

How will we manage without you? When You Lose First Responders to Big Fires and Other Disasters

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We live in reference to past experience and not to future events, however inevitable. ~ H. G. Wells

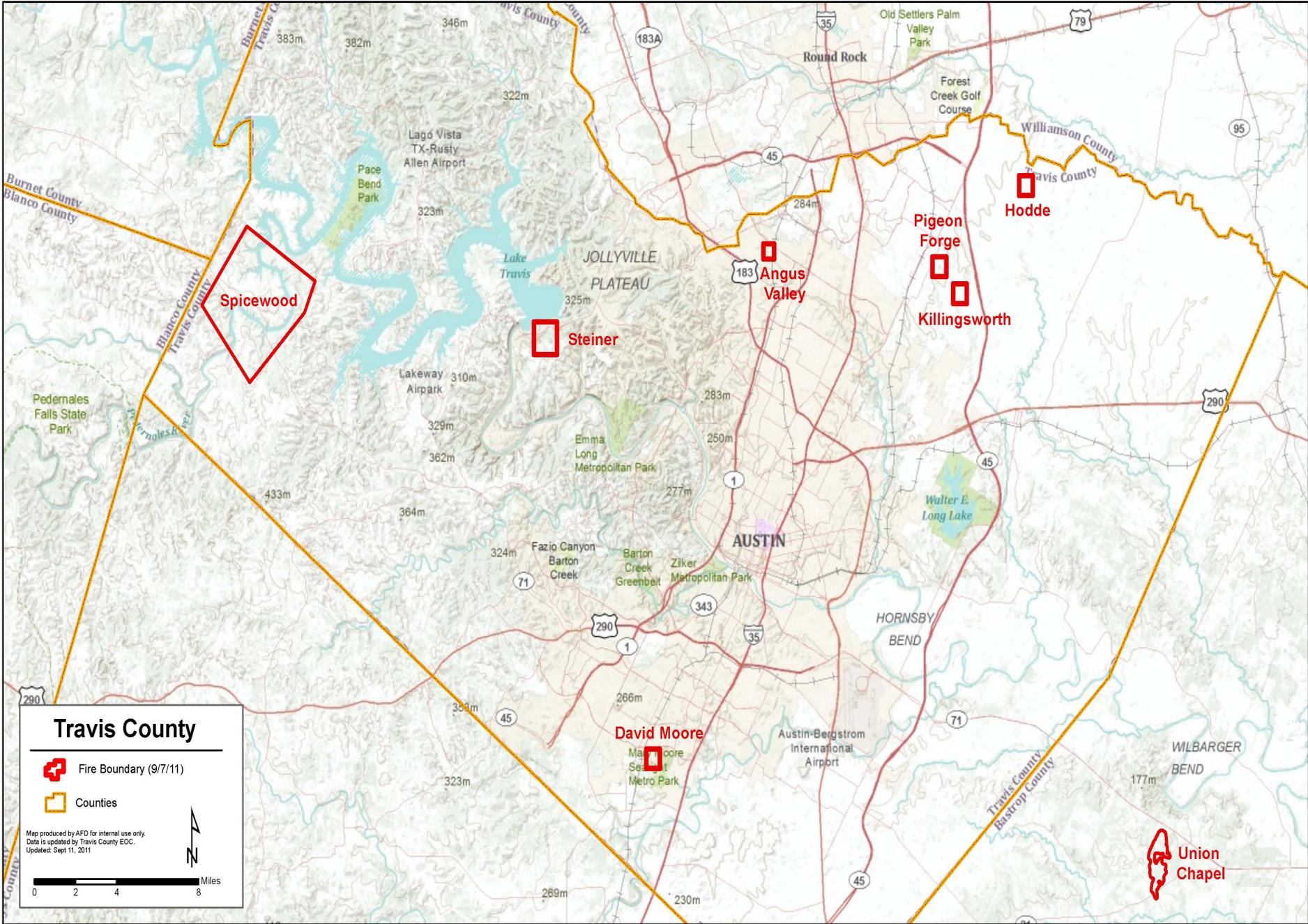
This was something entirely different...



Fires raging throughout Central Texas

By American-Statesman staff | Sunday, September 4,

- On September 4th wildfires struck several communities in Travis County
- At approximately 4pm I was contacted
 - Normally approximately 150 pieces of apparatus
 - Now 18 engines and 7 ladder trucks
 - Covering 1,100 square miles
- **“We are no longer able to provide medical first response”**



Travis County

-  Fire Boundary (9/7/11)
-  Counties

Map produced by AFD for internal use only.
 Data is updated by Travis County EOC.
 Updated: Sept 11, 2011



0 2 4 8 Miles

 Union Chapel

We learned a few things from our wild
fire experience not the least of which
was...

