

Branch Review



Drivin' in a Winter Wonderland Tour of Lights bigger and better than ever

FARMERS BRANCH ~ Millions of twinkling, festive lights beckon thousands of visitors throughout the season to come to the Farmers Branch Christmas Tour of Lights, November 25 through December 30.



Starting at the intersection of I-35E and Valley View Lane, the driving tour continues down Denton Drive, which now features animation synced to music, and on to the Farmers Branch Historical Park where a veritable 'Winter Wonderland' will

be presented in a bigger-than-ever show with even more twinkling lights, holiday music and Christmas displays.

The lights will be on each evening during the season from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., with the Historical Park portion of the tour closed two nights only, December 3 and 25. Admission is a suggested \$5 donation per vehicle to the various non-profit groups and agencies working the tour each night. Weather updates and other info is at [fbspecialevents](https://www.facebook.com/fbspecialevents) on Facebook or by visiting fblights.com.



Christmas Tree Lighting festivities planned for December 3 at Historical Park



FARMERS BRANCH ~ Residents will gather in celebration to officially kick off the holiday season in Farmers Branch on Saturday, December 3 with the annual Christmas Tree Lighting festivities at the Farmers Branch Historical Park.

Visitors can tube down a real snow hill, warm up with free hot chocolate and treats, try Victorian games, take a holiday tour of the General Store and hear stories of Christmases past. In addition, there will be holiday balloons, glitter tattoos, a bounce house, edible crafts and more.

The traditional countdown to light the City tree along with a fireworks finale will begin promptly at 7:20 p.m.

Gates will open at 4 p.m. and admission is free. Parking is also free and is available at the Metrosquare Business Park, two blocks south of the Historical Park on Ford Road with a free shuttle to the gate.

Visit [fbspecialevents.com](https://www.facebook.com/fbspecialevents) for more information.

City offices to close for Christmas & New Years

FBTX~ Most City offices and facilities will be closed on Friday, December 23, Monday, December 26 and Monday, January 2 in observance of the legal holidays for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Day.

The Rec Center, Natatorium, Senior Center and Historical Park will operate specific hours during those days. Call those facilities for information.

However, there will be garbage collection on City holidays, Mondays, December 26 and January 2.

Additionally, all facilities will be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Day, December 24 & 25 and January 1.

For more information, call 972.919.2620.



FHT presents Christmas classic 'It's a Wonderful Life'

FBTX ~ The Firehouse Theatre will present 'It's a Wonderful Life: The Live Radio Play' December 7-11 & 14-18.

This stage adaptation of the classic film is presented as a 1940s radio show. The Firehouse Theatre is located at 2535 Valley View Lane in old Farmers Branch Fire Station No. 1. For tickets, visit thefirehousetheatre.com.



Marsh Lane work ongoing

FBTX ~ Motorists regularly using Marsh Lane between Carrollton, Addison and Farmers Branch should consider alternate routes through the winter as construction of a new bridge on the southbound side of Marsh Lane at Farmers Branch Creek is now underway.

With the southbound bridge's history of submerging in flash flooding situations, the City of Farmers Branch and Dallas County are behind the work to reconstruct that bridge and raise it to a compatible height with the northbound side.

Farmers Branch and Dallas County are splitting the design and construction costs of about \$2.4 million. The project is slated for 200 working days.

During this period, Marsh will be reduced to one lane north and southbound at the Farmers Branch Creek bridge.

Red tags on blue carts require immediate attention

FBTX ~ As recycling totals since the return of curbside recycling have already eclipsed last year's drop off recycling numbers, City officials remind residents that recycling carts must be stored out of sight of the street or the resident may be in violation of City code.



In the first five months of the new program, more than 699 tons of material have been recycled, far outweighing last year's annual total.

Since October 1, Code Enforcement officers have been placing reminder notices on carts left out in view of the street. A yellow notice reminds residents of the new rules. A red notice means the cart is in violation and will be scheduled for pickup, unless the resident calls Public Works at 972.919.2597 and provides the proper screening or storage solution.

