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**SOLID WASTE
GRANT FUNDS
\$262,330.07 Allocated**

- SMITH COUNTY \$3,000
- CITY OF HAWKINS \$2,000
- CITY OF QUITMAN \$25,000
- UPPER SABINE VALLEY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT \$26,950
- CITY OF ARP \$7,200
- CITY OF TOOL \$25,000
- RAINS COUNTY \$12,269.81
- CITY OF HALLSVILLE \$20,000
- CITY OF GLADEWATER \$30,000
- VAN ZANDT COUNTY \$20,000
- CITY OF HENDERSON \$15,100
- CITY OF LINDALE \$7,200
- CITY OF POINT \$3,000
- CITY OF JACKSONVILLE \$3,000
- CITY OF BULLARD \$7,200
- CITY OF RUSK \$10,000
- CITY OF CARTHAGE \$5,195
- CITY OF WHITEHOUSE \$10,215.26
- CITY OF VAN \$10,000
- GUN BARREL CITY \$20,000

Anderson County & ETCOG Partner for Regional Benefit

Message from Executive Director, David Cleveland

During the last year, ETCOG has partnered with Anderson County in the development of highly detailed emergency response maps at county and fire district levels. These maps are designed for all weather conditions and can be used to seek air support in heavily wooded areas of Anderson County. ETCOG and Anderson County emergency responders have relied on the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Global Position System (GPS) technologies throughout this project, during several meetings and workshops, for data collection, decision making and map development.

Geographic Information System (GIS) is a spatial database system that provides powerful decision making tools for every facet of public governance from producing simple hard copy maps to analyzing complex crime patterns. GIS tools are used by emergency responders to respond to accidents, housing specialists to analyze the quality and condition of housing, environmentalists to identify the location of hazardous waste sites, social service workers to identify the location of elderly and disabled, waste management officials to route vehicles, police to analyze crime patterns, public works crew to maintain road inventory, etc.

Global Position System (GPS) is a complex technology built on a constellation of 24 satellites and their ground stations. GPS provides powerful tools for navigation,

tracking, mapping, timing, etc. Anderson County, in partnership with ETCOG, continues to leverage the use of these technologies in all areas of county governance. ETCOG is currently evaluating mobile technology solutions suitable for deployment in the county patrol cars. ETCOG is also assisting in the development of an Emergency Incident Resource Information System



(EIRIS) through which emergency responders can access building floor plans for schools, public buildings, hospitals during SWOT situations.

Under the leadership of County Judge Linda Ray, our partnership with Anderson County will now benefit the entire region. Judge Ray

and the Commissioners Court recently approved the utilization of state allocated emergency service funds to strengthen ETCOG's GIS program through the purchase of hardware and software tools. This contribution helps ETCOG move one step closer toward accomplishing the ambitious goal of developing a state of the art GIS technology center for East Texas. The goal of this technology center is to incubate the development of specialized GIS tools for implementation in all areas of public governance.

The GIS and GPS resources that will be purchased under the partnership with Anderson County will promote the advancement of GIS and GPS technologies through-



Emergency Notification System Coming to East Texas

ETCOG has contracted with Emergency Communications Network to license its CodeRED high-speed notification solution for East Texas. The CodeRED system, funded by a Homeland Security grant, provides city and county officials the ability to quickly deliver messages to targeted areas or the entire city or county.

The CodeRED system will be set up by Emergency Communications Network in each of ETCOG's 14 counties, as well as the largest city in each county. Each jurisdiction will build a telephone number database to which emergency notifications will be deployed in the event of a crisis or incident. This will allow for a 15-30 second automated phone call to inform residents of how to respond to a crisis such as evacuation notifications or when to take shelter.

CodeRED system setup is projected to begin in January.



9-1-1 Division Updates

Youth Recognition Program Launched

To promote emergency awareness in East Texas, ETCOG's 9-1-1 Division has launched a new Youth Recognition Program to honor young heroes between 3-12 years of age who successfully demonstrate the proper way to call 9-1-1. The program, named through a region-wide contest as 9-1-1 Angels in Action, recognizes youth who are able to call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency and use it correctly by giving the location, telling the situation, and staying online with the dispatcher to aid in emergency response.

