

## **City Makes Safety a Priority with Convenience Store Standards**

New guidelines have been approved for convenience stores to increase safety measures for residents, customers and store employees. The guidelines are intended to help address the following:

- Nearly half of all business robberies occur at convenience stores.
- Suspects leave little evidence, reducing the possibility of arrests.
- An unsafe environment exists for employees and customers.
- Stores are easy targets without proper prevention measures.

“These standards are especially important following the approval of beer and wine sales by Irving voters,” said Police Chief Larry Boyd.

The guidelines require the following safety features be put into effect:

- An alarm system, silent panic or hold-up alarm must be installed.
- Surveillance cameras that capture the images of the store’s interior and exterior are to be added, with signage and permit required.
- Enhanced installation requirements for ATMs.
- An unobstructed view of the cash register.
- A trespass affidavit, which authorizes police to enforce trespass laws on the store owner’s behalf.
- Safety training for employees
- A drop safe.

All of Irving’s 250-plus convenience stores are required to comply with the new requirements. Equipment requirements must be in place by January 2010.

To schedule safety training, send an e-mail to [crimeprevention@cityofirving.org](mailto:crimeprevention@cityofirving.org).

## **Stronger City Regulations to Lessen Impact of Beer, Wine Sales**

City regulations put into place prior to the alcohol election will limit the community impact of beer and wine sales.

New ordinances approved to offset the impact of alcohol sales include:

- Convenience Store Crime Prevention – Owners of convenience stores are required to comply with the new crime prevention ordinance (details above).
- Beer Barns – Drive-through alcohol sales are not allowed.
- Distance Requirements – Distance requirements between stores selling beer and wine, and public and private schools have been changed from “door-to-door” to “property-line-to-property-line.” Private schools have been incorporated into the list of protected areas with the minimum 300-foot distance requirements.
- Appearance Standards – Higher appearance standards are required for new convenience stores and upon remodeling or expansion of existing stores.

### **Alcohol Sale Details**

Packaged beer and wine sales only will be allowed for off-site consumption. Alcohol can be sold at locations that meet the separation requirements as outlined in the city ordinance and are zoned retail, such as convenience and grocery stores. Permissible hours of sale for beer and wine retailers are:

- Monday–Friday: 7 a.m. to midnight
- Saturday: 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. (Sunday)
- Sunday: noon to midnight

### **Permitting Process**

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) issues permits to sell beer and wine. Before issuing a permit, the city must first verify that the property is properly zoned and inspect the property to ensure that the distance requirements between the beer and wine establishment and schools, churches and hospitals are met.

### **Enforcement**

The Irving Police Department is collaborating with TABC to instruct officers on alcohol code violations and primary enforcement of violations.

The Police Department uses grant funding for enhanced DWI enforcement. Alcohol sale locations will be monitored for compliance and the Police Department will conduct periodic covert investigations to ensure compliance with state and local laws, especially to prevent sales to minors.

## **Police Presence Enhanced with Take-Home Patrol Cars**

The Police Department issued its first two take-home patrol cars on Nov. 14 as part of a new pilot program to enhance police presence and visibility in Irving neighborhoods. It also is intended to encourage public safety personnel to reside in the city.

Ten patrol cars were authorized in the new fiscal year budget for officers who live in Irving. The pilot program is one of several police initiatives to help continue Irving's significant crime rate reduction.

## **Gang Unit**

The Police Department works hard to keep gang activity firmly under control in Irving. To combat gangs, police officers take a multifaceted approach.

### **Prevention**

The gang unit first focuses on prevention. To prevent teens from joining gangs, the unit works closely with school resource officers to identify at-risk youth, and conducts home visits. Special training is provided for police officers, teachers, Irving Citizens on Patrol members, parents, schools and businesses at their request.

### **Enforcement**

When prevention does not work, the unit focuses on enforcement with a zero-tolerance approach through a high-profile community presence. Known gang members and their associates are closely monitored by the unit, which also surveys locations that are frequented by members.

### **Intelligence**

When gang members are arrested, officers shift their focus to intelligence work for future enforcement activities. All gang members and potential gang members who are arrested and processed through the jail system are interviewed, regardless of the reason for incarceration, to help police track members and their activity.

The Police Department has been given an opportunity to increase its gang initiatives to build on last year's significant crime reduction through a statewide gang initiative grant.

The grant provides up to \$225,000 in overtime reimbursement to help address gang crime and related issues. Provided by the Governor's Criminal Justice Division, the grant may be used for deployment and training, and no matching funds are required.

