Fiesta is right around the corner. The Commons will be filled with creative vendors, music and great food on Saturday, April 21st for Fiesta Castle Hills. Grab your colorful clothing and Fiesta medals and join in the fun!

I value your ideas and concerns as citizens of Castle Hills, please feel free to contact me.

Maretta Scott  
Alderman Place 2  
[mscott@cityofcastlehills.com](mailto:mscott@cityofcastlehills.com)



*Amy McLin,*  
**PLACE 3**

It was a great experience to have Dr. Lewis facilitate a positive and productive discussion about the future of our city on Saturday, February 3, 2018. Our Mayor, all of City Council, the interim and new City Manager,

Department Heads, other key participants, and a few residents started our strategic planning for the City of Castle Hills.

Dr. Lewis challenged Council to take immediate action by adopting the Mission Statement, appointing an Economic Development Committee, and identifying a group that will finalize our City's Vision Statement and list of initiatives (five-year goals) that we prioritized at the retreat. A plan of action should be formulated by April 2, but strategic planning should be an ongoing, flexible process for our city that is revisited yearly. We have taken the first step and on February 13, 2018, Council adopted the following Mission Statement for the City of Castle Hills:

*Continued on page 5>>*



*JR Trevino,*  
**Place 1**

Happy Spring Friends,

Hopefully by the time you all are receiving this Reporter our weather will have returned to some sort of normalcy, making the weather for your Spring Break enjoyable! We are about a month away from one of Castle Hills' busy seasons, FIESTA! If you haven't participated in Fiesta Castle Hills I would encourage you to come out and meet your neighbors. I may be biased, but our Fiesta is one of the best! The committee responsible for planning has been working arduously to plan a fun family friendly event. As usual, we will have a parade, food, and games. If you are watching the parade you will see the latest addition to the Castle Hills Fire Department, Platform 109.

In our effort to continue to "provide unrivaled City services" we recently acquired a new ladder truck for our Fire Department. First off, I would like to thank Fire Chief Dover for all of his hard work and bringing forward a great deal. Our existing ladder truck was beginning to show its age and Chief Dover brought that to Council's attention. Not only will the new truck give us greater abilities, but it will spend less time in the shop for costly repairs. Platform 109's ladder is 25' (feet) longer giving our Firefighters the ability to reach higher and further for some of the big lots we have in Castle Hills.

Chief Dover also made Council aware that are some areas of town that are not in compliance in regard to tree limb heights. Our code states that trees branches and limbs must be trimmed to 14' over streets and alleys. If you haven't already, you will see the Fire Department out taking measurements. Your assistance in helping Castle Hills become fully compliant is greatly appreciated. Simply put, a low limb can be the difference in a fire truck being able to safely and timely make it to a fire. While we are currently not in an oak trimming season; the City will make its usual exception if it pertains to safety or your home. The biggest thing that we ask is that all wounds are properly sealed. Oak wilt is a costly and unsightly headache. If you have not come into compliance by August 31st, you will be subject to enforcement action.

Lastly, I have had several residents ask about the status of the possible Honeysuckle closure. I have reached out to TxDOT and there is no official update. While I think we all prefer to hear that the idea has been abandoned, I am glad to know that no additional steps have been taken towards its implementation. As I have said previously, if you haven't reached out to your County and State officials, please do so. As always, if I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Yours in service,

JR Trevino  
City Council, Place 1  
[JTrevino@CityofCastleHills.com](mailto:JTrevino@CityofCastleHills.com)  
210-559-5940

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<<Continued from page 4

*"Our mission is to provide unrivaled City services that are thorough and efficient to a diverse, engaged community."*

This dynamic statement reflects what I have heard residents state time and time again – that one of the main reasons they moved to Castle Hills is because of our unrivaled City services. According to Black's Law Dictionary, "engage" means "to employ or involve one's self" or "to take part in." I challenge everyone to "ENGAGE" in our community in whatever positive capacity you are inclined. This will mean something different for everyone, but with everyone's positive contributions we can accomplish our goals. Please contact me if you want to get involved!

