

DISCOVER



PELHAM'S HEROES Females on the Front Line

Heroes don't always wear capes. Sometimes they wear a badge or turnout gear. Sometimes they answer the call at times when we're most in need. March is Women's History Month, and we sat down with three women who protect the City of Pelham each day. Traditionally, women didn't always have opportunities to serve as first responders, but society has changed, and today more women fill roles in police and fire departments and emergency dispatch centers across the nation.

Iliana Hayakahua is one of two women who serve as officers within the Pelham Police Department. She said to become a police officer, women have to pass the same exam and the same physical tests as their male counterparts to land a job. "As long as a woman knows how to do the job, does the right thing, and most of all, earns the trust of their fellow officers, she will have no problem being a successful officer."

Lieutenant Eliska Click with the Pelham Fire Department echoed Officer Hayakahua's thoughts. "The key is building trust with the team. To do that, the guys have to see that I can do the job. I have to have enough confidence in myself and my decisions to not get my crew hurt." Click is the first female officer with the Pelham Fire Department and is one of the City's two female fire medics.

It's often said that the person at the receiving end of a 9-1-1 call is the "first" first responder. This is true of the experienced team at the Pelham emergency dispatch center. Jeanie Davis is the Communications & Records Manager. "I do not feel gender is a factor (in this job) as much as being assertive, yet empathetic in an emergency. When citizens call into our dispatch office, it can be the worst day of their life. When we answer the phone, we have to remain calm in any situation and be there for that person no matter what's going on at that moment." She credits both male and female mentors for her career success.

There's so much more to the stories of these incredible women. We'll feature the full article in the June issue of The Pelham Pathway.



Water Meter Upgrades

A \$3 million investment by the City of Pelham will increase the accuracy and efficiency of reading water meters and upgrade the equipment to modern radio technology. "The current meter reading system is a completely manual system requiring significant man-hours every month to read meters," said Chris Cousins, acting City Engineer. "The existing system does not capture data in between meter reads. The new system will allow meters to be read in significantly less time, allowing water system personnel to be deployed to other necessary tasks."

Cousins said the new meters are read using a "drive-by" system. Water personnel will drive the routes in a vehicle equipped with a radio receiver. The receiver communicates with the new meter and downloads the meter data as the truck passes by. It will no longer be necessary for a meter reader to visit each meter on the system.

For the average Pelham water customer, the new system reduces the possibility of human error in meter reading and will provide better reading accuracy. "The data collected will also allow system personnel to better identify leaks occurring on the customer side of the meter," said Cousins. "Additional data will also be collected allowing water system management to better analyze consumption demands and perform leak audits, among other things."

Work began in late February for homeowners and businesses along the Highway 261 corridor. Work is expected to be completed within six months. For the majority of customers, there will be no disruption in water service, and most work will be done within the existing meter box with no damage to surrounding yards and landscaping. As with any project, there could be instances where a broken meter box or other deficiency is discovered. In that case, the City and/or the contractor will notify the resident or business before work is performed. "We will do our best to minimize disruptions and any other inconveniences related to this work," said Ainsley Allison, Communication Manager for the City of Pelham. Allison also added that contractor vehicles will be marked, and city inspectors will monitor the work. "As the work progresses, the City will notify the public when a new phase of work begins."

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the project manager, Andrew Golden, at (205) 822-0387.

