



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 6, 2016

Media Contact: Celso Martinez, 972-623-8836

Emergency vehicle control of traffic signals increases

SACHSE (May 6, 2016) Seven of the City's most trafficked intersections will be equipped with traffic signal preemption devices, allowing emergency vehicles to change the signal when approaching them, says Public Works and Engineering Director Greg Peters.

"These devices are not new to Sachse, and certainly not new to cities across the country," he said. "We have had these devices in operation for some time along SH 78. However, we are adding a few arterial intersections and updating the ones along SH 78 to ensure they all function properly."

Preemption devices use infrared signals to request or extend a green traffic light in the direction of oncoming emergency vehicles. Fire Department vehicles are equipped with emitting devices that send the signal to the readers on the signal arms. The devices are manufactured and marketed by Opticom Global Traffic Technologies, a leader in the industry.

Four of the intersections are on SH 78, specifically at the Ranch Road; Fifth Street; Ben Davis Road; and Bunker Hill Road intersections. The other three are at the intersections of Merritt Road and Pleasant Valley Road; Murphy Road and Blackburn Road; and Miles Road and Hudson Road.

"Installation begins on Saturday, May 7 and may last up to three weeks," he said.

Fire Chief Martin Wade says the preemption devices can make a significant difference in response times and could possibly result in lives saved.

"Getting our personnel and equipment on the scene of an emergency in as little time as possible is critical," he said. "Whether it's a fire, a vehicle accident, a health-related emergency or any other situation that requires our assistance, we want to get there quickly and safely. These systems are critical to our effectiveness."

Just the same, he warns, driver compliance is essential to the safety of the first responders. "We can have the latest technology, but if drivers are distracted or unsure of what to do when approached by an emergency vehicle, there can be severe consequences," he said.

Obeying traffic signals and yielding the right-of-way to emergency vehicles can guarantee the safety of drivers, pedestrians and emergency personnel. On the other hand, drivers trying to beat a signal or attempting to outrun an emergency vehicle can place everyone in danger.

"There is a certain amount of stress involved in answering an emergency call, and while our personnel are highly-trained and disciplined drivers, they count on the driving public to do their part by safely moving out of the way," he added.

###

ABOUT THE CITY OF SACHSE – Sachse is an emerging city in Collin and Dallas Counties with a population of 20,329 according to the 2010 census. Located about a mile north of the President George Bush Turnpike off State Hwy 78, the City is chartered as a Council-Manager municipality. Founded in 1845 by William Sachse, the City enjoys an eclectic mix of older, established neighborhoods and new residential and commercial developments. Proud of its history, the City is home to a strong historical restoration movement which includes an extensive history museum.