

El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1

Proposition Election Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

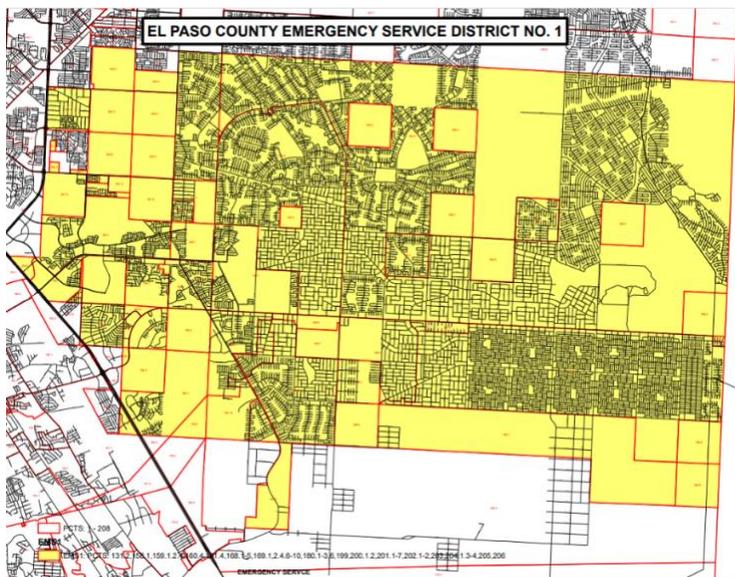
The Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1 ("EPCESD1", or the "District") has called for a sales and use tax proposition to be on the election ballot for Saturday, May 1, 2021. If approved by voters, this proposition would authorize up to one-and-a-half percent (1.5%) to be captured by the District in all areas not yet at the state maximum of 8.25%. If the proposition passes, the funds will be used to address the needs of the District to address the rapid population and commercial growth in the area.

To ensure that residents and other constituents of the District have accurate information regarding the proposed authorization and the Board's goals for the District, answers to common questions are provided below. This page will be updated periodically to address additional questions and provide additional information prior to the election.

What is El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1?

An Emergency Services District (ESD) is a local government created by voters in an area to fund fire protection, emergency medical services, or both. More than 300 districts are operating in Texas, and more are added at almost every uniform election date.

EPCESD 1, home to Horizon Fire Department, is the government entity that collects property taxes to provide funding for emergency response to the residents within the District boundaries (see map below). EPCESD 1 funds the two (2) Horizon Fire Department (HFD) volunteer fire stations and has served the community for over 45 years.



Through sound fiscal management and good stewardship, the Board of Commissioners of EPCESD 1 has been able to purchase and maintain the current training, apparatus, and equipment needed to protect the community up to this point. However, with the anticipated growth and increase in volume of emergency response calls over the next ten (10) years, it is estimated that the current funding sources will not be sufficient to provide the same level of response EPCESD 1 has been able to provide. As the Board considers the next ten (10) years of growth and emergency response, long-term strategic goals have been drafted to highlight the next steps in anticipating the needs of the District.

Why does the District need more funding?

The area serviced by EPCESD 1 has seen tremendous population and commercial growth over the past decade and is projected to continue similar growth trends in the coming decade. The number of single-family homes has increased by 80% since 2010, and commercial development has seen increases of 165%. In direct relation to the growth, the number of calls the District has responded to has increased over the last 10 years. In 2020, Horizon Fire Department responded to over 3,500 calls. By 2030, the department expects to respond to over 6,200 calls per year. To keep up with the community growth, additional infrastructure, equipment, and paid personnel will be required to keep response times at the current level.

What is the Long-Term Strategic Plan?

The Board of Commissioners of EPCESD 1 has been working with the Horizon Fire Department administration, staff, and membership to develop a strategic plan for the District to address the growing needs of the community and continue to provide the same level of service. The three overarching goals outlined in the long-range plan are:

- new stations
- new fire equipment and apparatus
- paid firefighters

To fully realize these goals, additional funding outside of property taxes will be needed, and sales tax is often considered, by districts, as a supplemental revenue stream.

Why a Sales Tax?

As our community grows, not only does the number of residents grow, but so does the influx of visitors and workers of the district grow exponentially, increasing the demand for emergency services. Currently, Horizon Fire Department is funded through EPCESD1-collected property