This is not a good time to make decisions
about how to degrade your service level





Pre-plan Loss of Service

- Better to plan when not under duress
- What if we have catastrophic loss of:
 - First Responder Resources
 - EMS / Hospital Resources
- Create options BEFORE you need them
 - Compile a cafeteria style menu
 - Pick what you need for your situation
- Provides well thought out rationale for why

Advantage of a Menu

- More comprehensive list of options
- Implementation can be planned
- Estimated effect/risk can be calculated
- Allows rapid and efficient implementation

Having a list of options

Reduce Demand

- Progressive elimination of first response to calls
- Eliminating hospital choice
- Cancel all interfacility transports
- Eliminating any response to Alpha/Bravo calls
- *Phone triage process*
- *Treat and release*

Increase Supply

- Adding additional transport units/EMS FR
- Utilize non-transport units in first response
- Engaging private ambulance services
- *Mutual aid/CERT*

Implementation

- What is your threshold for activation?
- How do you activate the process?
- Who is affected by the change and have they been educated?



Estimated Effect/Risk

- To make an informed decision you have to know the risk/benefit
- Who has reduced/increased workload?
- What risk are you incurring and are they reasonable given your circumstances?

Turning off alpha/bravo response

- Do you have a mechanism to do so?
- Do you have a script for call takers?
 - What are your instructions?
- Do you have a call back process?
 - What do you do on the call back?
- How many call takers do you need to accomplish the new tasks?

- How confident are you in your identification?

Communications Center

- Dispatch is at the center of your ability to modify your system on the fly
 - Allows you to rapidly effect change by modifying behavior of a few providers
- Know your communications capabilities and their weaknesses
- Invest heavily in evaluating this process

	Impact if applied to Original Data	all filtered	high acuity	% filtered w/ high acutiy	delta or echo
Animal Bite Pri 4	137	86	4	5%	0
Eye Injury Pri 4	80	27	1	4%	0
Abdominal Pain Pri 5	1174	1158	36	3%	0
Burn Pri 5	37	36	1	3%	0
Hemorrhage Pri 4	1104	772	21	3%	0
Assault Pri 4	3051	1104	29	3%	0
Psychiatric Pri 4	1490	933	24	3%	1
Injury Pri 4	2359	1478	37	3%	0
Animal Bite Pri 5	43	43	1	2%	0
Psychiatric Pri 5	290	284	4	1%	0
Eye Injury Pri 5	81	79	1	1%	0
Obstetrical Pri 5	83	81	1	1%	0
Headache Pri 5	172	168	2	1%	0
Injury Pri 5	267	253	3	1%	1
Assault Pri 5	174	172	2	1%	0
Fall Pri 5	333	261	3	1%	1
Obstetrical Pri 4	155	103	1	1%	0
Back Pain Pri 5	651	644	5	1%	0
Near Drowning Pri 4	2	1	0	0%	0
Near Drowning Pri 5	4	4	0	0%	0
Psychiatric Pri 4F	46	12	0	0%	0
Stroke Pri 5	3	2	0	0%	0
Traffic Injury Pri 4F	5830	635	0	0%	0
Gunshot Wound Pri 5	1	1	0	0%	0

A blurred, dark image of a city skyline at night, with lights reflecting on a body of water in the foreground. The text is overlaid in white.

Without a preplan there are actions
that are easily overlooked...



**Burn Ban
In Effect**
Pedernales Fire Department

Prevention

- Notification of public via media
- Identified at risk populations
 - Recommended moving to other locations
 - Staying indoors
 - Decreasing activity
 - Use of medications as needed
 - Consultation with PMD if needed
 - When to contact 911

You will not be able to anticipate
everything....
sometimes your plans won't work

Fire Rehab

- Established process for structure fires
- Had more than an adequate supply of
 - Food/Snacks
 - Water
 - Area to rest
 - Even Shade!







Rehab Model Didn't Work

- Remote location
- Limited access
- Strung out on fire line
- Limited resources









What is your personal pre-plan?

- Many live where we work so disasters are going to affect you personally
- Do you have a pre-plan for your family
 - Where do you evacuate to?
 - What do you bring?
 - How do you stay in contact?
- If you don't have a plan you can't focus on the tasks at hand

Take Away

- You need a pre-plan to deal with predictable catastrophic losses in your System
- Realistic evaluation of your menu of options before you need them
- Pre-plans for degraded service allows attention to other elements of your disaster
- Your plans will be imperfect but leave you better prepared

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