

DeSoto City Lights

A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

What Does The New Texas Open Carry Law Mean for DeSoto?

DeSoto Police Chief Joe Costa and City Attorney Joe Gorfida discussed the implications of the Texas Open Carry Law at a recent Town Hall Meeting. Here are the main topics discussed:

The current law allows citizens to openly carry rifles and shotguns, but not handguns. A Concealed Handgun License (CHL) is not needed to do this. However, it must be done in a manner not “calculated” to cause alarm; meaning carrying the rifle to purposely intimidate or scare people. Starting January 1, 2016, citizens with a CHL will be permitted to now carry openly in Texas, per House Bill 910 of the 2015, 84th Legislative Session. Non-Texans from states whose permits are also recognized by Texas will be allowed to open carry under the new law as well. The new law authorizes individuals to obtain a license to openly carry a handgun in the same places that allow the licensed carrying of a concealed handgun with some exceptions. Open carry refers to the act of carrying a handgun (generally) that is in plain view in a holster. There is no concealment garment such as a t-shirt or vest that is covering the firearm. Unconcealed handguns, loaded or unloaded, must be carried in a shoulder or belt holster.

Open carry is still prohibited in city and government buildings where a city meeting is taking place. The new law, however, limits the scope of the governmental meeting prohibition by restricting it to the specific room or rooms in which the meeting is being held, and to public meetings for which notice is required under the Open Meetings Act. A sign must be visible outside of the room in which the meeting is taking place.

Beginning August 1, 2016, institutions of higher education and private/independent schools have the ability to allow a concealed handgun on campus. (SB 11). Open carrying of handguns is still prohibited at these locations. Citizens will be able to carry a concealed handgun but they cannot open carry on college campuses.

Business owners and employers will still have the authority to ban weapons on their property and work place using the proper legal signage. In places of worship, pastors or the heads of churches have the authority to ban handguns or allow them on the premises.

The full presentation from the meeting is posted on the Police tab at www.desototexas.gov. If you have questions regarding Open Carry, please call the DeSoto Police Department at 469-658-3000.



City Calendar

December

1 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
3 Historical Foundation Mtg. 6 pm
3 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
3 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
5 Holiday Parade - dusk - Hampton Rd.
7 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. 6pm
7 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
8 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
15 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
21 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
22 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm
24 Christmas Eve - city facilities closed
25 Christmas Day - city facilities closed

January

1 New Year's Day - city facilities closed
4 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. 6 pm
4 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
5 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
7 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
7 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
7 Historical Foundation Mtg. 6 pm
12 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
18 MLK Holiday - city facilities closed
19 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
25 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
26 Planning & Zoning Mtg. City Hall 7 pm
30 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am



**FREE WIRELESS INTERNET
HOTSPOT**

A Message from DeSoto Code Enforcement

At a recent a Mayor's 360 Meeting with representatives of local homeowners association, the topic of Code Enforcement was discussed. HOA representatives asked that information on the top Code Enforcement issue they are seeing during the month be published.

"In January, we typically investigate issues related to overgrown tree limbs that block sidewalks and cause other problems," said Charles Humphrey, Code Enforcement Supervisor.

Residents should be aware of their responsibility regarding overgrown trees on their property as follows:

OVERGROWN TREES

It is unlawful for any owner, occupant or person in charge of adjacent property to allow the branches of any tree to extend over into a public street or alley at a height less than fourteen and one-half (14 1/2) feet. It is also unlawful to allow the branches of any shrubbery or similar vegetation to extend over into adjacent property or over a sidewalk blocking or hindering pedestrian access. Failure to comply can result in a citation and fine.

When trimming trees, all limbs, brush, or trunks can be placed on the curb in front of your residence for

pick-up. The cost for this service is included in your monthly City of DeSoto utility bill. It is not necessary to bundle the brush or limbs. Republic Waste, our solid waste contractor, will pick-up the brush within seven days of its being placed at your front curb under normal circumstances.

DeSoto Code Enforcement officers encourage you to be their "eyes and ears" in the community and report overgrown brush, high weeds or other Code violations in your neighborhood. A quick and easy way to do this is to go to the "Service Request" section on the homepage of



the City's website at www.desototexas.gov and fill in the information. If you are using an iPhone or Android, download the free GOResult app, take a photo of the Code violation, and quickly upload it to the Service Request system. You can also report an issue by calling the Code Enforcement Office at 469.658.3075.



These smiling faces belong to City of DeSoto employees who were recognized by citizens or other City employees for providing "Above and Beyond" Customer Service in FY2015. The City Manager recognizes each of these employees at quarterly luncheons throughout the year. All recognized employees are also recognized at a Council Meeting once a year.

City of DeSoto Will Hold a Regular Municipal Election on May 7, 2016

The City of DeSoto will hold a Regular Election on Saturday, May 7, 2016.

