

## **Horseshoe Bay Fire Department Telecare Program**

Horseshoe Bay residents have access to a unique program offered by the Fire Department known as Telecare. Telecare is a community-focused initiative designed to ensure the safety and well-being of residents, particularly those who are elderly or may need additional support.

The purpose of Telecare is to provide a way for people to maintain their independent lifestyle with the added benefit of having daily contact with someone who can check on them and arrange help if necessary.

The program is open to anyone who lives in the areas serviced by the Horseshoe Bay Fire Department. This includes the City of Horseshoe Bay, Oak Ridge, Blue Lake, and Deerhaven. Primarily, the program serves residents who live alone. Enrollees vary in age and most lead active lifestyles.

### **How does Telecare work?**

The enrollee calls 830.598.9916 Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to reach one of the dedicated program volunteers at the fire station. If the enrollee chooses, a volunteer will call him or her on weekends. It is common for enrollees to opt out of weekend calls, as many attend church, have visitors, or are traveling out of town. Enrollees should let a volunteer know in advance of anticipated absences such as vacations or pre-scheduled doctor's appointments, if possible.

Sometimes, an enrollee may forget to call each weekday or may miss a call for an unexpected reason. As we all know, life gets busy! If the enrollee misses a call, the volunteer for that day will first attempt to call the enrollee on their home residence and cell phone numbers. If the enrollee cannot be reached, a designated contact, usually a neighbor or friend, will be contacted.

If no designated contact is on file or the contact cannot be reached, the fire department will go to the residence for a welfare check to ensure everything is okay. There is an option with this program to provide a key kept in a secure box that is only accessed for such events. This key cannot be counted on in case of a 911 emergency. Therefore, the Horseshoe Bay Fire Department recommends installing a residential Knox Box, which we will share more information about in an upcoming article (information is also available online at [www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov/fdprograms](http://www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov/fdprograms)).

There is no fee to enroll in the Telecare program. This is a service administered by the Horseshoe Bay Fire Department and staffed by department members and volunteers from our community who wish to serve.

There are many benefits to having this complimentary service that residents may wish to consider.

- Regular contact establishes a routine in which the welfare of participating individuals is consistently addressed and may result in improved access to healthcare when needed, and even potentially reduce ER visits and hospitalizations.
- Telecare can enable enrollees to better prepare for emergencies by helping them pre-plan for first responder access.
- Enrollees (and all Horseshoe Bay residents) can take advantage of home safety assessments from the fire department and receive guidance on fall prevention or other measures.
- A friendly voice can provide emotional support and benefit a participating individuals' behavioral health.

### **How to Sign Up for Telecare**

If you are interested in Telecare or have further questions about enrolling, please call the fire station at 830.598.6953. You can also enroll by completing the Telecare Program Hold Harmless Agreement at [www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov/telecareform](http://www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov/telecareform). Completed forms may be emailed to [sblack@horseshoe-bay-tx.gov](mailto:sblack@horseshoe-bay-tx.gov) or delivered in person to the Central Fire Station next to City Hall at 1 Community Drive.

Please follow the City of Horseshoe Bay on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/horseshoebaygov](http://www.facebook.com/horseshoebaygov)) and Instagram ([www.instagram.com/horseshoebaygov](http://www.instagram.com/horseshoebaygov)).