The 9-1-1 Division has identified its first Angel in Action, a young girl in Van Zandt County who called 9-1-1 on June 25, 2009. Around 10:15 PM the girl's mother fell and hit

her head. When the girl found her mother unresponsive and bleeding from the head, she got paper towels to put pressure on the wound and dialed 9-1-1. While speaking with the dispatcher the girl remained calm and told the dispatcher her address, what cars to look for in the driveway, and followed pre-arrival medical instructions. The girl stayed on the phone until the police and EMS arrived. Her actions were vital in getting her mother the emergency treatment she needed.

ETCOG is proud of this 9-1-1 Angel in Action and will recognize her bravery with an engraved acrylic plaque, certificate of achievement and other gift items.

Wireless Phase II Deployed

East Texans calling 9-1-1 on their cell phones may now receive quicker emergency response due to the launch of Wireless Phase II (WP2), which sends emergency dispatchers the caller's latitude and longitude coordinates. Under WP2, cell phone companies provide Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) dispatchers with the actual location of a caller within distances mandated by the Federal Communications Commission. Prior to the launch of WP2, cellular service providers could only identify the tower location the call came from, and the call back number.

ETCOG's 9-1-1 Emergency Services division began assisting 17 East Texas PSAPs with the deployment and testing of WP2 last December. Testing of the system was completed by all PSAPs in August.

Carolyn Flores, Director of 9-1-1 Emergency Services for ETCOG cautions the public on its expectations of location technology as it applies to cellular services. *"Although we are deploying the service, there are still times when the information available to the dispatcher is limited to the caller's telephone number and tower. Certain technologies of shared networks have not been resolved and default to Phase I as well. Callers should continue to be aware of surroundings so that when an emergency occurs they have landmarks and other pertinent information to assist the emergency responders in locating them."*

Participating PSAPs:

Anderson County, Palestine, Camp County, Cherokee County, Jacksonville, Gregg County, Gladewater, White Oak, Marion County, Panola County, Carthage, Rains County, Upshur County, Van Zandt County, Canton, Wood County, Mineola.



18th Annual REACH Conference Held

Approximately 450 East Texans who work with the elderly received training at the 18th Annual Regional Education on Aging, Caregiving & Healthcare (REACH) Conference at Maude Cobb Convention Center in Longview on October 29-30, 2009.

The Conference, hosted each year by the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), is a collaborative effort to provide educational workshops, plenary sessions and networking opportunities for professionals, caregivers, and anyone interested in Aging issues. This year's conference provided at-

tendees a choice of 38 workshops over the two-day event, access to 50 exhibit booths, and accreditation and/or continuing education hours relative to the attendees' field of work.

Conference proceeds will be used by the AAA to pay for emergency needs of clients such as medication, propane to heat homes, utility assistance, and emergency dental extractions for seniors in ETCOG's 14 county region.

REACH is partially funded by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services and the following

sponsoring agencies: DSSW/Life Span Home Health, At Home Health Care, Copeland Group, Heritage Home Health/Legacy Hospice, Highland Pines Nursing and Rehab, Nexion Health, and The Hospice of East Texas. It is organized by a planning committee made up of thirteen State and Local agencies.

The 2010 REACH Conference is tentatively set for the 1st week in November and will be held at Maude Cobb in Longview.

...continued from P.1, Partnership Programs

out the East Texas region. GPS handheld devices such as GeoXH; GPS antennas such as Zephyr and Hurricane; GPS software such as Pathfinder and Terrasync; map making and laminating equipment; print-plot-scan systems to digitize large format floor plans, site plans, plat, drawings, maps to build and support emergency pre-planning databases in 9-1-1 dispatch centers, are a few resources that are being acquired.

ETCOG envisions eventually providing these tools to all its stakeholders through a combined resource sharing program that will empower members of all communities within the ETCOG region to have access to these advanced tools. ETCOG will now have an added capability to offer training to staff from all its member entities in all areas of public governance: emergency services, public works, utilities, building inspections, animal services and

health inspections, to name a few.

