

Mayor of Bonham issues Disaster Declaration to mitigate threat of COVID-19

Bonham, Texas -- As a result of the continued threat of COVID-19 and to protect the health and safety of the community and our employees as well as help minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The mayor of Bonham has issued a Disaster Declaration for the city of Bonham. The City of Bonham encourages employees and the public to adhere to virus mitigation guidelines from the CDC to reduce their risk of exposure to COVID-19. These guidelines include hand washing, avoiding public places while sick, and social distancing.

The following City facilities will be closed to the public starting Wednesday, March 18th until further notice: Bonham Public Library, Bonham Community Center (Also known as the Armory). All City-sponsored events and programming at all facilities are suspended. Facility and room rentals are suspended as well.

City offices remain open; however, customers are encouraged to conduct business by phone or online if possible. Many city services can be accessed online. City of Bonham officials and public safety personnel will continue to monitor the situation closely.

The City of Bonham will continue to hold public meetings related to City Council and Planning functions. The City of Bonham is asking residents who are experiencing symptoms such as fever or cough or who have traveled to affected areas to refrain from physically attending these meetings. To remain compliant, the occupancy load cannot exceed 50 people. Any important updates from public meetings will be shared on our Facebook page as well as the city website.

In lieu of visiting City Hall in person, residents are strongly encouraged to utilize the numerous online resources that are available for utility billing, municipal court. The city has a drive thru that can assist you with utility payments as well as payment of other city permits.

We offer multiple ways to pay your utility bill including by mail, on our website, through our payment drop box, or by calling 903-583-7555.

In compliance with the Texas Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals, the Bonham Municipal Court has suspended Trials for March 26th and April the 9th court dates. Those dates have been rescheduled for April 23rd. All other hearings are suspended temporarily.

If you are currently scheduled for a court hearing or trial you should contact the Municipal Court to ensure that we have your current telephone number and mailing address so that you will receive future notifications concerning your case. The Court encourages you to call or use electronic means to contact the clerk's office and avoid appearing in person. At this time, all other city services will continue to be provided to our residents as usual.

MAYORAL DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER DUE TO PUBLIC

HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, beginning in December 2019, a novel coronavirus, now designated SARS-CoV2 which causes the disease COVID-19, has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, the symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe illness and cause further complications including death; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 virus mainly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Governor of the State of Texas issued a proclamation certifying that COVID-19 poses an imminent threat of disaster in the state and declaring a state of disaster for all counties in Texas; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bonham, Texas, is taking extraordinary measures to prevent the spread of this potentially devastating disease in our community; and

WHEREAS, said state of disaster requires that certain emergency protective measures be taken pursuant to the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 relating to Emergency Management and Public Health, pursuant to Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BONHAM, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That a local state of disaster for public health emergency is hereby declared for the City of Bonham, Texas, pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code.

SECTION 2. That pursuant to Section 418.108(b) of the Texas Government Code the state of disaster for public health emergency shall continue for a period of not more than fourteen (14) days from the date of this declaration, unless continued or renewed by the City Council of the City of Bonham, Texas.

SECTION 3. That pursuant to Section 418.108(c) of the Texas Government Code this declaration of a local state of disaster for public health emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the City Secretary.

SECTION 4. That pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster activates the City of Bonham, Texas, emergency management plan, and authorizes the furnishing of aid and assistance under the declaration.

SECTION 5. That this declaration authorizes the City to take any actions necessary to promote health and suppress the virus, including the quarantine of persons and occupied structures, examining and regulating hospitals, regulating ingress and egress from the City, regulating ingress and egress to occupied structures, establishment of quarantine stations, emergency hospitals , and other hospitals, and insuring compliance for those who do not comply with the City's rules, pursuant to Section 122.006 of the Health and Safety Code.

SECTION 6. That this declaration hereby limits the size of gatherings to not more than 50 people and mandates the cancellation of all such gatherings until further notice. A "gathering" refers generally to a scheduled event or common endeavor where 50 persons are present in a confined space, room, or area.

SECTION 7. In accordance with Texas Government Code §418.173, a person who knowingly or intentionally violates this declaration commits an offense, punishable by a fine up to \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term that does not exceed 180 days.

SECTION 8. That this declaration hereby authorizes the use of all lawfully available enforcement tools.

SECTION 9. That this declaration shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

Declared this 17th day of March, 2020