Sincerely,

Amy M. McLin  
Alderman Place 3  
P: 210.319.4488 Ext. 102  
F: 210.319.4444  
amclin@cityofcastlehills.com



*Frank Paul,*  
**PLACE 4**

#### JUST THE FACTS – CITY EMPLOYEES

There has been a lot of discussion recently about the number of employees the City of Castle Hills employs. It seems to always pop up during an election. All of us on council are Castle Hill's residents and citizens first. Our goal to ensure safety, services and fiscal responsibility for the city is of the highest priority in our decision making process.

Most information concerning the operation of the city is not released to the residents in a general, everyday way. However, it is available when requested under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This procedure allows the City up to 10 days to fill the request. Unless there are undue circumstances, these requests are generally filled sooner. Legal issues, personnel issues and some other types of information must receive the approval of the City Attorney before release.

After speaking with the Mayor, we both agreed there is no reason why the city employee numbers cannot be made public. The table below shows the number of employees on the payroll as of Dec. 31 of each of the last 4 years. The last 2 years seem to be the topic of controversy.

#### City of Castle Hills Employee Numbers

Year	Positions Available	Employees at Year End
2014	71	62
2015	71	63
2016	72	66
2017	72	68

In 2016, two part time "temp agency" employees were hired and converted to city employees. This was less expensive than paying through the temporary agency. The two temporary part time employees were part of the 2015 staff but were not included in the 2015 employee count. They were added in the 2016 count. We also added a part time dispatcher in 2016.

In 2017, City Council approved a Project Manager position to assist with streets and drainage issues oversight. In addition, a part time Clerk was approved for the Passport Processing Office. Neither of these is in the 2017 count.

In summary, the City converted two people from a temporary agency to full time, hired three temporary dispatchers and one full time police officer – a total of 6

employees from 2014 through 2017. The positions available only increased by 1 in the 4 year span.

So, if anyone was expecting 80 or 90 employees, I trust you will be pleased with the facts!

Thank you,  
Frank Paul  
Council Member, Place 4  
fpaul@cityofcastlehills.com



*Douglas Gregory,*  
**PLACE 5**

City Council members, along with Department Heads and some staff, recently attended a retreat to determine where they felt the City stands and to focus on where they might want the City to go. Dr. Richard Lewis, Jr. an able Principal Consultant moderated the program. The Conference took most of the morning through mid-afternoon. Much was discussed. Council Members, including Department Heads and staff, were asked to vote from a list of priorities for six ideas they felt were important to the City. I hope that there will be some meaningful initiatives to come from this retreat.

It seems to me that some on City Council are confused as to what necessarily needs to be accomplished for the City in the future. From wanting an impound lot in a residential neighborhood to the opening of a Passport Office in Castle Hills, these odd priorities along with others seem to spell drift within the City Council.

The City Council, after a search among many applicants has finally filled the position of City Manager. In the final analysis, we voted unanimously for a person who has fine credentials and is well connected to the City of San Antonio. I am optimistic for him. I wish him all the best.

I am currently concluding 14 years of hard work on the Castle Hills City Council. Demand and pressures are endless. Please call me at 210-342-5442 with any concerns you have or suggestions you feel might be of help. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Councilman Gregory

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# The Care and Feeding of On-site Sewage Treatment Systems

The vast majority of residents in Castle Hills don't have to worry about the care and feeding of an on-site sewage treatment system. When elevations and other factors prohibit a homeowner from connecting to the municipal sewage collection system, then an on-site disposal system is an option.

Only a few homeowners in Castle Hill have had to install an on-site sewage treatment system. These systems range from somewhat simple septic tanks with underground drain fields to aerobic treatment units (ATU) with complex mechanical, electrical, chlorine disinfection and surface irrigation components that need to receive proper care and maintenance.

If you have an ATU and want to avoid costly repair and replacement bills or the cost and hassle of cleaning up sewage backups then heed the following hints for the care and feeding of your system.