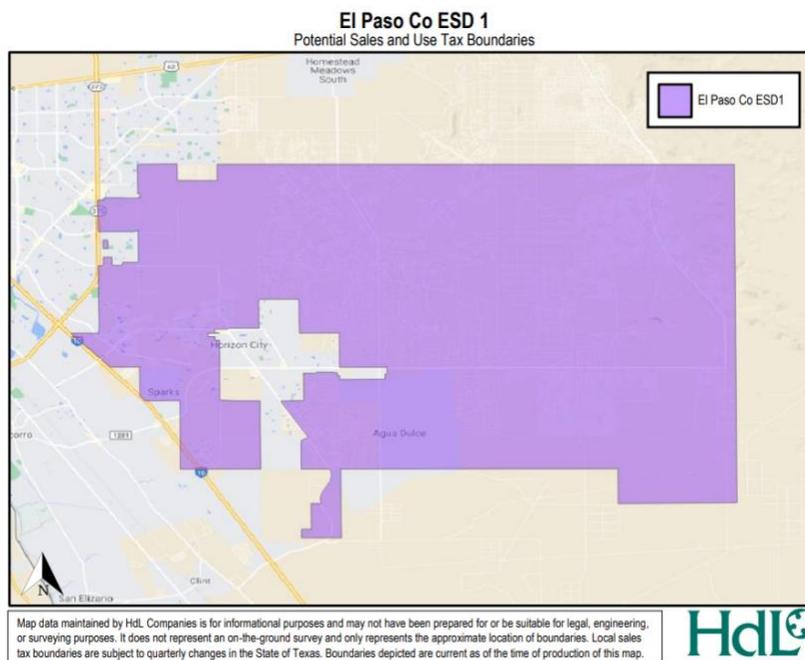
taxes, but they respond to calls that support a greater community of individuals and families, working, traveling through, or visiting the District. A sales and use tax places some of the funding for growth and response upon non-residents and non-property owners, allowing the District greater flexibility to fund Horizon Fire Department.

The Board of Commissioners has considered several sources of additional funding and the best option would be the use of sales tax in the District. In Texas, the state captures \$0.0625 (6.25%) on every dollar spent but allows other local government entities to capture up to \$.02 (2%), with a state maximum of \$0.0825 (8.25%), to support community services. If the District levied an up to one-and-one-half percent (1.5%) sales tax, it could supplement the existing funding of emergency services from solely depending on residents' property taxes to those people traveling to and through the EPCESD1 community, who may also use local emergency response.

What areas does the proposed new sales tax affect?

On the map below, the purple area is the portion of El Paso County that the District would be able to capture the one and a half percent (1.5%) sales and use tax.

Residents in the carveout areas are already at the state maximum of eight and a quarter percent (8.25%) sales and use tax. To clarify, no area within the District can go above the state sales and use tax cap as a result of this election proposition.



What Happens If the Sales Tax Proposition Fails?

Whether or not the sales tax measure passes, the EPCESD 1 Board of Commissioners will continue to work with Horizon Fire Department to serve the residents within the District boundaries, but they will be limited in their ability to address the increasing need for services in the District and implement the long-range plan.

What Will the Ballot Look Like?

The May 1, 2021 ballot will ask residents to vote for or against a Local Sales and Use Tax, for the entity El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1. It will read as follows:

Proposition:

“The adoption of a local sales and use tax in El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1 at a rate not to exceed one and one-half percent (1.5%) in any location in the district.”

Voters will need to be looking for this language if they wish to cast their vote regarding the sales and use tax for EPCESD 1.

When, where, and how can I vote?

Voting schedules and locations for the May 1, 2021 Election can be found at this official El Paso County website <https://epcountyvotes.com/>.

Use these links to find information on the following topics:

Registering to vote: https://epcountyvotes.com/voter_information/voter_registration

Mail-in Ballots: https://epcountyvotes.com/voter_information/civilian_ballot_by_mail

I have more questions...

Good! The goal is for the residents to have all the information at their disposal when voting approaches. Additional questions can be fielded through the “Contact Us” form on the “District’s website”: [Contact Us - El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1 \(epcesd1.com\)](https://epcesd1.com)

Join us for the Community Sales Tax Education Webinar

El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 1 Board of Commissioners cordially invites the residents of the District to our Community Sales Tax Education Webinar to discuss the upcoming proposition election on the May 2021 ballot. These events will feature exhibits showing the plans and goals for the District, and the Commissioners and our consultants will be present to answer your questions. To prepare yourself for the event, be sure to review posted information regarding the election.

You may select from the dates designated below.

March 30, 2021 7:00 PM

April 10, 2021 10:00 AM

Please register for El Paso ESD 1 - Community Sales Tax Education Webinar at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/2116298611873285392>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Stay in Touch with Us

El Paso County ESD 1 and Horizon Fire Department want to provide excellent communication and transparency, and there are several ways to stay up to date about the District.

Visit <https://www.epcesd1.com/> and follow us on social media:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/horizonfd

Instagram: www.instagram.com/horizon_fd

Twitter: www.twitter.com/Horizon_FD

How can I become a volunteer firefighter?

Volunteer firefighters have been, and will continue to be, the backbone of El Paso County ESD 1. Volunteers are critical to the District, and Horizon Fire Department is always recruiting new members. If you would like to serve your community through emergency service, please contact the District at <https://www.epcesd1.com/contact-us?department=fire-department>.