
From this side...

The Texas EMS/Trauma System has stepped up to the plate again: as we go to press, EMS providers remain in San Angelo providing support to local and state operations, and the city's two hospitals, both Level III designated trauma facilities, are available to serve as needed. On behalf of the Department of State Health Services, I want to take this opportunity to again express our gratitude to all of the state EMS providers which have signed memoranda of agreements with us to provide services during statewide situations. You do Texas proud.

Speaking of pride, May is Trauma Awareness Month and May 18-24 is EMS Week. It's only fitting that those in the trenches should be honored for the difference you make in the lives of thousands of Texans every day. A sincere thanks for all you do from all of us here at DSHS EMS/Trauma Systems.

GETAC week rapidly approaches, and the May 7-9 meetings in Austin will again be held at the Hilton Austin Airport. Among other things, the committees and council will be discussing proposed changes to GETAC's organizational structure, including numbers of standing committees and subcommittees, task forces, and workgroups. This will be one not to miss.

These will be my last GETAC meetings as director of the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination. I'll be transitioning on June 1 to my new job as administrative director of trauma services for Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas and a return to the private sector after eight years of public service. When I leave, one of the most important things I'll take down from my office wall is this sign:

"...government is the servant, and not the master, of The People. It is the policy of the state that each person is entitled—unless otherwise expressly provided by law—at all times to complete information about the affairs of government and official acts of public officials and employees.

The People, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for The People to know and what is not good for them to know.

The People insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created. The provisions of this chapter shall be liberally construed to implant this policy..."

--Opening paragraph of the State of Texas Public Information Act.

It's been a guiding principle for me during my tenure with the state. It's beautifully worded, and even better: it's the law.

I'll leave you with one of my favorite stories about a government official who a number of years ago also decided the time was right take a post in the private sector after many years as a public servant. He told his colleagues:

"I love to participate in public life, and I love the people who love to participate—even the people I don't agree with. I do think, though, the addiction of ego to any status position is going to take a little weaning. But, as far as I can tell, the public is always ready to wean you, and you'll find out you weren't any big @\$%# to begin with. I'm sure I'll get some help there."

So, as I prepare to leave, thanks in advance for your "help there". I also thank Kathy Perkins for giving me the opportunity to help build on the state EMS-trauma systems that she and others birthed back in 1989. And finally, many thanks to each of you for your support these past eight years...



FROM THIS SIDE



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