

**SMITH COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT TWO  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Smith County ESD #2 Hosts Town Hall Meetings**

Smith County Emergency Services District No. 2 (ESD2) invites residents to participate in a series of Town Hall Meetings to discuss the future of emergency services in our area.

ESD2 is the local government responsible for supporting fire protection and emergency medical first-response provided by 11 fire departments in Smith County.

ESD2 covers 712 square miles of Smith County outside the city limits of Tyler and Whitehouse. It protects more than 92,000 residents and all visitors who pass through the district

ESD2's Board of Commissioners has called an election for Nov. 5, asking voters to approve a sales tax of up to 1.5 percent in the district.

The State of Texas currently collects a sales tax of 6.25 percent. Local jurisdictions, with voter approval, can collect up to two percent.

The Nov. 5 election would not affect jurisdictions – such as the cities of Bullard, Troup and Arp – which are already at the maximum 8.25 percent.

Voters in Bullard, Troup and Arp may cast ballots in the Nov. 5 election, though.

**The proposed sales tax would have no effect on a homeowner's property tax bill.** In fact, the sales tax will reduce the ESD's reliance on property taxes to fund its operations and help keep property taxes down.

After a rigorous strategic planning process, the ESD Board has identified the need to add two fulltime firefighters to supplement volunteers in the 11 departments in the district. The additional staffing would require an increase of \$1.2 million in ESD2's annual budget.

All 11 fire chiefs in the volunteer fire departments of the district have endorsed the plan.

Here's the schedule for Town Hall meetings:

**7 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 3**

**Bullard Fire Station #1**

**213 S. Houston Street, Bullard 75757**

**7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 8**

**Red Springs Station #1**

16759 FM14, Tyler 75706

**7 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 10**

**Chapel Hill Fire Station**

13801 County Road 220, Tyler 75707

**7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 15**

**Jackson Heights Station #2**

19832 Texas 31, Tyler 75705

**7 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 17**

**Noonday Fire Station**

16619 Texas 155, Tyler 75703

**7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 22**

**Troup Fire Station #1**

204 E. Wilkinson Drive, Troup 75789

“We invite residents to the Town Hall meetings to learn more about the challenges our 11 departments face and about our plans to address them,” said ESD2 Board Pres. Randy Melton.

Smith County Emergency Services District 2 was formed in 2007 by public referendum, and is the primary funding source for eleven volunteer fire departments in Smith County. These departments include Arp VFD, Bullard VFD, Chapel Hill VFD, Dixie VFD, Flint Gresham VFD, Jackson Heights VFD, Noonday VFD, Red Springs VFD, Troup VFD, Winona VFD, and Whitehouse VFD. Smith County ESD 2 also employs the paid firefighters who work in the volunteer stations Monday-Friday.

For more information about how Smith County ESD 2 serves the community or about the Town Hall meeting schedule go to [www.smithcountyfire.org](http://www.smithcountyfire.org), follow the Smith County ESD 2 Facebook page, or call the administration office at 903-617-6578.