



February 27, 2014, Tomball, TX - Tomball Regional Health Foundation has awarded a grant to the City of Tomball for the installation of traffic control devices at the cities selected intersections. The device, known as the EVIEWS Safety System, will be installed on Texas Department of Transportation traffic control boxes and at number of key intersections later this year.

The system allows police, first responders and emergency service vehicle drivers to control the traffic signals at intersections, which provide a safer passage for official vehicles responding to an emergency, or transporting patients to Tomball Regional Medical Center. “The grant would allow us to acquire equipment to put in all of the electronic control boxes at traffic intersections throughout the city, and out beyond the city limits,” said Randy Parr, Tomball Fire Chief.

The EVIEWS system will cost \$283,000 and will be paid for by the grant. Tomball Police Chief Robert Hauck said he likes the system because it won’t require any specialized training for officers, firefighters or paramedics. “The beauty of this system is that it’s smart enough that it sees where you’re at via GPS technology,” Hauck said. “It makes passing through the intersections that much safer.” The city plans to install the system at 26 intersections, and each of the systems will be controlled by a portable emitter, known as the EVIEWS Intelli-TranVehicle Transponder to be installed in 40 fire, police and emergency service vehicles.

Lynn LeBouef, CEO for the Tomball Regional Health Foundation, said the project was a win for the city. “This is going to be a wonderful thing. This will protect the safety of our first responders,” LeBouef said. Having the system in place will allow the first responder approaching a red light to change to change the signal to green and safely pass through the intersection. “This will not only improve safety, but response times for patients who are having a heart attack or stroke, where seconds count,” LeBouef added.



The city installed a similar system, known as the Opticom traffic light control system in 2001, at six intersections. The older system relied on a sensor on the overhead traffic light system to acquire a flashing light from an emitter installed in emergency response vehicles. However, there were not very many city emergency vehicles that had the necessary strobe light equipment, and the system often required the emergency vehicle to nearly stop in the intersection in order for the system to record the light signal from the vehicle, Hauck said.

In 2008, as the city was discussing upgrading the Opticom system, Hurricane Ike struck the area and rendered the equipment useless. The EVIEWS system uses a newer technology that utilizes GPS tracking and wireless infrastructure that can monitor the speed of approaching emergency responders and provide first responders a way to pass safely to their destination. Parr said the technology is being used in parts of Harris County, and that nearby agencies such as Cypress Creek EMS, Klein, Spring, Ponderosa, Champions and Cypress Creek fire departments, have all seen the benefits of this system.

The system will sync with those traffic control systems in the surrounding area outside of Tomball. “When I say this increase public safety, it obviously increases the ability of emergency vehicles to get through these intersections in a safe manner, and increases the safety of motorists who tend to stop in front of emergency vehicles,” Parr said. The system will not change how first responders approach intersections. Parr and Hauck said even when the system changes the light from red to green, emergency responders will still be required to slow down, or stop if necessary to ensure other motorists don’t pull into the intersection or turn in front of emergency vehicles. “I am excited because it makes our officers safer, our fire fighters safer, our paramedics safer, and everybody on the road safer,” Hauck said. “That to me is the key.”

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**About Tomball Regional Health Foundation:**

Tomball Regional Health Foundation (TRHF) is the new name of the Tomball Hospital Authority (THA). The THA was the owner and operator of the Tomball Regional Medical Center from its founding in 1976 up until its sale in 2011. TRHF's mission is to promote wellness and improve health status for all residents in our communities through programs that enhance access to health care, preventative care and health education. Please visit the new TRHF website at [www.trhfoundation.org](http://www.trhfoundation.org) for more information regarding the foundation.

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