## **New Fingerprint Technology Aids Police Investigations**

Irving police officers have a new crime-fighting tool at their fingertips. AFIX Tracker®, a computer-based fingerprint and palm print identification system, provides police officers with a powerful resource.

The system has been installed at the Irving Jail and is used to electronically capture and store print information, providing faster retrieval, identification and comparison of fingerprints. The software includes a device used to digitally capture fingerprints, making them available for use in identifying a subject almost instantly.

“The system is easy to use,” said Clark Nethers, detention supervisor. “Any one of a prisoner’s fingers can be placed on the single-digit live-scan reader, and in seconds, the system displays a mug shot and personal data on the screen. The fingerprint from the live-scan reader shows side-by-side with the enrolled record fingerprint and helps us immediately verify identity.”

The database currently holds more than 78,000 sets of fingerprints, captured as prisoners are processed at the jail. With the AFIX network of software, police can quickly verify prisoners, making it virtually impossible for them to lie about their identity. It also helps to verify the identity of prisoners who are being released to ensure mistakes are not made.

Irving can share its database with other agencies that use AFIX, providing even more extensive identification capabilities. Additionally, the fingerprints are stored electronically and can be shared with any agency that uses the standard software, or police can quickly print or e-mail fingerprints for agencies without this technology.

### **Auto Theft Prevention Tips**

Most car burglaries involve valuables left in plain sight. Thieves know the places that valuables are hidden—they think to check the console and under seats.

Taking all valuables when exiting the car is the best way to avoid being a victim of burglary.

### **A Costly Mistake**

Not only is there the expense of replacing stolen items, but thieves often cause damage to the car, such as broken locks or windows.

Time is valuable, and cancelling and replacing credit cards, debit cards, checks, driver's licenses and other personal information that can be used to steal a person's identity is a hassle.

### **Protecting Valuables**

- Always take items such as a purse, wallet, laptop, MP3 player, cell phone and other valuables when exiting the car.
- When taking valuables is not an option, lock valuables in the trunk. Move valuables to the trunk beforehand to avoid being seen by potential burglars.
- Take notice of the surroundings. Drive around the parking lot before parking the car.
- Note any suspicious persons or vehicles. If something feels suspicious, it probably is.
- Once parked, walk promptly with keys or cell phone in hand, while looking around.
- Report suspicious persons to the police immediately.

For more information, visit [www.irvingpd.com](http://www.irvingpd.com).

## **Irving Public Library Introduces Community Information Wiki**

Looking for a chess club, a list of charter schools, or a worthwhile agency that will accept old furniture? Find information such as this by searching the Irving Community Information Wiki.

Compiled by the Public Library, the Irving Community Information Wiki is a city-specific, free online encyclopedia with information on all aspects of the city's culture, history and day-to-day life. The Irving Public Library launched the Irving Community Information Wiki on Dec. 1.

"Reference librarians have always provided information about our community to library visitors," said Lyle Vance, adult services manager. "Now we can offer that information at any time and place by providing unique and specialized information about Irving on the Internet. The Wiki is a handy resource and as the content continues to grow, it will become an invaluable tool."

The Wiki provides easy access to a variety of community information in one place. Much more than a directory, it includes a description of each topic, whether it is a community service organization, school or recreational activity, with contact information and links to more information. The community Wiki is not a forum for advertising; it exists to inform people about what Irving has to offer, who lives here, and its history. The Wiki is an interactive resource—users are able to suggest organizations to be featured on the Web site.

To explore the Irving Community Information Wiki or to request that an organization be included, visit <http://irvingwiki.cityofirving.org>.

## **Heritage Crossing Public Input**

City staff will present the draft design guidelines for the Heritage Crossing area, formerly called Olde Towne, during an informational meeting:

**7 p.m. Dec. 8**  
**Irving Central Library**  
**801 W. Irving Blvd.**

The meeting will provide residents who live within the Heritage Crossing area an opportunity to ask questions and receive information.

Design guidelines will provide development standards for the redevelopment of property within the area, which is bounded on the north by Pioneer Drive, on the east by Britain Road, on the south by Shady Grove Road and on the west by MacArthur Boulevard. The design guidelines will include requirements for:

- Landscaping
- Signage
- Parking
- Building orientation
- Other design elements

The Heritage Crossing Advisory Committee, established by the City Council, has completed its review of the draft document and provided comments to the developer, Delbert McDougal. The design guidelines have been presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission for discussion and the commission will hold a formal public hearing on Jan. 5.

