

EMERGENCY SERVICE DISTRICTS



TSDC

- ESDs trace their history to the old Rural Fire Prevention Districts (RFPDs). In the late 1940s, Texas voters approved RFPDs. In 2003, the Texas Legislature **changed RFPDs to ESDs** as the preferred method for providing fire protection and emergency medical response.
- As of 2024, there are 368 Emergency Services Districts (ESDs) statewide.
- Voters entrust the provisions of emergency services to a five-member Board of Commissioners, who serve two-year terms and are required to receive six hours of training.
- In most counties, the ESD Board of Commissioners is **appointed by the County Commissioners Court**, except in Harris, Smith and Orange counties and for ESDs located in more than one county, where ESD Commissioners are **elected**.
- When an ESD is created through a local election, voters authorize the district to levy a property tax with a constitutional tax limit of ten cents per \$100 of value.
- ESDs can provide emergency services, own and operate emergency facilities, contract for services, hire or utilize personnel, collect and use tax revenues, govern as a public entity and ensure training and safety.
- ESDs are created and governed under Chapter 775 of the Health and Safety Code.
- For 20 years, the **State Association of Fire and Emergency Districts (SAFE-D)** has been the only statewide organization dedicated to helping the men and women of ESDs protect more than 10 million Texans. Contact SAFE-D at 512-251-8101 or admin@safe-d.org for more information. www.safe-d.org.