Do contract with a company to conduct repairs, maintenance, required system inspections and wastewater tests. If you try to carry out maintenance activities without the proper training and tools, you may void warranties, damage components and even worse injure yourself.

- Don't use chemical cleaners; automatic devices continually sending chemical disinfectants into the system; acid lime removal products; caustic drain cleaners; antibacterial soaps and similar products. All these products can harm aerobic bacteria in the aeration tank allowing anaerobic bacteria to produce foul septic tank like odors.
- Do maintain chlorine in the disinfection system. Failure to maintain chlorine in the disinfection system may result in your property becoming a public health nuisance. Warning: do not use swimming pool chlorine tablets. Swimming pool chlorine tablets can release nitrogen chloride, an explosive gas. They are not approved by EPA for use in ATU systems.

- Don't allow your spray irrigation system to become a public health hazard by forgetting to maintain sufficient chlorine tablets in the disinfection unit.
- Do become familiar with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) rules and requirements for the operation and maintenance of ATUs at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/ossf/ossfmaintenance.html>.
- Do obtain a copy of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, "Living with an Aerobic Treatment Unit and Spray Field" publication B-6234 01/10. Copies of this publication can be picked up at the Castle Hills administrative building at 209 Lemonwood Drive. A copy can also be found at the following Website: <http://www.foodsafesa.com/on-site-sewage-treatment-systems>.







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# COUNCIL MEETING

## HIGHLIGHTS



### December 20, 2017 City Council Special Meeting

#### Council approved items:

- Ordinance 2017-12-20-A, Amending Ch. 48, Code of Ordinances, raising the height of vegetation on streets and alleys to 14 feet requirement effective Immediately with code enforcement beginning September 1, 2018, and the tree trimming permit fee waived through February 1, 2018. (Gregory/McLin 5-0)
- Ordinance 2017-12-20-B, Approving 2017 Year-End Budget Amendments. (Paul/Trevino 5-0)
- Authorize City Manager to approve installation of emergency exit door in council chambers. (Trevino/McLin 5-0)

#### Tabled Item

- Resolution R2017-12-20-B, Authorize City Manager to Submit Application to Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program. (Vote 3-2 - Aye; McLin, Scott, Gregory/ Nay; Paul, Trevino)

#### Postponed Items to January 9, 2018

- Implementation of the City's Message Board
- A Resolution to advise TxDOT of the City's opposition to the Honeysuckle street closure.
- Treasurer Reports and Special Fund Balance for October and November 2017.
- Minutes for the Meetings on November 14 and November 28, 2017.

### January 6, 2018 City Council Special Meeting

- Janet Thelen was appointed as Interim City Manager effective January 2 - March 1, 2018, or until the City Manager's position was filled.

### January 9, 2018 City Council Regular Meeting

#### Promotions:

- Police Sergeant Steve Zuniga promoted to Captain; and
- Police Sergeant Wayne Waggoner promoted to Lieutenant.

#### Council approved items:

- Revised Treasurer Reports and Special Fund Balance for October and November 2017.
- Revised Minutes for Meetings on November 14 and November 28, 2017.
- Approved ARC application for removal of (3) trees at 230 Fox Hall Lane. (Paul/Scott 5-0)
- Authorize Police Chief to sign an agreement for mutual aid services with the City of Balcones Heights. (McLin/Scott 5-0)
- Resolution R18-01-09-A, advise TxDOT of the City's opposition to the Honeysuckle Street closure. (McLin/Paul 5-0)
- Resolution R18-01-09-B, Authorize City Manager to submit application to Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program. (4-1 - Aye; Trevino, Paul, Scott, McLin/Nay; Gregory)

#### Postponed Item to February 13, 2018

- Discuss Future of the Street Program.

