

From the Desk of Bobbie Mitchell, Denton County Commissioner Pct. 3 – August 2018

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Our Denton County Records Management Department

When the Paper Trail Becomes Digital: Denton County's Records Management Story

When you think of a “government record” what comes to mind? Do you picture a file in a folder? Your birth certificate? Standing in line to fill out a form and renew your driver’s license? Maybe you envision a dark, secluded file room from a scene in your favorite crime show. All of these things have something in common: paper. However, in today’s world a majority of our business is conducted digitally. Think about it—when was the last time you sent a hand-written letter instead of an e-mail? Business in government agencies is no different. In the State of Texas, a government record is defined as anything that documents public business, regardless of its physical format. This means that local governments like Denton County are responsible for efficiently creating and preserving all types of documents, including those that are created and stored digitally. So, you may be asking yourself, how does Denton County manage the massive amount of information created and received?

In 1989, the Texas Legislature passed the Local Government Records Act, recognizing that the citizens of the state have a right to expect, and the state has an obligation to foster, efficient and cost-effective government. This law recognizes the central importance of local government records in the lives of all citizens. In 1991, Denton County Commissioners Court passed the Denton County Records Management Program Resolution to lay out the policies and procedures for managing records across our local government. The Records Management division was assigned the task of assisting each county department with following these laws, policies, and best practices for their records. As technology advanced over time and government records became increasingly integrated with technology, the need for greater control over digital records became apparent. To address this need, the Records Management Division was reorganized to become a part of the Department of Technology Services in 2012.

With more than 50 departments and over 1,700 Denton County employees to serve, the Records Management division has their work cut out for them. The Denton County Records Management team is comprised of seven Records Technicians and an Assistant Manager who complete digitization projects, provide customer service and consultation for each department, and maintain our Records Center. The division is led by Denton County’s Records Management Officer (RMO), who is the senior records official ultimately responsible for ensuring the county’s compliance with state and local records regulations.

Denton County’s services and operations are diverse, and so are our records and the technology that creates and stores those records. For example, we have law enforcement records, health records, court records, and even the documentation of our administrative departments like Human Resources and Purchasing. All of these records are stored in various software applications and formats. To make the management of these records even more challenging, the

same type of record may be stored in several different formats, even within the same office. It would be a daunting task for the Records Management division to manage everything alone. That's why Denton County also has 67 Records Liaison Officers in the various departments across our county. The liaisons are appointed by elected officials or department heads to be a point of contact for records policy implementation, training, and information sharing. Since Records Management policy can be confusing and sometimes complex, one of the main focuses of the Records Management division is outreach and training for Records Liaison Officers and others within their departments.

Denton County Health Department and Services you may have never known about

Aside from Primary care Providers (PCP), specialists, nurses and pharmacists, what other services or providers are included in healthcare and well-being? With epidemiologists who track infectious disease rates and distribution within Denton County communities, to environmental health workers investigating and enforcing septic or standing water concerns, the skilled team at Denton county Health (DCPH) provides health services that prevent, promote, and protect the communities' health in unique ways that may go unnoticed. All of these services uniquely protect Denton County but do not traditionally fall under the topic of healthcare. Prevention includes communicating with PCP's on infection prevalence and educating on the importance of immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases. DCPH utilizes promotion to encourage healthy living within communities, whether it is initiating coalitions for access to care or services, encouraging healthier eating, or providing education on the health related benefits of exercise. Lastly, DCPH protects residents within Denton County with experts in the field of surveillance and monitoring and pursuing policies that further the health of our communities. While healthcare is often the services we receive at the doctor's office, DCPH continues to lead our communities to a healthier future with unique and invaluable services that benefit the entire county.

Did you know?

That suicide rates have increased in almost every state in the US from 1999 to 2016 and the most recent data shows that number is still rising. Within Denton County, 98 deaths by suicide were reported in 2017, up from 88 in 2016. As this number grows, it is vitally important for communities to work together to support and connect at risk individuals to mental and physical healthcare options. Over half of people who died by suicide did not have a known mental health condition and instead that many other factors contribute to feelings of hopelessness and / or suicide, per CDC reports. Relationship problems, impending or recent crisis, substance use, and either financial or health problems are all factors reported that contributed to suicide and are areas we can look for solutions within our communities to help prevent suicide. If you are concerned for a friend, neighbor, or family member's wellbeing, BeThe1To.com advises 5 simple steps to help someone at risk including ask, keep them safe, be there, help them connect, then follow up. If you or someone you know needs help, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), a free, confidential, 24/7 service that provides support, information, and local resources to people in a suicidal crisis or emotional distress or

those around them. Visit SuicidePreventionLifeline.org or CDC.gov/vitalsigns/suicide/index.html for resources and additional information.

Shady Shores Road Improvements in Lake Dallas:

Denton County will be continuing work on surface road improvements for Shady Sores Road from Main Street to just south of Swisher Road in coordination with the City of Lake Dallas. Construction will close the road to North Bound traffic through the project (See link below). If you have any questions about the project please call Lake Dallas Public Works at 940-497-4484. The project is currently expected to be complete by mid-August 2018.

<https://dentoncounty.com/Departments/Commissioners/Commissioner-Pct3.aspx>

Lewisville Selects a New Chief of Police

Welcome to Lewisville's recently announced Officer Kevin Deaver as the next Chief-of-Police; who will succeed Chief Russell Kerbow upon his retirement! Many thanks to Chief Kerbow and congratulations to Officer Deaver! For more Cty of Lewisville information go to

<http://cityoflewisville.com>

Lewisville ISD Back to School Fair

Do not miss the opportunity to attend the LISD Back to School Fair on Saturday, August 4th at Lewisville High School from 9 Am to 2PM. It is sure to be informative and very helpful in getting your kids and you ready for another great year!

FYI – the First Day of School in LISD is **August 15th** so be prepared and go to the Back to School Fair and most important, Have a safe and Happy rest of your summer!

Go to <https://www.lisd.net> for more information.

North Texas Fair and Rodeo

The North Texas Fair and Rodeo begins on August 17th and continues thru August 25th It is sure to be filled with something for everyone to enjoy so don't miss out on the best Entertainment of the Summer right here in our own back yard in Denton County, just a short drive up the highway to Denton.

For more event information and tickets for the North Texas Fair and Rodeo go to <https://www.ntfair.com>

Did You Know these Fun Facts about Purple Martins?

They are the only domesticated free-flying songbird in the United States. Purple martins prefer to live in manmade homes in close proximity to humans (often referred to as “Purple Martin Landlords”)

They are a federally protected migratory songbird, found seasonally from Florida to Texas. Purple Martins eat on the fly, consuming hundreds of insects a day.

They are considered clean birds with a high visual appeal.

They are very fast, agile and noted for their “aerial acrobatics.”

Their “hello” call is a promising and happy “Cheer-Cheer.”

Their rich history dates back 12,000 years. Native Americans discovered that martins could be lured into their villages by hanging up gourds with holes cut in the sides.

Importantly, the Purple Martins population is only 10% of what it was in the 1930’s, but has increased in the Lewisville area during the past 20 years.

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