

# May 4 Election to Annex Lost Creek Into ESD 9



## ■ Why is Emergency Service District (ESD) 9 proposing to annex Lost Creek into its service area?

On May 4, the residents of Lost Creek will vote on de-annexing from the City of Austin, a decision that would end all city services to Lost Creek including emergency response. Prior to the City of Austin's annexation, ESD 9 was the primary emergency response organization serving the community. Bordering Lost Creek, ESD 9 continues to respond to many calls in the neighborhood through an automatic aid agreement with the City of Austin, which requires the closest unit to respond regardless of jurisdiction. However, our responsibilities would increase if ESD 9's Westlake Fire Department again becomes the primary emergency responders for approximately 3,000 residents.

Annexing Lost Creek into ESD 9 would allow the district to collect property taxes from the neighborhood to cover the cost of our services while also allowing the district to do more proactive fire prevention.

## ■ If the Westlake Fire Department already serves Lost Creek, why does the district need more tax revenue?

While the Westlake Fire Department continues to respond to many calls in the Lost Creek neighborhood today, we are not the primary emergency service providers. Our call volume will increase if the neighborhood ceases to be served by the Austin Fire Department.



ESD 9 has already identified a need to build a third fire station near Barton Creek Boulevard and Bee Caves Rd. We are also looking to hire a full-time wildfire mitigation specialist, as other nearby ESDs have done, to address our area wildlife threat. Increasing our tax revenue will provide the district with more resources to meet these needs as we expand the district population we serve by approximately 20%.

## ■ What should voters expect to see on the ballot May 4?

Voters in Lost Creek will be asked to decide whether to de-annex from the City of Austin and, on the same ballot, they will also be asked to vote on whether Lost Creek should voluntarily be annexed into ESD 9.

Residents in the rest of ESD 9 (West Lake Hills, Rollingwood, Rob Roy and the nearby unincorporated area of Travis County) will also be asked to vote on whether Lost Creek should be annexed into ESD 9. ***The voluntary annexation of Lost Creek into ESD 9 must be approved by the majorities of both Lost Creek residents and ESD 9 voters who do not live in Lost Creek.***

## ■ What will happen if Lost Creek isn't annexed into ESD 9?

If Lost Creek residents vote to de-annex from the City of Austin but ESD 9 does not receive all the votes necessary to annex Lost Creek into its service area, then the Westlake Fire Department will continue to respond to emergency calls in the neighborhood as required by state statute. However, Lost Creek residents would not receive all of the services that ESD 9 residents receive, and our Board of Commissioners would likely establish fees that Lost Creek residents would have to pay for services when needed.

## ■ If annexed, would Lost Creek residents be required to help pay ESD 9's existing debt?

No. ESD 9 currently has only \$123,000 in debt from previous bonds, an amount the district will pay off in full this fall before the district could begin to collect property taxes from Lost Creek residents.