### January 23, 2018 City Council Work Session

#### Council discussed:

- Future of Streets and Drainage Committee.
- Implementation options for the City's Message Board. (Thelen/Kochel)

- Status of the City Employee Survey. (Thelen/McLin)
- Lighting considerations for The Commons master landscape design. (Thelen/McLin)
- The Commons Foundation to support and host park improvement fundraisers. (Thelen/McLin)
- Walkability Committee. (McLin)
- Status on the implementation of the passport acceptance site. (Thelen/McLin)
- Status of work on the Master Plan Committee. (Gregory/McLin)
- Submitted Statement of Qualifications for Municipal Engineering Services.
- Updates on projects assigned to council members.

### February 3, 2018 City Council Strategic Planning Retreat

- The City Council hosted a Strategic Planning Retreat on Saturday, February 3, 2018, for the analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, and discuss the city's core values, purposes, targets, goals, and key initiatives.

### February 13, 2018 City Council Special Meeting

- The City Council accepted RPS, CEC Engineering, LNV Engineering, and M&S Engineering as our Municipal Engineers.

### February 13, 2018 City Council Regular Meeting

#### Promotions

- Police Corporal Singleton promoted to Sergeant;
- Police Officer Crawford promoted to Corporal; and
- Dispatcher Valorie Medellin transferred to Police Administrative Assistant.

#### Council Denied Item:

- Special Use Permit for Iglesia Cristian Emanuel at 210 and 212 Lemonwood Drive.

#### Council approved items:

- Minutes for Special Meetings on February 3 and January 6, 2018.
- Ordinance 2018-02-13-A, call for a General Election on May 5, 2018 to elect 3 Alderman to fill Places 1, 4, and 5.
- Ordinance 2018-02-13-B, a Special Election on May 5, 2018 to reauthorize the Sales and Use Tax for revenue to maintain and repair municipal streets.
- An Joint Services Agreement with Bexar County Elections Administrator for the May 5, 2018 General and Special Election.
- Resolution R18-02-13-A, adopt mission statement.
- Resolution R18-02-13-B, censuring Council Member Gregory.
- Resolution R18-02-13-C, establish an Economic Development Committee.
- Direct Interim City Manager Thelen to submit a Letter of Authorization to CPS Energy for the Installation of LED Street Lights on Lundblade Drive.
- Authorize Police Chief Siemens to accept the proposal from Rosenberg Indoor Comfort, LLC to install two A/C units in Police Dispatch for an amount not to exceed \$17,500.

#### Postponed Items to February 27, 2018

- Treasurer Report and Special Fund Balance for January 2018.



The outdoor season is rapidly approaching so I would like to revisit swimming pool maintenance. "Green pools" a.k.a. stagnant water pools are not healthy. They are a public health concern, a nuisance and a code violation. Homeowners who possess such pools need to address this situation. Now that we are under a Court of Record, Code Enforcement has the ability to immediately abate public health and safety nuisances. Obviously, the offender will be given a chance to abate the problem themselves, but these types of pools may fall under the auspice of a public health issue. This may lead to the issuance of an administrative warrant to enter upon private property to determine the existence of a green pool. I stated last summer and will do so again this summer; clean your pool. If you cannot clean or (legally) empty stagnant water; please deploy either mosquito "dunks" or mosquito fish/frogs in the pool and show proof to this office, particularly if you get a door hanger or a Notice of Violation.

On another topic, I have received a lot of complaints about some of the more "in-depth" remodeling/renovation projects going on around the city. Most of the time these projects are permitted but at times some of the licensed work does not, in fact, have all the necessary permits. There are a few occasions where the entire project is not permitted and that's why you may see work on a house suddenly come to a halt. In these cases, a Stop Work Order is issued as well as one or several court citations. Unfortunately, I can't detect every single instance on my own. If you see something, please report such activity to me. Please also remember that if I am unavailable, the Police, the Fire Chief and/or the Building Inspector also have the authority to enter upon any property to determine if illegal (non-permitted) and/or unsafe work is being done, as provided by the Code. As always, if you feel the system is not working either fast enough for you or in a manner agreeable to you, you may file a complaint against your neighbor with the Municipal Court. At your hearing date, you can then express your concerns. Have a great Spring!