This will be the first opportunity for the commission to vote on a recommendation to be forwarded to the City Council. Every property owner shown on the most recently approved tax roll will receive a mailed notice of the public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

## **Community Partnership Grant Funds Assist Neighborhood Associations with Improvements**

The new year is just around the corner and community leaders are recruiting neighbors and volunteers to spruce up their neighborhoods courtesy of the Community Partnership Grant Fund. The special grant funding, provided by the City of Irving, supports neighborhood leaders in implementing projects that will foster a spirit of community and renew the concept of what it means to be a good neighbor.

Grants between \$250 (minimum) and \$1,500 (maximum) are awarded to neighborhood groups within the city limits. These funds are to be matched equally (dollar for dollar) by a private source of funds, labor or in-kind contributions. Last year, \$20,000 was awarded to 20 neighborhood associations for physical improvements, neighborhood beautification, street sign toppers, special events, newsletters and Web site development.

“This is a great opportunity for neighborhood groups and also a way for us to show appreciation to our neighborhood leaders who work tirelessly to improve the quality of life for everyone,” said Community Outreach Manager Susan Rose. “The spirit of the grant is about getting your neighbors involved and creating a plan that will help our community thrive.”

The application deadline is Jan. 20. Those interested in receiving an application or forming a neighborhood group should contact the Corporate Communications Department at (972) 721-2533.

## **Organizations Have Opportunity to Receive Housing, Urban Development Funding**

The Housing and Human Services Department assists those with low to moderate income with funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Since 1999, the city has allocated federal funds to nonprofit agencies to assist in the agencies' programs benefitting people with low to moderate income. Organizations must apply for funding annually, which includes an interview with the Housing and Human Services Board. Once accepted, organizations must submit performance measures and reimbursement reports on a monthly basis. The fiscal year runs from October through September.

Funding allocated from HUD to the City of Irving includes:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- HOME Investment Partnership
- American Dream Down Payment Initiative (ADDI)
- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)

Priorities and eligible programs include:

### **Affordable Housing**

- Homeownership assistance
- Rehabilitation/reconstruction
- Acquisition
- New construction of affordable housing
- Transitional housing
- Other development of affordable housing

### **Special Needs Populations**

- Job training
- Dental and medical health care
- Crisis assistance programs for low-income families
- Services for youth
- Services for the elderly and disabled

### **Homeless Services**

- Operations and maintenance of emergency shelters
- Essential services for the homeless (case worker services to persons)
- Homeless prevention activities

### **Non-Housing Community Development**

- Neighborhood revitalization projects
- Infrastructure/park improvements

Interested organizations must be represented at a mandatory application workshop from 9 to 11 a.m. Feb. 6 at the Valley View Municipal Complex, 333 Valley View Lane. Applications will be available beginning Jan. 15, online at [www.cityofirving.org](http://www.cityofirving.org), or by calling (972) 721-4800. Applications are due by 5 p.m. Feb. 27.

## **Residents Encouraged to Participate in Christmas Tree Recycling Opportunity**

Residents will have an opportunity to properly dispose of fresh-cut Christmas trees for recycling during Irving's annual Christmas Tree Roundup. Bare Christmas trees will be picked up as part of the city's weekly brush/bulky waste collection Dec. 29–Jan. 15. For more information, call (972) 721-2355. Residents also may take their Christmas trees to any of the following drop-off locations Dec. 26–Jan. 11:

- Cottonwood Park, 4051 N. Story Road
- Southwest Park, 2800 Shady Grove Road
- Drop-Off Recycling Center, 9940 W. Valley Ranch Parkway (behind the Valero off of MacArthur Boulevard)
- Hunter Ferrell Landfill, 220 W. Hunter Ferrell Road (Drop off daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1)

Collected Christmas trees will be mulched and made available for a nominal fee at the city landfill. Call (972) 264-3772.

## **Enhancements to Improve, Beautify Irving Corridors**

Irving's visual image is being enhanced through the creation of regional entryways into the city along highways and major thoroughfares. Improvements are being made to more than 33 miles of thoroughfares that serve 400,000 automobiles on a daily basis.

The project uses several funding sources, such as tariffs, franchise fees, gas lease revenues and general obligation bonds, to provide for more enhancements using fewer taxpayer dollars.

