



### MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF HERNANDEZ

The only thing I like more than hearing good news is sharing good news. I'm excited to share information about efforts dedicated to sustainability at our jails. I've told you about our gardens and the bountiful harvests we've brought in this year. Recycling is a way of life at both the Travis County Jail and the Travis County Correctional Complex. But, the gardens and our recycling program, valuable by themselves, are just two parts of a much bigger endeavor.

At TCSO, we're dedicated to doing more than executing environmental projects. We seek to completely shift our culture. It's not enough to reduce waste; we want to reverse it. We want to do right by the men and women in our care and custody, to do right by the environment and to do right by taxpayers. To that end, we've teamed up with the [Travis County Environmental Quality Division](#) and we're implementing innovative systems that are already making a positive impact.

Our ultimate goal is to achieve LEED Gold (O&M) certification and Net Zero (zero emission, zero energy bill) renewable energy systems for the complex. In this issue, you'll learn more about projects, as large as a processing plant and as small as a seed, that have us on track to set the standard for sustainability in Texas jails.



### SUSTAINABILITY



### #TCSOcares



Carolina Muller is a Master of Public Affairs Student at the LBJ School of Public Affairs who assisted our agency as an intern this summer. Her internship project required 300 hours in a policy related position. We teamed up with [Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources](#) and sought her assistance on the Sustainable Jail Project. She performed a landscape analysis of sustainability projects in jails around the country, coordinated meetings with stakeholders to collect baseline information, and provided recommendations for collaborations and partnerships. Her tenacious research and purposeful presentation helped us greatly in the development and vision for sustainability, both today and for decades to come. Travis County has surely benefited from her efforts.

### FEELING THE CHILL



The Travis County Correctional Complex is currently consuming a large amount of energy in order to cool water for air conditioning systems. Construction is underway on a central plant with high efficiency chillers and cooling towers.

The central plant will draw from its own well in the alluvial aquifer, reducing water consumption. The chilled water it produces will be pushed to our buildings, where it will cool the AC units, pick up heat, then return as warm water to the central plant to be re-cooled.

We're also installing higher efficiency HVAC rooftop units throughout our jail campus.

In addition to huge cost savings, this project is reducing energy consumption, taking TCSO one step closer to a net zero carbon footprint.

### SEEDS OF CHANGE



Photo taken prior to COVID-19

Our gardens at the correctional complex continue to produce bountiful harvests for both our inmate population and the community. To date, we've harvested 2,871 pounds of carrots, 1,864 pounds of celebrity/beef steak tomatoes, 238 pounds of cherry tomatoes, 416 pounds of Swiss chard and 100 pounds of jalapenos from our traditional garden. Our aquaponic garden has produced 129 pounds of micro-greens in 12 different varieties. That represents \$9,450 in market savings! Produce from the gardens feeds our inmate population and is also donated to the [Central Texas Food Bank](#).

### A BRIGHT IDEA



It's no secret LED lighting saves energy and cuts costs. As of this year, we have replaced all conventional and fluorescent lights in our jails with LED. Not only are we experiencing brighter spaces, but also exceptional cost savings. In August, we received a \$186,356 rebate check from Austin Energy!

### HIGHER EFFICIENCY



We're eliminating old plumbing flush valves and replacing them with electronically controlled flush valves. This seemingly small modification will generate enough cost savings to pay for the entire project within about two years.

### [RE]Versing WASTE



Early this year, TCSO and [Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources](#) participated in a competition called [Terra's Useful Pitch](#). The event is an innovation program that turns valuable raw materials, currently leaving local businesses, non-profits, and institutions as waste, into the foundation of new social enterprises. We pitched the availability and potential usability of used, plastic inmate sandals.

The pitch was a winner! [Terra](#) will re-purpose the sandals along with vinyl record scraps and discarded decorator fabric samples to make collapsible helmets, designed for cyclists and scooter drivers.

### RESERVE UNIT DONATION



[Stalker Radar](#) expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Sheriff's Office with their generous donation of five Stalker Dual SL Radar units to our Reserve Unit. We send a big thank you to Regional Sales Manager Bill Switzer!

### 911 CELL PHONE DONATION



TCSO Victim Services Unit (VSU) would like to thank Sergeant Neil Tarrant and the [Sheriff's Combined Auto Theft Task Force](#) for their donation of multiple cell phones as part of our partnership with the [911 Cell Phone Bank](#). VSU passes these phones along to victims of crime who need a device to call 911 in case of an emergency. For more information about the donation program, please contact Victim Services.

## SHOUT OUT

Hi there!  
Just wanted to send y'all a quick message to let you know that yesterday afternoon I was at a Texaco on 969 and Hunter's Bend, and had a pleasant interaction with Sergeant Brian Turner. He was very friendly and fun to talk to. I've been isolating for months, and was a bit nervous about going into the store, but he made it fun for me. I'm guessing y'all get more complaints than compliments, so I wanted to let y'all know. Thank you all for serving our community, and may God bless y'all and protect y'all.  
- Angie

### DEAF & HARD OF HEARING TRAINING



Earlier this month, our Records Section at the Travis County Correctional Complex Interacting with Drivers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing training. Upon completion of the class, they began to re-think how we communicate with deaf and hard of hearing inmates upon release.

At their recommendation, we installed a web cam and microphone at the release window to assist those inmates who may require interpreter services. [Travis County Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) will work in conjunction with the Records Section to interpret during an inmate's release via Microsoft Teams. This will allow the interpreter to visually see the inmate and convey important information to include bond conditions, convey requirements, who to contact upon release, court dates, etc. The goal is to ensure that all inmates receive equal, effective communication upon release.

COVID-19 restrictions kept us from gathering this year for MADD's annual DWI Enforcement Ceremony. Honorees were recognized via a video posted September 28<sup>th</sup> on their [Facebook page](#).

For many years, TCSO deputies have been recognized for their efforts to keep roadways safe from impaired drivers. This year, Senior Deputy Dustin Rade received the Commitment Hero Award. He has served as a Field Training Officer, teaching DWI refresher courses, DWI SFST training with wet lab and the TCSO Basic Peace Officer Course driving portion. Rade also educated students about law enforcement encounters and DWIs, a requirement for their distraught license. In addition, he coordinated the stuffed animal collection with the Austin IRS, for the purpose of comforting distraught children involved in criminal incidents.

Sheriff Hernandez received the organization's top honor, the Jaime Padron Memorial Hero Award for her continual support of the TCSO DWI Unit and of MADD. DWI training and Drug Recognition Expert training has been made available and highly encouraged by the Sheriff's Office for the DWI Unit and Law Enforcement Bureau. She also worked closely with the TCSO Reserve Unit for the Sheriff's alcohol consumption stings.

We are grateful to MADD for recognizing the efforts of our agency.