## D.A. DESIGNS

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With Spring almost here and summer not far behind, naturally we become more active. As such, this time of year is often the busiest as it relates to catching up on home improvement/repair projects delayed by Winter. These projects can often times be cumbersome and overwhelming, lending cause for many to use a contractor. It is my contention that there are typically three types of contractors; the good, the bad, and the crooked (scammer). It is the bad and the crooked we wish for you to recognize and avoid.

With the hail storms of 2016 and some of the inclement weather provided by Hurricane Harvey; we here at the Police Department have fielded numerous reports for theft surrounding these types of projects. Sadly, many did not rise to the statutorily required elements of the offense for the Bexar County District Attorney's (BCDA) Office to pursue criminal charges. Rather, most were referred to civil court as some level of the negotiated work had been completed. This, not only leaves all of us saddened and frustrated, it lends itself to a very precarious situation. You the resident, may feel the Police Department did not/is not providing the requisite services you deserve. For us, having our hands tied because there are no charges we can bring to the BCDA for prosecution is also frustrating. We sincerely want to assist our good citizens of Castle Hills, but are hindered by what the law says we can pursue. Often times these complaints (that seem like theft or theft of service on the surface) are unfounded because, some level of service was provided, however small, leaving civil courts as the only recourse for homeowners.

The key is often found in taking steps to protect yourself. Many of which include vetting the contractor, not over pre-paying, and consulting trusted friends and family for referrals.

For more information and resources for protecting against home improvement/repair fraud, visit the link below.

<https://www.homeadvisor.com/r/preventing-home-improvement-fraud/>



As always, stay safe and please report suspicious activity.  
Chief Johnny Siemens

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 neighborhood/area you are interested in, in the subject line.



# FALLS

Hello everyone, these days a large percentage of the emergencies that the Fire Department responds to are EMS calls; and recently we have seen an increase in responses for falls. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in people over 60. Fall prevention may not seem like a lively topic, but it's important. As we get older, physical changes and health conditions — and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions — make falls more likely. Here are some tips to help prevent falls.

**1. Make an appointment with your doctor.** Begin your fall-prevention plan by making an appointment with your doctor. Be prepared to answer questions such as:

- **What medications are you taking?** Make a list of your prescription and over-the-counter medications and supplements, or bring them with you to the appointment. Your doctor can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling. To help with fall prevention, your doctor may consider weaning you off medications that make you tired or affect your thinking, such as sedatives and some types of antidepressants.
- **Have you fallen before?** Write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time. Details such as these may help your doctor identify specific fall-prevention strategies.
- **Could your health conditions cause a fall?** Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Be prepared to discuss your health conditions and how comfortable you are when you walk — for example, do you feel any dizziness, joint pain, shortness of breath, or numbness in your feet and legs when you walk? Your doctor may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style (gait) as well.

**2. Keep moving.** Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your doctor's OK, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi — a gentle exercise that involves slow and graceful dance-like movements. Such activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.



If you avoid physical activity because you're afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your doctor. He or she may recommend carefully monitored exercise programs or refer you to a physical therapist. The physical therapist can create a custom exercise program aimed at improving your balance, flexibility, muscle strength and gait.

**3. Wear sensible shoes.** Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall-prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall. So can walking in your stocking feet. Instead, wear properly fitting, sturdy shoes with nonskid soles. Sensible shoes may also reduce joint pain.

**4. Remove home hazards.** Take a look around your home. Your living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, hallways and stairways may be filled with hazards. To make your home safer:

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Move coffee tables, magazine racks and plant stands from high-traffic areas.
- Secure loose rugs with double-faced tape, tacks or a slip-resistant backing — or remove loose rugs from your home.
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away.
- Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats in your bathtub or shower. Use a bath seat, which allows you to sit while showering.

