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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Little Elm Alert implements system improvements

LITTLE ELM (March 16, 2017) The inherent uncertainty of natural disasters, weather emergencies, major traffic incidents, utility outages or other unexpected contingencies almost always includes the lack of reliable information or the spreading of undependable data.

To address that essential necessity, Little Elm's Emergency Management Department is upgrading its Little Elm Alert system with the implementation of Everbridge, a back-office program that serves as the platform for sending emergency messages to subscribers.

"Getting solidly reliable information out to affected residents is crucial to the success of any emergency management operation," says Travis Calendine, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator for Little Elm. "Informing residents of impending or ongoing emergencies helps them develop their own response to the event, and it helps us in ensuring that they are reacting to the facts as we know them."

Residents who are already signed up for Little Elm Alert will not be required to register for the new program, and should have already received a test notification. On the other hand, new residents or those who have not registered for Little Elm Alert would not have received a test message and thus should register.

Little Elm residents or non-resident business owners who are not already signed up for Little Elm Alert are strongly encouraged to register by visiting: <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736726738#/signup>. Visitors and people who work in Little Elm may receive important information via text only by texting 75068 (Little Elm's ZIP code) to 888777.

The system can be configured to send alerts to subscribers regarding weather, special events, volunteer opportunities and traffic information, in addition to other emergency notices.

"The system allows us to send critical information to a variety of contact paths or mediums, until we are assured that the recipient has received and acknowledged receipt of the alert," he said.

Mobile recipients may be able to have two-way conversations with the emergency center through the ContactBridge mobile app, available on Google Play and iTunes for all devices. ContactBridge provides for users to request additional information and upload photos and reports, along with many other features. This app has special applications for events in that users can receive real-time information during an event in case of emergency.

"Upgrading the Little Elm Alert system helps keep residents 'in the know' with reliable information on flooding, rising waters, closed thoroughfares, cancelled events, traffic tie-ups, gas leaks and any number of other emergencies," said Calendine. "But we can't alert people if they don't sign up. In order for us to be faithful to our core values as a Town, we must have the voluntary cooperation from our residents in registering on the site."

The information entered into the Little Elm Alert system will remain confidential and will not be shared with any other firm, individual or organization.

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ABOUT LITTLE ELM – Little Elm is one of the state's fastest growing communities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Lewisville, the Town was incorporated in 1966, adopting the Council/Manager form of government. The population increased dramatically over the last several years, growing from under 4,000 in 2000 to over 30,000 today. Little Elm's population exceeds the state average in education and income, and is increasingly trending younger and technologically proficient. The Town's footprint is just over 21 square miles and boasts some 66 linear miles of shoreline within its boundaries.