



P O N D E R O S A
FIREFIGHTER
HARRIS COUNTY ESD #28

Station 61: 17061 Rolling Creek Dr., Houston, TX., 77090

Station 62: 4362 Louetta Rd., Spring, TX., 77388

Station 63: 21455 Imperial Valley, Houston, TX., 77388

Fire fighters are more than just professionals who put out fires. They are your family, your brothers and sisters who risk their lives every day to protect you and your community. They are the ones who run towards danger when everyone else runs away. They are the ones who sacrifice their time, their health, and sometimes their lives for the greater good. They are the ones who show courage, compassion, and dedication in the face of adversity.

Why do we need fire fighters?

Because they are the heroes we depend on in times of crisis. Because they are the ones who save lives, property, and the environment. Because they are attempting to help you while you are having the worse day of your life. Because they are the ones who make our world a safer and better place. And because they are the ones who inspire us to be brave, generous, and resilient.

Support your firefighters! They deserve our respect, our gratitude, and our help. They need our support and advocacy. They need us to stand with them, to cheer them on, and to thank them for their service. Support your firefighters because they are family.

Have you ever wondered... How it all got started?



The Ponderosa Fire Department (PFD) was a volunteer fire department that served the unincorporated area north of Houston, Texas. It was founded in 1972 by a group of dedicated individuals who saw the need for fire protection in the growing community as Spring VFD Station #3.

The PFD now has three stations: Station 61 in Ponderosa Forest, Station 62 in Cypresswood/Cypressdale, and Station 63 in Northview/Willow West/Inverness Forest. The PFD has a fleet of modern and well-equipped apparatus, including pumpers, ladder truck, rescue truck, and support vehicles. The PFD is funded by Emergency Services District #28 that levies a property tax of less than 10 cents per hundred dollars of evaluation.

The PFD has achieved the Public Protection Class (PPC) rating of 2 from the Insurance Services Office (ISO), which is a measure of how well a fire department can protect its community from fire risks. The PPC rating ranges from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most highly rated and 10 being no fire department rating. The PPC rating is based on factors such as water supply (40%), communication systems (10%), fire department equipment, personnel, and training (50%). A lower PPC rating can lower the insurance premiums for property owners in the area. The PFD's PPC rating of 2 places it in the top 54% of the nation's fire and rescue agencies.

The PFD has a history of excellence, professionalism, and service to the community. Some of the inspiring news stories involving the PFD are:

- In 2017, the PFD rescued a woman and her two dogs from a house fire that was caused by a lightning strike. The firefighters arrived on scene within four minutes and were able to enter the burning house and bring the woman and her pets to safety. The woman suffered minor injuries and was transported to a hospital for treatment. The firefighters also managed to contain the fire and prevent it from spreading to other houses.
- In 2018, the PFD responded to a major gas leak that affected several businesses and homes in the area. The firefighters evacuated the affected buildings and secured the scene until the gas company arrived to fix the leak. The firefighters also helped some of the residents who were displaced by the incident to find shelter and resources. No injuries or explosions were reported.
- In 2019, the PFD participated in a charity event called "Fill the Boot" to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). The firefighters collected donations from drivers and pedestrians at various intersections in their district. The PFD raised over \$20,000 for the MDA, which helps fund research and treatment for neuromuscular diseases.
- In 2020, the PFD faced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with courage and resilience. The firefighters adapted to new protocols and procedures to protect themselves and the public from the virus. They also continued to provide essential services to the community, such as responding to medical emergencies, fires, accidents, and other incidents. The PFD also supported other frontline workers by delivering meals, masks, and sanitizer to hospitals, nursing homes, and schools. The PFD never missed a second of work.
- In 2022, the PFD celebrated its 50th anniversary with pride and gratitude. The firefighters organized a commemorative event that featured a ceremony, and an open house. The event honored the past, present, and future of the PFD, as well as its founders, members, supporters, and partners. The event also highlighted the PFD's achievements, equipment, and programs.

