



City of Rockwall
The New Horizon

ANNEXATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The City of Rockwall is providing the following information to help answer some questions that may be raised concerning services provided by the City and general questions about annexation. Please feel free to call the City with any questions at 972-771-7700.

Why does the City want to annex our land?

The City has identified areas for annexation because of the following factors: the identification of several areas of imminent growth and subdivision; to control the possible development in these areas of potential growth; and to protect the gateways and corridors into the City.

What do I gain from being annexed into the City of Rockwall?

- Voting rights and representation
- Maintenance of public streets
- Regulation of land use and density through zoning
- Notification of changes of zoning/land use, density, or variance requests (as determined by distance)
- Code Enforcement
- Building quality standards and enforcement through inspections, especially for new houses and businesses
- Health code enforcement through restaurant inspections and employee food handler training
- Protection of natural resources from uncontrolled growth and development; regulation of development in the floodplain, and the effects of development on downstream flooding

Do I lose my agricultural exemption when annexed?

No. Current agricultural valuations would continue after annexation as long as the land continues to be used for agricultural purposes.

What other types of services can I expect?

Under the Texas Local Government Code, municipalities are to provide services in the same manner that it serves areas within the City. The City of Rockwall will provide the following services either immediately upon annexation or within 60 days.

- Police protection
- Fire protection
- Solid waste collection
- Operation and maintenance of roads and streets
- Access to City owned recreation facilities and parks

What are you going to do about the flooding and drainage problems in my area?

When an area develops, the City requires that for commercial development, a developer to design and construct a drainage system that cannot release more water from the new development than was released before the construction. In order to satisfy this requirement, most developers construct detention ponds that hold water and allow it to release slowly and/or absorb into the soil. For residential development, a developer is required to do a flood study and manage their drainage. With all development, commercial and residential, the City will enforce FEMA and the City Floodplain Regulations. Improvements to drainage ditches in the public right-of-way may also be required of a developer to accommodate drainage.

Will I still be able to burn on my property after annexation?

Open burning is only permitted by the City of Rockwall for property owners with land parcels 2 acres and greater for the on-site burning of residential yard and garden debris and waste plant growth only. Trees, brush, grass, leaves, branch trimmings, or other plant growth may be burned on the property of which the material grew. The plant growth must be burned by the property owner or any person authorized by the owner. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality does not allow the burning of household trash within the City of Rockwall.

Will I still be able to hunt on my property after annexation?

Yes. Effective September 12, 2005, the State legislature passed a new law that permits hunting within the City limits on properties annexed after September 1, 1981 with acreage, distance, and shot size regulations.

Can I use my property in the same manner that I do now?

Yes. Newly annexed property is zoned Agricultural and all use of land in existence at the time annexation is “grandfathered”. The following is from the Local Government Code, Chapter 43.002, “Continuation of Land Use”:

- (a) A municipality may not, after annexing an area, prohibit a person from:
 - (1) continuing to use land in the area in the manner in which the land was being used on the date the annexation proceedings were instituted if the land use was legal at that time; or
 - (2) beginning to use land in the area in the manner that was planned for the land before the 90th day before the effective date of the annexation if:
 - (A) one or more licenses, certificates, permits, approvals, or other forms of authorization by governmental entity were required by law for the planned land use; and
 - (B) a completed application for the initial authorization was filed with the governmental entity before the date the annexation proceedings were instituted.
- (b) For purposes of this section, a completed application is filed if the application includes all documents and other information designated as required by the governmental entity in a written notice to the applicant.
- (c) This section does not prohibit a municipality from imposing:
 - (1) a regulation relating to the location of sexually oriented businesses, as that term is defined by Section 243.002;
 - (2) a municipal ordinance, regulation, or other requirement affecting colonias, as that term is defined by Section 2306.581, Government Code;
 - (3) a regulation relating to preventing imminent destruction of property or injury to persons;
 - (4) a regulation relating to public nuisances;
 - (5) a regulation relating to flood control;
 - (6) a regulation relating to the storage and use of hazardous substances;
 - (7) a regulation relating to the sale and use of fireworks; or
 - (8) a regulation relating to the discharge of firearms.

What about fireworks?

Use of fireworks will not be permitted, as per the City’s ordinance.

What about zoning or rezoning of my property?

All property will be zoned “Ag”, Agricultural District after annexation. The use of the property at the time of annexation can continue; however, a municipality may

impose certain regulations as stated in Chapter 43.002, "Continuation of Land Use." If the land use were to be changed, the land would need to be rezoned to the intended use.

Why do I need a building permit?

As with other cities, Rockwall requires permitting and inspection of construction in order to protect consumers from potential poor construction practices and the health and safety hazards as well as financial issues that could result in substandard construction. In the newly annexed areas, minor building maintenance does not require building permits, but new items like re-roofs and new buildings do require permits to ensure the quality of work. No permit is required for fence repair but is required for a new fence.

How much is the City's property tax rate?

The fiscal year 2009 tax rate is .5031 cents per hundred dollars of assessed value.

What about City garbage collection services and rates?

You will immediately be entitled to garbage collection by the City's contractor, Allied Waste. Services include:

- twice weekly trash collection
- once weekly curbside recycling collection
- twice monthly brush and bulky item collection

The rate is \$14.39 currently.

Helpful Phone Numbers

The following are some phone numbers that might be needed:

Police Department (non-emergency)	(972) 771-7725
Fire Department (non-emergency)	(972) 771-7770
Building Department (permits, inspections)	(972) 771-7709
Planning Department (zoning, platting)	(972) 771-7745
Engineering Department (streets, drainage)	(972) 771-7746
Utility Billing (trash collection)	(972) 771-7736
Code Enforcement	(972) 771-7708
Animal Control	(972) 771-7750