

# TARRANT COUNTY

## NEWS & INFORMATION



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www.tarrantcounty.com

## Do You KnowWhat2Do In Case Of An Emergency?

Over the past decade, our country has seen hundreds of natural disasters – ranging from blizzards and wildfires to hurricanes, tornadoes and flooding that disrupt or even destroy families' homes and entire communities across America. These events can happen without warning, changing our lives in an instant.

According to a national survey, only 36 percent of individuals believed there was a high likelihood of a natural disaster happening in their community. Many people think they have everything they need in the event of an emergency at hand, and can simply "grab and go."

September is National Preparedness Month and a good reminder that we all have a responsibility in protecting ourselves, families and our communities. Emergencies will happen, but taking action now can help us minimize the impact they will have on our lives. People need to be prepared for those first 72 hours before help can reach them.

The regional KnowWhat2Do Campaign (in collaboration with the national Ready Campaign) is reminding North Texans to take important preparedness steps including:

- get an emergency supply kit;
- make a family emergency plan;
- be informed about the emergencies and their appropriate responses; and
- get involved in community efforts, such as Citizen Corps Councils.

Throughout September, activities and events will take place across the county to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement.

The KnowWhat2Do Campaign encourages you to take a few extra minutes this month to plan in case of an emergency. Consider the following questions:

- Have you spoken to your children's schools about their shelter-in-place and/or evacuation plans?
- Do you know the evacuation plan at your work?
- If your cell phone was inoperable, how would you get in touch with your family?
- Do you have a family meeting place and an out-of-town contact?

These are just a few of the questions you should consider as you are developing your emergency plan.

Free preparedness resources are just a click away at [www.knowwhat2do.com](http://www.knowwhat2do.com). An Emergency Plan template and an Emergency Supply Kit Checklist are also available at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or by calling 1-800-BE-READY.



**KnowWhat2Do**  
**Think.Prepare.Act.**

## Whooping Cough Cases Increase

More pertussis cases have been reported in Tarrant County this year than in any year since the 1960s, according to Russell Jones, Tarrant County Public Health's Chief Epidemiologist. More than 400 cases have been reported here, while the state has seen record numbers of pertussis cases.

Pertussis, or "whooping cough," commonly affects infants and young children, especially babies less than a year old. It can be fatal. So far, there have been two pertussis-related infant deaths in Texas, but none in Tarrant County.

Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory disease usually spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing while in close contact with others. Symptoms of pertussis (coughing, sneezing and runny nose) develop within 7–10 days after being exposed and more severe symptoms (difficulty breathing or seizures) may develop later. Older children and adults may have a chronic, bothersome cough and runny nose, but not make the classic whooping sound when coughing. Some mistake mild symptoms for allergies until they are diagnosed. Many infants who get pertussis are infected by older siblings, parents or caregivers who might not even know they have the disease.

If you have a persistent cough, or know you've been exposed to someone with pertussis, see your health care provider. Early diagnosis and treatment can reduce the severity of symptoms and the amount of time a person is contagious.

The best protection against pertussis/whooping cough is vaccination. People should check their children's and their own shot records to ensure they've been vaccinated against pertussis. Mothers-to-be should be vaccinated while pregnant to protect the baby. Fathers, siblings, extended family members, and other caregivers who are around newborns and young infants should also be vaccinated.

## TollTags for Tarrant County

The Chisholm Trail Parkway, a toll road currently under construction from Fort Worth to Cleburne, is expected to open by mid-2014. TollTags will be your best way to travel on the new Chisholm Trail. TollTag customers pay the lowest rates -- ZipCash customers pay 50 percent more, reflecting the higher cost of collection. You can use your TollTag for parking at Dallas/Fort Worth International and Dallas Love Field airports and receive discounted rates for parking and pass-through at DFW Airport. TollTags also can be used on any toll road in Texas without the hassle of receiving and paying bills through the mail. To find out where you can get a TollTag in Tarrant County, you can go to the NTTA's website at [www.ntta.org](http://www.ntta.org).

## "What they do"

### County Auditor

The County Auditor oversees all financial record keeping for Tarrant County. Responsibilities include: auditing the books and records of County offices that receive and disburse money; making recommendations on accounting processes and systems; processing payments to employees and vendors; and providing grant administration and reporting.

The Auditor provides the Commissioners Court with a monthly financial report which includes: balance sheets; statements of revenues and expenditure and changes in fund balance; notes which include information regarding outstanding bonded debt and county investments; and budget information. These financial reports can be viewed on the Tarrant County Auditor's Office web page at [www.tarrantcounty.com](http://www.tarrantcounty.com).

The County Auditor also is a financial forecaster, charged with the responsibility of forecasting the available revenues for the operation of the County in the upcoming fiscal year. The process includes assessing the economic condition—including inflation and deflation trends—of the county, state and nation and how it may affect tax revenue and other revenues available to the County. This forecast is then provided to the Commissioners Court prior to the annual budget hearings.

In Tarrant County, the auditor is appointed for a two-year term by the Board of District Judges. In a 1985 constitutional amendment, the office of Tarrant County Treasurer was abolished and the duties transferred to the Auditor's Office. The Treasurer's duties included receipting and disbursing of funds.