The Ponderosa Fire Department today is a combination agency of full time, part time, and volunteers while being a shining example of how fire departments can make a positive difference in their communities. The PFD is always ready to respond to any emergency with skill, speed, and compassion.

The PFD is also committed to improving its capabilities and services through training, education, and innovation. The PFD is more than just a fire department; it is a family of dedicated personnel who serve with honor, integrity, and commitment.

Sources:

- : <https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2018/08/24/gas-leak-forces-evacuations-in-north-houston/>
- : <https://www.ponderosavfd.org/news/2019/9/3/fill-the-boot>
- : <https://www.ponderosavfd.org/news/2020/4/30/covid-19-update>
- : <https://www.ponderosavfd.org/news/2021/10/11/50th-anniversary>

How an Emergency Servicing District HELPS YOU.

An Emergency Services District (ESD) is a type of local government that provides fire protection, emergency medical services, or both to a specific area. ESDs are different from county governments in several ways.

- First, ESDs are created by voters in an area who want to fund these services through property tax, sales tax, grants, and service fees.
- Second, ESDs are governed by a board of commissioner elected by the voters, not by the county commissioners' court.
- Third, ESDs are independent political subdivisions of the state, which means they have their own taxing authority and budget.
- Fourth, ESDs operate in conjunction with other ESD's, but they do not provide duplicative services. For example, one ESD could provide fire protection and another Emergency Medical Services.

According to the Harris County Appraisal District website, the zip codes 77090, 77388, 77014, and 77073 are in ESD 28 and are governed by a board of 5 commissioners elected for a 4-year term and reside in their respective ESD. ESD's can operate their own fire and Emergency Medical Service, (EMS) agency, or they can contract with a service provider.

ESD boundaries were set decades ago before the explosive growth of unincorporated Harris County. Related to that is the various residential, commercial development and the resultant roadway improvements and additions.

ESD28's ad valorem tax rates started at 3 cents, then 5 cents, and (based upon financial need) was incrementally adjusted over the years to the tax cap of 10 cents where it is today. Included is an over 65 exemption and a disability exemption.

May 2011 the ESD knew that reducing services to meet budget needs was not an answer, so a sales tax election was held. The vote passed. The following year a sales tax collection on communications was passed and this revenue replaced the lost revenue due to property devaluations and retired debt much earlier than scheduled.

The ESD board of directors/ citizens of the community is dedicated to making the right decisions within the resources available. The list of accomplishments is many; three award winning fire stations, top notch equipment and paid personnel who are the best individuals that understand our services mission.

As emergency responses continue to increase- Ponderosa Fire Department-Harris County Emergency Service District #28 are deeply proud of the steady growth of our firefighting capabilities over the past 50 years. Starting from one station with one truck making 50 runs a year to three stations making 2800 runs a year. At every step along the way we have but one objective- be prepared to respond in the shortest amount of time to the emergency needs of the residents in our service area while utilizing skilled, highly trained personnel and the latest in firefighting and rescue technology.

ESD#28 and PFD live by our Mission of
Duty, Pride, and Commitment

This level of capability does not just occur, it is the result of careful long-range planning with an incredibly supportive board of directors, continuing education, and the unwavering support of the community we serve. ESD#28 has met the challenges of the past and has the commitment to do so in the future.

<https://www.esd28.com/>

Fireworks and Holidays

Hey, it's that time of the year again when everyone wants to light up the sky with fireworks. But before you do that, the Ponderosa Fire Department wants you to know some key facts about fireworks safety.

You might think that fireworks are harmless fun, but they can cause serious injuries and fires. Even the ones that are labeled as "consumer-type fireworks" or "safe and sane fireworks" can be dangerous. That's why all the cities in Harris County have banned them.

But we live in the unincorporated areas of Harris County, you can still use them, but you must be careful. Some apartment complexes might not allow them either. And did you know that sparklers can burn as hot as 1,200F? That's hot enough to melt metal! And exploding fireworks can send debris flying and start fires.

