

City of Leon Valley Proactively Protects Citizens

Leon Valley, Texas, has had its share of flooding events. Located in Central Texas within Northwest San Antonio, it is a community that has taken a proactive approach to keeping its citizens safe.

Under the guidance of Fire Chief Luis Valdez, the City of Leon Valley has become the first High Water Mark (HWM) Initiative Community in Region 6 and is recognized as part of the national program. Chief Valdez has seen firsthand the damage caused by flood to homes and the lives of the citizens of his fair city.

“There is no doubt that the number one threat that faces our citizens is flooding,” Valdez says. By communicating flood risk in the Huebner Creek area, citizens will be able to see just how high the water rose in the flood of October 17, 1998.

As part of FEMA’s HWM Initiative, the City of Leon Valley placed a permanent High Water Mark sign on the Raymond Rimkus Park Walking Path. It serves as a daily reminder of the day the City of Leon Valley faced over 6-feet of water in the park.

The HWM Initiative encourages local residents and businesses to learn about their flood risks. The sign itself reminds residents to make emergency plans and build disaster supply kits. The initiative was based on tools and strategies developed by FEMA and eight other Federal agencies.

In addition to the HWM Initiative, Leon Valley is actively engaged in mitigation and risk communication projects, including an 11 million dollar floodplain improvement project in cooperation with Bexar County Flood Control resulting in reducing the floodplain for 53 structures, installing three new sensors along the creeks, automatic text alerts to residents living near the creeks, adopting higher standards, developing flood impact maps to inform response efforts, and partnering with developers to create storm water detention ponds. They also created a Flood Emergency Response Plan (FERP), which is available online at http://www.leonvalleytexas.gov/government/fire_and_ems/docs/FERP_2015_Final_Public_Version.pdf.

The High Water Mark Initiative (HWMI) is a community-based awareness program that increases local community awareness of flood risk and encourages action to reduce that risk long-term. To learn more about the High Water Mark Initiative visit <https://www.fema.gov/high-water-mark-initiative>.



Elected Officials from Leon Valley, TX; FEMA R6 Deputy Division Director, and Fire Chief Luis Valdez at the unveiling of the High Water Mark Sign.



The High Water Mark sign is unveiled in Leon Springs, TX