

On 10 September, 2016, an informal survey of the River Crossing subdivision was performed with the purpose of identifying possible challenges to Fire Department response, particularly regarding wildland fires. The survey was performed by Assistant Chief Brian Harvey of Bastrop County Emergency Services District No.1, the department providing fire and rescue services to the area including the subdivision. River Crossing representative Carl Rees requested and participated in the survey for question-and-answer.

Specific items audited were property access, fuel loading, and water supply. The survey included:

- Colorado Drive
- Brazos Drive
- Concho Drive
- Pecos Street
- Trinity Street
- Sabine Drive
- Llano Court
- Palo Duro Drive
- Frio Court
- Colorado Cove
- Colorado Bluff

Property Access

Fire Department recommends driveway access be no less than 12' wide and 12' high at the lowest point, including low-hanging tree limbs. Driveway access as visible from the roadway was sufficient on the majority

of residences, with some specific issues and concerns pointed out. Normal Fire response for grass and brush fires is Type-6 Wildland engines (brush trucks) on an F-550 or similar chassis, carrying 300-500 gallons of water for fire suppression. Fire response for a structure fire, or for structure protection during a wildland fire, is a much larger Type-1 fire engine that is significantly longer, wider, and taller. Proper clearance is required for this type of apparatus to make access.

Other access items that were discussed were:

- The possibility of access between Pecos Street and the property to the east at 251 Old 71.
- Access along the powerline easement between Pecos Street and Trinity Street.
- The trail that runs much of the perimeter of the subdivision.
- Access to (and possibly across) Dry Creek off of Colorado Cove.

Fuel Loading

Fuel loading is a term used to describe the amount, types, and consistency of fuel (grass, leaves, brush, trees) available to a wildland fire. As visible from the roadway, nearly all properties were well-maintained, especially near the residences, with grass kept mowed, bushes and shrubs trimmed, and trees limbed-up from the ground. There were some exceptions, mostly on undeveloped properties, or at the back or edges of developed properties. Timber in the area is primarily Post Oak Savannah, with other hardwoods and some Juniper (Cedar) mixed in the wooded (southern) portion of the subdivision. Some great guidelines and tips can be found at www.firewise.org.

Water Supply

Water supply within the subdivision is sufficient, and well above the average of the surrounding area. There are fire hydrants spaced throughout, mostly near the intersections of Colorado Drive and the spur streets. The hydrants were visible and easily accessible from the roadway.

Overall, the survey was successful in the exchanging of information between both parties, benefiting all involved. River Crossing as a whole is a well maintained property with regards to the items audited. In pursuit of continuous improvement, would recommend looking into the requirements to become a Firewise community.

Regards,

Brian Harvey