So, if you really want to use fireworks, make sure you have an adult with you and follow the instructions on the package. And be considerate of your neighbors. Some people might not like the noise or the smoke, or they might have pets that get scared by the loud sounds. And remember, if you cause any damage or injury with your fireworks, you are responsible for it.

Fireworks are not toys. They are explosives that can hurt you and others. The National Fireworks Association says that most of the injuries from fireworks happen because people don't use them properly. Here are some numbers from a study they did in 1999:

- 6,300 people went to the hospital because of fireworks injuries
- Most of the injured people were boys and men
- Kids from five to 14 years old got hurt the most
- One out of five injuries were to the eye
- Firecrackers caused the most injuries
- Rockets, sparklers, and Roman candles also hurt a lot of people

So please, think twice before you use fireworks. There are other ways to celebrate the New Year without risking your health and safety. And don't forget if you use fireworks, clean up the mess and always place the debris in a bucket of water before disposal.

The Ponderosa Fire Department.

<https://www.facebook.com/PonderosaFD/>

Wishing you and yours a safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Happy holidays from ESD #28, the Ponderosa Fire Fighters and the Ponderosa Fire Department!

We hope you are enjoying this festive season with your loved ones and staying safe and warm. As you celebrate, we would like to share some tips for holiday fire safety that can help you prevent any accidents or emergencies.

- Keep your Christmas tree away from heat sources such as fireplaces, candles, and heaters. Make sure it is well-watered and dispose of it properly when it becomes dry.
- Check your holiday lights for any damaged cords, loose connections, or broken bulbs. Replace any faulty lights and do not overload your outlets or extension cords.
- Never leave candles unattended or near flammable items such as curtains, paper, or furniture. Use candle holders that are sturdy and stable and keep them out of reach of children and pets. Use a ceramic plate under the candles.
- Be careful when cooking for the holiday feast. Do not leave the stove or oven unattended and keep a fire extinguisher nearby. Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves that can catch fire. Keep your cooking area clean and free of grease or oil spills.
- Test your smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and make sure they have fresh batteries. Have an escape plan in case of a fire and practice it with your family.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year! Thank you for your support and trust in us. We are proud to serve our community and protect you from any fire hazards. Remember, we are always here for you, 24/7, 365 days a year. Stay safe and have fun!



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This publication is intended for the residents within the Ponderosa Fire Department service area. If you received it in error, we hope you still read it and utilize the fire safety information.

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17061 Rolling Creek Dr.
Houston, TX 77090



Don't forget- Smoke Detectors SAVE LIVES!

Hey, did you know that most people who die in house fires don't have working smoke alarms? That's scary, right? Smoke alarms can save your life, but only if they're working and you know what to do when they go off. So, here's what you need to do to stay safe.

First, make sure you have smoke alarms in every room of your house and test them monthly. Do not place your smoke alarm over your kitchen stove. Place your smoke alarm near your kitchen, in the bedrooms, and hallways. Look for a dual sensor smoke detector with photoelectric and ionization capabilities. The sensors work together to equip your home with comprehensive smoke and fire protection. Follow the directions for installation of your smoke detector on the ceiling or on the wall 12 inches from the ceiling.

Second, plan how you would get out of your house if there's a fire. You should have two ways to escape from each room, like a door and a window. If you have a second floor, get some fire escape ladders, and learn how to use them.

Third, when you hear the smoke alarm, get out as fast as you can. Close the doors behind you to slow down the fire and smoke. If you can't use the door, use the window. If there's smoke, crawl under the smoke to breathe better. If you live in a tall building, use the stairs, not the elevator.

Fourth, pick a spot outside your house where everyone can meet and make sure everyone knows it.

Fifth, call 9-1-1 as soon as you're out and tell them where you are and what's happening.

Sixth, practice your escape plan with your family at least twice a year.

Seventh, never go back inside a burning house for any reason. It's too dangerous!

That's it. Follow these steps and you'll be ready for any fire emergency. Stay safe and have fun!

<https://www.ponderosavfd.org/contact/>