### **Design Elements**

A more comprehensive design approach is being applied to infrastructure and aesthetics. Functional elements now include:

- Roadway paving and accents
- Bikeway provisions
- Expansion of greenbelts for pedestrians
- Upgrades to street and traffic lights for safety and architectural accent

Quality of life elements include:

- Landscaping improvements
- Public art
- Median treatment and pavers
- Fencing and noise walls
- Monument signage
- Building façade improvements
- Gateways and entryways

### **Planned Projects**

#### *Belt Line Road*

- Scope: Median enhancements with ornamental grasses, crepe myrtles, specimen trees, turf irrigation and entry sign
- Project Cost: \$1.1 million
- Design Completion: December
- Construction Completion: June

#### *MacArthur Boulevard*

##### Hunter Ferrell Road to Shady Grove Road

- Scope: Median enhancements with ornamental grasses, crepe myrtles, specimen trees, turf irrigation, upgraded streetlights and entry sign
- Project Cost: \$555,000
- Design Completion: December
- Construction Completion: August

#### *Shady Grove Road and MacArthur Boulevard*

- Scope: Median enhancements with monument signs, gateway marker with public art, brick crosswalks, concrete paving, upgraded traffic standards, façade improvements and underground utilities
- Project Cost: \$3.4 million (first project using tariff revenues)
- Design completed
- Construction Completion: May

*MacArthur Boulevard*

Shady Grove Road to Northgate Drive

- Scope: Median enhancements with ornamental grasses, crepe myrtles, specimen trees, Sixth Street intersection pavers, church frontage, upgraded streetlights and underground utilities
- Project Cost: \$4 million
- Design Completion: Summer 2009
- Construction Completion: Summer 2010

*O'Connor Boulevard*

State Highway 183 to Rochelle Road

- Scope: Greenbelt enhancements with ornamental grasses, crepe myrtles, specimen trees, upgraded streetlights, screening wall and pedestrian/bikeway paths

Screening Wall

- Project Cost: \$600,000
- Design Completion: December
- Construction Completion: August

Landscape Enhancements

- Project Cost: \$300,000
- Design Completion: August
- Construction Completion: Summer 2011

**Heritage House**

Visit the Irving Heritage House, 303 S. O'Connor Road, from 3 to 5 p.m. Dec. 7 for a view of yesterday. Docent-led tours are provided at 3 and 4 p.m.

The Heritage House is a restored pioneer home that was originally built in 1912. The house has been designated as a Texas State Historical Landmark. Furnishings include a wedding gown from 1903, a clock from 1840, an organ ca. 1880, a square piano ca. 1860, and antique porcelains.

Admission is free, and group tours may be scheduled. For more information, call (972) 252-3838 or visit [www.irvingheritage.com](http://www.irvingheritage.com).

**Office Closings**

City offices will be closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1. All offices will reopen at their regular hours Dec. 29 and Jan. 2. There will be no trash, brush or curbside recycling collection on these days. All full-service recycling drop-off centers are closed Dec. 23–25 and Jan. 1. The Hunter Ferrell Landfill will be closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1. Libraries will close at 5 p.m. Dec. 24 and 31, and will be closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1. The libraries will reopen at their regular hours Dec. 27 and Jan. 2. Recreation and aquatic centers will be closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1. The Irving Arts Center will be closed Dec. 25–26 and Jan. 1. Box office and gallery hours resume Dec. 27.

## **Blue Christmas Drive**

The Police and Fire departments are once again hosting Blue Christmas. The program, which both departments have participated in for nearly 30 years, has the potential to help close to 400 families in need this holiday season.

Through Dec. 17, donations of new, unwrapped toys for children ages 1–16, as well as canned and box food items, can be dropped off at the Irving Police Station, 305 N. O'Connor Road; Police North Substation, 5992 Riverside Drive; Fire Administration, 845 W. Irving Blvd., or at any Irving Fire Station:

- Fire Station No. 1, 925 Chamberlain St.
- Fire Station No. 2, 1306 N. Story Road
- Fire Station No. 3, 1825 E. Grauwlyer Road
- Fire Station No. 4, 3303 N. MacArthur Blvd.
- Fire Station No. 5, 2925 W. Shady Grove Road
- Fire Station No. 6, 2801 Esters Road
- Fire Station No. 7, 3303 W. Walnut Hill Lane
- Fire Station No. 8, 650 E. Las Colinas Blvd.
- Fire Station No. 9, 8101 Jetstar Drive
- Fire Station No. 10, 415 Cimarron Trail
- Fire Station No. 11, 6200 Love Drive

For more information, call (972) 721-2746.