**5. Light up your living space.** Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:

- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Place a lamp within reach of your bed for middle-of-the-night needs.
- Make clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances. Consider trading traditional switches for glow-in-the-dark or illuminated switches.
- Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

**6. Use assistive devices.** Your doctor might recommend using a cane or walker to keep you steady. Other assistive devices can help, too. For example:

- Hand rails for both sides of stairways
- Nonslip treads for bare-wood steps
- A raised toilet seat or one with armrests
- Grab bars for the shower or tub
- A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub — plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down

If necessary, ask your doctor for a referral to an occupational therapist. He or she can help you brainstorm other fall-prevention strategies. Some solutions are easily installed and relatively inexpensive. If there is ever anything that we can help you with, please do not hesitate to call us. Stay safe everyone!



Chief Darrell Dover  
Castle Hills Fire Department



# FIESTA CASTLE HILLS KICK OFF PARTY



**Thursday, April 19, 2018**

**5-7:30 p.m.**

**IBC Bank**

**2201 NW Military Drive**

**2018 Fiesta Castle Hills**

**Saturday, April 21, 2018**

**209 Lemonwood Drive**

**5K – 8:00 a.m.**

**Parade – 10 :00 a.m.**

**Fair – 9-4 p.m.**



**Fiesta After Party – 7:30 -10:30 p.m. (Top Shelf Band and Food Trucks)**

For more information visit "Fiesta Castle Hills" Facebook page; <http://fiestacastlehillstx.org/> ;  
or on the [cityofcastlehills.com](http://cityofcastlehills.com) website.

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## Shop CASTLE HILLS New Businesses

Clementine Restaurant – Restaurant  
Creative Civilization – Advertising Firm  
Chari Vandever MA, LPC – Counseling Services  
Discount Tax Services – Accounting Services  
True Connections Health System – Medical Services

## ANNIVERSARIES:

10 years – Marcial Rivera – Dispatch  
5 years – Kolin Jonas – Fire Department  
1 year – Alfred Mermea – Sanitation

## PROMOTIONS:

Sergeant Steve Zuniga was promoted to Police Captain.  
Sergeant Wayne Waggoner was promoted to Police Lieutenant.  
Corporal Singleton was promoted to Police Patrol Sergeant.  
Officer Tony Crawford was promoted to Police Corporal.

Congratulations to the outstanding police officers who through professional development rise within the ranks of the Castle Hills Police Department.

Castle Hills, TX

# go green

## LET'S DO OUR PART IN HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT!

Did you know you can “opt in” to have  
this newsletter delivered electronically?

### How?

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

### What will change?

Well....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)

## Castle Hills Fire Department First Fiesta Medals On Sale Now!



The Castle Hills Fire Department is offering their first Fiesta Medal. Medals may be purchased for \$10.00 (cash only) at the Permit window at City Hall, or from the fire fighters at the fire station. All proceeds will go to the “Fire House Fund”. The fund pays for the items needed to make the fire station a “home away from home”. Cooking utensils, couches, televisions, refrigerators, are just a few of the items that the fire fighters need to “live” at the fire station.

## Before You Dig Call 811

As spring time nears, many of you will start planning outdoor home improvement projects. Some of you will plan on planting new shrubs and trees, while others will begin planning to build new decks or installing a new backyard fence. All of these involve digging and a lot of heavy lifting. Before you start digging, make a checklist of all the things you will need; such as gloves, shovels, picks, wheel barrows and knee pads; and don't forget to call 811. 811 is the state wide phone number you can dial to request that underground utilities be located and marked. Best of all, this service is free for homeowners. Even if you have a contractor doing the job and they bust a water line when digging you might still be responsible for repair bills.

A homeowner was building a fence; his son was digging a post hole and hit something hard. To continue digging he got a pick axe and proceeded to knock a hole in their gas line. Calling 811 before starting the project would have saved the homeowner \$1,800 in repair bills.

More examples could be provided of what can happen when failing to call 811 before starting a project that involves digging in yard. Another reason to call 811 before you dig, it's the law. To find out more about your responsibilities for calling the 811 service in Texas go to <http://www.texas811.org>.