Similar to its ambitious pursuits in the fields of GIS and GPS technologies, ETCOG has been striving through all of its program areas to provide improved services to East Texans. ETCOG will continue to seek best methods and practices while building strong relationships to better serve our region.

ETCOG Adds Grants & Research Position

A component has been created to pave the way for greater organizational efficiency through effective management of grants within ETCOG's Public Information Regional Services (PIRS) Division. The Grants and Research Component of PIRS provides ETCOG and its members with funding opportunities and community data requests for demographic and work statistics. Monique Jackson, the newly-hired Grants and Research Analyst, will be responsible for the seeking of funds, writing and development of these internal and external grant programs.

Monique's main focus will be to research grants for ETCOG and provide statistical and data analysis to other ETCOG divisions. She will also manage and maintain existing partnerships with potential funding agencies and make use of raw census data for research and statistics within various grant and loan program applications. The objective of the grants and research addition to ETCOG is to establish a cohesive approach in maintaining the organization's current grants and loans, and to establish a systemic base from which to work from in seeking ways to increase internal and external funding streams.

LOAN PROGRAM SBA Fees to Return

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provided fee relief on 7(a) and 504 loans.

As of November 23, 2009, SBA is providing for a transition period where applications for new loans may be submitted either: (1) as Recovery Act loans, which will mean being placed in a queue to await the potential availability of Recovery Act funding or (2) as non-Recovery Act loans, which will be funded as soon as approved, but which will not be eligible for fee relief.

At any time while waiting in the Queue, an applicant may choose to withdraw and re-submit it as a non-Recovery Act loan once the transition period has begun. Applicants will be able to determine where they are in the SBA Recovery Loan Queue by accessing SBA's website. The website address is www.sba.gov/recoveryq.

On December 16, 2009, the House voted to approve a measure extending SBA 504 fee relief through February 2010. At the time of this publication the measure was still awaiting Senate approval.



Serving Our Customers

Current Initiatives Across the Organization

The nine divisions of ETCOG each serve the cities, counties, school districts and special districts of East Texas as well as many other customers. We directly serve seniors, job seekers, businesses, vendors, contractors and individual citizens. Here are some updates on how ETCOG serves its customers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic & Community Development Division has assisted the City of Lindale in obtaining an \$850,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). These grant funds will be used for building roads and water lines to a new biofuel power plant that is locating in Lindale within the next year. Staff will also be providing post-grant administration for Lindale which is a new avenue of customer service that Julie Burnfield is excited to enter into.

TRANSPORTATION

ETCOG's rural transportation system makes 400-500 trips a day, 5 days a week, throughout the 14 counties of East Texas. This demand/response system only requires a phone call —

1.800.590.3371—and a small fare. The system currently operates under the name Rural Transit District. Look for the system's new name and logo to be revealed in January!

SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

The Small Business Loans program through ETCOG's affiliate, the East Texas Regional Development Company, is busy overseeing seven (7) loans this year. These loans are stimulating business growth, thus creating more jobs and/or helps keep jobs available. In just two (2) years the program was able to help lock in over 400 jobs in the region.

SENIOR SERVICES

The Aging Division serves persons in the region who are at least sixty (60) years of age no matter what their income level or need, as well as their family members and care givers. Last year they received over 66,000 calls and provided on-site visits to seventy-eight (78) nursing

homes and eighty (80) assisted living facilities.