Senior Dances set Mondays

FBTX~ Live music and friendly people make Senior Dance night one of the best in the Metroplex. Tickets are \$5 at the door for dances from 7 to 9:20 p.m.

DEC 05 Swingin Country (Country)
DEC 12 Jim Baker (Ballroom)
DEC 19 No Dance (Merry Christmas)
DEC 26 No Dance (Happy New Year)

New fiscal year budget does not raise tax rate

FARMERS BRANCH ~ Following the October 1 start to the new fiscal year, Farmers Branch City Manager Charles S. Cox and his staff have embarked on the 2016-2017 fiscal year, \$97 million City budget.

Coming in about 1 percent lower than the previous fiscal year, the new budget includes a flat City property tax rate of 60.22 cents for every \$100 of valuation, which continues to be one of the lowest in Dallas county.

The new budget does include a 9 percent increase in water and sewer rates. This is required to offset rising costs for treated water from the City's supplier, Dallas Water Utilities, as well as increased expenses for wastewater treatment from the Trinity River Authority. A residential water consumer, using 10,000 gallons of water, is expected to see an increase of \$7.91 on their monthly bill.

To reduce attrition, increase employee retention and attract exceptional job applicants to the Farmers Branch staff, the budget includes a 5 percent increase to all employee pay ranges, to adopt a philosophy of 5 percent over median salaries of comparable positions in other cities.

Only three new positions were added, including an administrative assistant in Building Inspection, a Special Projects Manager in Solid Waste and a Marketing Specialist for Special Events.

Capital Improvement Program projects for this budget include a continuation of the 10-year street bond program, Justice Center security upgrades, southbound Marsh Lane bridge replacement, joint Fire Training facility construction, Park & Trail improvements, utility system improvements and upgrades to the Farmers Market area.

Fixed asset purchases for this year will include a new ladder truck for the Fire Department, a number of replacement Police vehicles, Library materials, new City monument signage and an outdoor digital marquee.

A Council-appointed Citizen Bond Committee is currently developing a Quality of Life bond package that they will recommend to the City Council in the near future. More information on that will be brought forward as it is made available.



**FARMERS
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Text-to-911 service now available in Farmers Branch

FARMERS BRANCH ~ The Denco Area 9-1-1 District has announced that it has implemented text-to-911 service for all of Denton County and the City of Carrollton, including the North Texas Emergency Communications Center, serving public safety dispatch for Farmers Branch, Carrollton, Addison and Coppell.

This results in wireless customers in any NTECC-participating-city, including Farmers Branch, can now utilize technology that allows a text (of up to 140 characters) to 911 in an emergency.

However, officials emphasized that Text-to-911 should only be used in an emergency situation when placing a voice call is not possible. Citizens who find themselves in an emergency situation and are unable to make a voice call to 9-1-1 should remember:

- Don't text and drive
- When sending a text to 911, do not include dashes or any other characters
- In the first text message send the location and type of emergency
- Text in simple words and be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions
- Photos and videos cannot be sent to 911 at this time
- Text-to-911 cannot include more than one person
- Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 911

Voice calls to 9-1-1 are always the best and fastest way to get help. Like any cellular area, there could be coverage gaps and the service may not be available outside the City.

If there is no response to a Text-to-911 operator, make a voice call to 9-1-1.



Code Enforcement Corner

Proper Display of Construction Permits

All construction permits, City approved plans (if applicable) and any other supporting documents for residential and commercial projects shall be kept on the job site until the completion of the project. In an effort to aid inspectors, the City also asks that the construction permits be displayed in a conspicuous location visible from the public street. Typical locations would include a front door, front porch area or a front window. Beginning in 2016 the City's Building Department began printing permits on bright green paper to further improve the visibility.

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To Report a Code Violation:

- Call 972.919.1414
- Log on at farmersbranchtx.gov/code
- Download the MyFBTX app