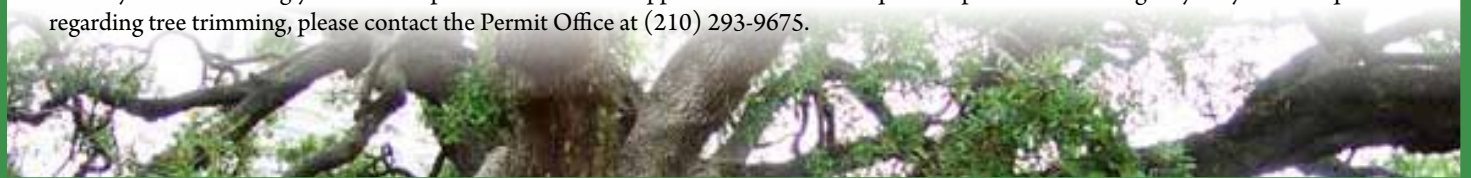
# New Tree Trimming Requirements

Effective January 1, 2018, all trees, shrubs, vines, hedges, palms or other vegetation that overhangs or obtrudes upon any pavement, roadway, alley, or curb must be trimmed to a minimum of 14 feet during all weather conditions. Vegetation may remain at 12 feet minimum clearance over sidewalks.

The new platform fire truck is now in service. **If you do not raise the canopy of your trees over the roadway and the platform truck is damaged, you will be responsible for the repair expenses. The council agreed to waive enforcement (court summons) until September 1st. This does not remove liability if damages occur.** The city prohibits the cutting of oak trees from February 1st through June 30th to help prevent the spread of oak wilt by the nitidulid beetle. The city does allow emergency trimming to protect persons and property during this time, but it is imperative that the cuts to the oak trees be painted immediately. If your tree canopy over the roadway or alleys needs to be raised to 14 feet, you will be issued an emergency permit. Homeowners trimming their own trees are asked to get a permit at no charge. If you hire someone to raise the canopy they must obtain a permit.

If you are unsure if your tree canopy is below 14 feet, please contact the Fire Department at (210) 342-2341 and the fire fighters as a courtesy will come out and measure your trees.

Thank you for trimming your trees to protect our new fire apparatus and ensure a quick response in an emergency. If you have questions regarding tree trimming, please contact the Permit Office at (210) 293-9675.



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# CASTLE HILLS PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES SCHEDULE

## REGULAR NON-HOLIDAY WEEK:

Pick-up Garbage, Leaf Bags, Brush Piles, Recycling - MUST be out by 7:00 AM

# 2018

NORTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
SOUTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI

HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE Limit 3 Cans	
RECYCLE No Limit	
BRUSH PILES Limit 3 Piles	
LEAF BAGS Limit 10 Bags	

### MONDAY HOLIDAY: Garbage & Recycle only. No Brush or Leaves.

NORTH OF LOOP 410	MON 	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
SOUTH OF LOOP 410	MON 	TUE	WED	THU	FRI

### THURSDAY HOLIDAY: Garbage & Recycle only. No Brush or Leaves.

NORTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU 	FRI 
SOUTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU 	FRI 

### FRIDAY HOLIDAY: Garbage & Recycle only. No Brush or Leaves.

NORTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI 
SOUTH OF LOOP 410	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI 

### 2018 City Holidays

JAN 1	New Year's Day	MON
JAN 15	ML King, JR. Day	MON
FEB 19	President's Day	MON
APR 27	Battle of Flowers Day	FRI
MAY 28	Memorial Day	MON
JULY 4	Independence Day	WED
SEPT 3	Labor Day	MON
NOV 12	Veterans Day	MON
NOV 22	Thanksgiving Day	THUR
NOV 23	Thanksgiving Day After	FRI
DEC 25	Christmas Day	TUE

### Important Note:

There is **NO BRUSH OR LEAF PICKUP** on a **Holiday week**. Do not put out brush or leaves as they will not be picked up. Regular brush and leaf pickup will resume the following non-holiday week.

*Thank You!*

# 2018

Dept of Public Works  
(210) 293-9676  
Rev.12.2017





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\*Department of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital – Medical Center, that has proudly earned Magnet Status.



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