The following places will be voted on in this election:

- Mayor Place 1
- Councilmember Place 3
- Councilmember Place 5

DeSoto residents who are interested in filing for one of these city council seats must live within the bounds of the district to be eligible. However, all candidates are elected at large. Candidates for Mayor must live within the city limits of DeSoto.

Candidate Filing Information Packets can be requested by sending an email to the City Secretary at kmorris@desototexas.gov. Please include your name, address, email address and contact phone number. Packets can also be picked up in the City Secretary's office during regular business hours. Packets will be available on December 15, 2015.

Filing for a place on the ballot will take place from January 20, 2016 through February 19, 2016 between the hours of 9 am and 12 noon and from 1 pm to 4 pm in the City Secretary's office. On February 19, 2016, the office will close promptly at 5 pm and no filing will be accepted after that time. Every election is determined by the citizens who vote. Make your voice heard by registering AND casting your vote.

- January 1, 2016 is the first day to receive an application for a ballot by mail from Dallas County elections.



- January 20, 2016 is the first day to file for a place on the DeSoto ballot.
- February 19, 2016 is the last day to file for a place on the DeSoto ballot.
- April 7, 2016 is the last day to register to vote in the May 7th election.
- April 25, 2016 is the first day of early voting.
- April 26, 2016 is the last date to receive an application for a mail-in ballot from Dallas County.
- April 26, 2016 is the last day to receive Federal Post Card Applications from Dallas County.

- May 3, 2016 is the last day of early voting.
- May 7, 2016 is election day.

You may obtain Voter Registration cards at the Action Center in City Hall, the Library and Recreation Center. Once you receive the application, carefully read the instructions on the form, fill it out, and mail it to the appropriate County Elections Department. It is important to know that to vote in any election, your application for voter registration must be postmarked or received in the County Voter's Registrar's Office at least 30 days prior to the election. Dallas County residents should mail their application to: Dallas County Elections, 2377 N. Stemmons Expressway, Suite 820, Dallas, Texas 75207. Please visit the City of DeSoto website at www.desototexas.gov for updates.

Holiday Trash Schedule and Live Christmas Tree Recycling

Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Friday this year. Regular Friday trash service on both days will move to Saturday. The normal schedule will resume on Monday, January 4, 2016.

The City's solid waste contractor, Republic Waste, will be collecting live Christmas trees for recycling on Wednesday, December 30th and Wednesday, January 6th. Place your tree on the curb in front of your home for recycling. Trees placed in the alley will go to the landfill. Be sure to remove all decorations and lights for recycling. Trees with flocking or artificial trees cannot be recycled. Place them with your regular trash for pick up.

If you have any questions regarding your trash service or tree pickup, please call the City of DeSoto Action Center at 972.230.9600.



Congratulations to City of DeSoto Parks and Recreation Staff for winning awards at the recent Texas Recreation and Parks Society annual conference. The DeSoto Senior Activity Center was recognized for a program they sponsored that paired a group of their senior patrons and teen members of the Youth Advisory Board to view the movie, *Selma*, and held discussion after the viewing. Texas Recreation and Parks created a special recognition award for this impactful program. Chris Glover was also recognized as Parks and Recreation Professional of the Year. Our hats are off to the great staff in our Parks and Recreation Department. (Pictured above from left, Juan Bragg Asst. Senior Center Mgr., swimmer Jordan Malone, Mayor Carl Sherman, Senior Center Manager Nathan Busby and Recreation Manager, Chris Glover.)



*Connecting teens to community,
resources, services, and support.*

Coming to the DeSoto Public Library in April 2016. For more information, please call Marq Runnels at 972.230.9663 or mrunnel@desototexas.gov.

BACK TO ART

Sunday, January 31, 2016 4 to 7pm

The DeSoto Arts Commission presents ***Back To Art***, a free event featuring information on programs offered by our 2016 grant partners; DeSoto Art League, Concerned DeSoto Citizens, International Museum of Cultures, Texas Winds Musical Outreach, the DeSoto Choral and Instrumental Music Series, Texas Blues Museum Youth Program and Dallas Area Writers Group as well as a preview of what we have planned for 2016. Visual artist, Tyra Goodley, will unveil an exhibit and demonstration of her unique style. The public is invited to browse the art display, meet our grant partners, and enjoy music, food and fellowship with the DeSoto Arts Commission.

Sunday, January 31st from 4 to 7pm
DeSoto City Hall Atrium, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.
R.S.V.P. if attending to 972.230.9648 by January 28th

Tyra Metal Art Designs

For innovative artist and painter Tyra Goodley, art and life have always been intertwined. Though diverse and talented in many styles, her current focus is abstract art, because it allows for a freedom of thought that translates to the viewer. Created on recycled sheet metal, her free-flowing artwork is both geometrical and multi-dimensional, some literally popping out of the frame. This is exemplified by her metal design series, which expertly blends metal, epoxy resin and acrylic paint. Each piece is hand-crafted and complimented with a twisted metal signature. The result is a balance of curvilinear style and modernism.