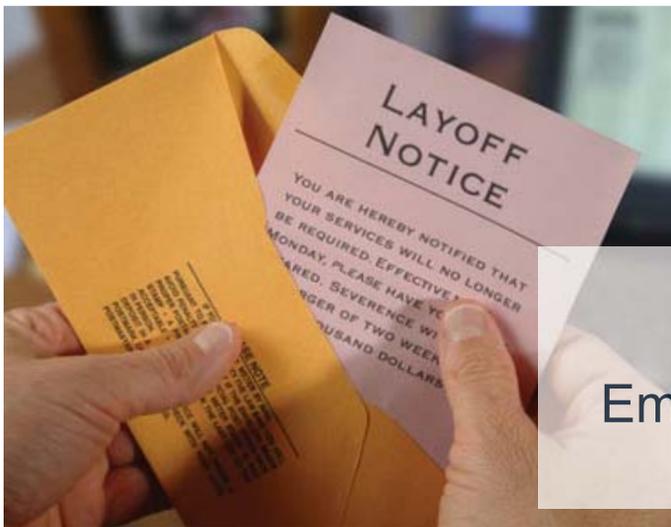
HOUSING EAST TEXAS

Housing East Texas continues to break old records. In FY09 the housing program repaired 179 homes! Through strategic partnerships with other housing programs and successful relationships with contractors and vendors, Housing East Texas has been able to do a lot of repairs for a little money. The value of those repairs was \$922,867.91, but we only spent \$171,291.16.

FINANCE

Nationally recognized as the recipient of the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Finance Division of ETCOG stands strong in how they operate and maintain their services. Currently the staff oversees 3,000 vendors, sixteen (16) funding agencies, eighty-four (84) grants, a number of subcontractors, and an average of 356 checks per month.

“These loans are stimulating business growth, thus creating more jobs and/or help keep jobs available.”



Workforce Solutions East Texas Connects Businesses & Employees Experiencing Layoffs with Available Services

In efforts to assist businesses and individuals in East Texas experiencing layoffs, Workforce Solutions East Texas provides Rapid Response sessions free of charge. In 2009, over 30 rapid response sessions have been held in the 14 county East Texas Region.

Rapid Response sessions are recommended to be held at agencies between the layoff announcement and the departure of employees. The sessions provide employers with information needed to make the Unemployment Insurance (UI) process as streamlined as possible as well as give the employer an opportunity to provide on-site services at no cost. The sessions also educate employees on Unemployment Insurance procedures and re-employment resources available through Workforce Solutions East Texas such as retraining opportunities and job skills workshops.

“An opportunity to provide on-site services at no cost.”

“It is our intent with Rapid Response to present factual information on what employees can expect after their layoff,” said ETCOG’s Director of Workforce, Wendell Holcombe. “With this necessary information, workers have a better chance of utilizing the resources that can get them back to work as soon as possible.”

Rapid Response informational meetings are set up with company officials, human resource officers, union officials when applicable, a representative from the Texas Workforce Commissions UI division, and local board and workforce center representatives to discuss available options for employers. From the informational meeting, companies are able to decide what services, if any, they wish to utilize in preparation of the pending layoff. Employers interested in Rapid Response services should contact Amanda Garner (903) 984-8641 ext. 247 or by email amanda.garner@etcog.org.

Board Attends TWC Conferece, Business Awarded

Nineteen Workforce Solutions East Texas (WSET) Board and Board Staff members attended the Texas Workforce Commission’s 13th Annual Texas Workforce Conference held December 2-4 in Grapevine. Board members in attendance included: Rusty Basham, Tony Cain, Pete Lamothe, Cindy Leleko, Zeke Linton, Tony Martin, Andrea Mayo, Laura Stuteville, Charles Thomas, Georgann Turlington and Robert Wilson.

An East Texas business, N.E.W. Customer Service Companies Inc., was honored at the conference with the Employer Award of Excellence for the WSET area. The Employer Award of Excellence honors employers that are actively involved with their local workforce

board and have made a positive impact on employers, workers and the community.

A leading provider of extended service plans, buyer protection services and product support, N.E.W. Customer Service Companies Inc. partnered with WSET, the Tyler Economic Development Council, Tyler Junior College and the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism Division to bring a new work-at-home call center to Tyler. The operation opened in less than six months as a result of the partnership, and employed more than 120 full-time staff.



east texas council of governments
Regional Report

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The East Texas Council of Governments is a voluntary association of counties, cities, school districts and special districts within the fourteen-county East Texas region. ETCOG assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. Established in 1970, ETCOG, either directly, or through its contractors, provides programs and services for East Texas seniors, employers, and job seekers. ETCOG and its contractors also build the 9-1-1 emergency call delivery system, provide peace officer training and homeland security planning services; and deliver rural transportation services, business finance programs, and environmental grant funding for the region.

TDD: 711



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