

TARRANT COUNTY

NEWS & INFORMATION



May 2008



www.tarrantcounty.com

Barnett Shale bonus and royalties to benefit Resource Connection

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court recently approved drilling for Barnett Shale gas at its Resource Connection campus in South Fort Worth. The \$1.5 million signing bonus and all subsequent royalties will be deposited into a special fund for special capital purchases and maintenance benefiting the Resource Connection.

Ultimately, the Resource Connection isn't the main beneficiary of this windfall – it's the people who need to use the social services located there. The Commissioners Court intends to use the gas money for this fund because the County wants to keep the Resource Connection as an Enterprise Fund that operates completely without assistance from the taxpayer-supported General Fund.

The Resource Connection has been developed as a one-stop social services mall that can be easily accessed by the disadvantaged in Tarrant County. By keeping all these social service agencies in one location, people who need to use the services don't have to travel all over the County to use their services.

Currently, the cost of operating and maintaining the Resource Connection is fully supported by the client agencies and County departments located there through their rents. These buildings are about 30 years old and are beginning to show their age. Without this infusion of cash, the Resource Connection would have to raise rental rates to cover costly capital improvements, which could result in the service-providers having less cash to carry out their missions.

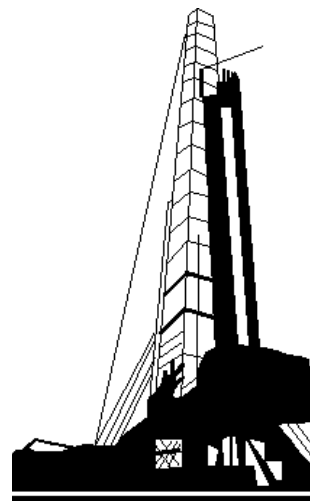
The Commissioners Court decided that it was important to keep the current rents at below market rates so that the agencies will have not only an incentive to stay, but also the extra cash to meet their growing clients' needs.

Judi Ketchum, the Resource Connection director, noted that, depending on how much money is earned through the contract, the facility could install a water reclamation system that would allow them to use rain water to irrigate the grounds.

"Water is one of our major expenses," she said, adding that the County could use the money to build additional buildings to house even more social service agencies out there.

The Resource Connection is currently at maximum capacity and gets several requests each year from agencies wishing to locate there.

Ketchum noted that one of the first major purchases she would like to purchase would be a dependable and handicap accessible shuttle bus. Many of the social agency clients travel to the Resource Connection using "The T." But they have to get off the city busses at the campus Welcome Center. The new shuttle will augment two older and less reliable vehicles now being used to carry clients to various parts of the campus.



Elections Office to administer city/school district polling

The Tarrant County Elections Office has contracted to provide services to 34 cities, towns, school districts and other entities for the May 10 elections. A list of participating political subdivisions is printed nearby.

Other Tarrant County cities and school districts are conducting their own elections or have contracted with other counties. The Town of Lakeside and City of Pelican Bay are contracting with the Tarrant County Elections Office but are separate from the joint election because special elections forced them to have very late candidate filing deadlines.

Early voting began at 38 locations throughout the county on April 28 and will run through May 6. Times for the remaining days for early voting are:

- May 3, Saturday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- May 4, Sunday, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- May 5 – 6, Monday – Tuesday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Temporary branch locations will be available in eight additional locations. For a full list of locations, log onto www.tarrantcounty.com and click on the "Tarrant Votes" banner. Then look for the link to "Early Voting Information."

"Voters may not be aware of the fact that they can vote in most of their hometown elections at any of the early voting locations," said Elections Administrator Steve Raborn. "For instance, someone who lives in Mansfield or Southlake would be able to vote close to where they work, whether it's in Fort Worth or Arlington."

However, that ability only applies to early voting, he emphasized. Votes on Election Day must be cast in the precinct designated on the voters' registration cards.

On election night, voters can go to the Elections Office website to monitor the results of all 34 elections as the ballots are counted.

The Elections Office provides voters with several on-line services. Potential voters can check the status of their voter registration, view or print a sample ballot, and can find the location of their polling place for the May 10 joint general and special elections.

Joint Election Participants

Of the 41 cities and 20 school districts in Tarrant County, the following political subdivisions have contracted with the Tarrant County Elections Department for election services for the May 10, 2008 joint election:

- City of Arlington
- City of Bedford
- City of Blue Mound
- City of Crowley
- City of Dalworthington Gardens
- City of Euless
- City of Forest Hill
- City of Fort Worth
- City of Grand Prairie
- City of Grapevine
- City of Keller
- City of Kennedale
- City of Lake Worth
- City of Mansfield
- Town of Pantego
- City of Saginaw
- City of Sansom Park
- City of Southlake
- City of Watauga
- Town of Westlake
- City of Westworth Village
- City of White Settlement
- Arlington ISD
- Azle ISD
- Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
- Fort Worth ISD
- Grapevine-Colleyville ISD
- Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD
- Keller ISD
- Kennedale ISD
- Northwest ISD
- White Settlement ISD
- Tarrant County College District
- Tarrant Regional Water District