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# MXVISION WEATHERSENTRY ONLINE®

CASE STUDY

## THE COLLIN COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE MCKINNEY, TEXAS

Collin County is located in north central Texas, 34 miles north of Dallas. It covers 848 square miles, and includes 27 cities with a total population of approximately 730,000.

The Collin County Fire Marshal Office has four full-time employees, including Fire Marshal Steve Deffibaugh. Per the state's statutory requirement, they are required to investigate all fires in unincorporated areas. In addition to investigations, they also are part of the county's storm spotting program and support local fire prevention.

### THE CHALLENGE

The Collin County Fire Marshal Office needed a way to track storms coming into their area — and the information had to be timely, reliable, and accessible.

### THE DTN/METEORLOGIX SOLUTION

The office selected MxVision WeatherSentry Online® *Public Safety Edition* from DTN/ Meteorlogix as part of their emergency management system. Delivered via the Internet, it quickly and clearly provides accurate weather information to help them make informed decisions, reducing risk and maximizing resources. They also added additional licenses so that everyone on the team has full access to the system's complete capabilities.

"In addition to using the system at the office, I can also access it in my vehicle via my laptop computer," says Deffibaugh.

The office relies in particular on the product's future radar capability which provides a forward view of where storms are expected to head over the next 90 minutes. And the highly local forecast and observation information gives them critical operational weather intelligence.

### RESULTS

The fire marshal's office is part of the Code Red system, which is used to provide critical warnings to residents in a specific geographic area via cell phone or home phone. Alerts are not only sent out for weather emergencies and natural disasters, but for missing children and hostage situations as well. The office's MxVision WeatherSentry Online *Public Safety Edition* helps support Code Red with its real-time weather information, customized alerts, and exclusive storm management tools.

The fire marshal is also part of the county's storm spotter program. To aid that effort, MxVision WeatherSentry Online *Public Safety Edition* helps him pinpoint where a storm is at to carefully direct spotters out in the field.

Deffibaugh is also the assistant emergency management coordinator under the director of homeland security. In this position, he uses the system to monitor tropical storms and weather



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patterns, and responds to natural disasters. The office also uses the system's plume modeling capabilities in chemical spill and hazardous material situations. "In one situation, we used the system to recommend residents stay indoors due a chemical fire in an adjacent county," said Deffibaugh.

Finally, the system allows the office to track the drought index for their county. To calculate the index, they use the precipitation total and evaporation rate products provided by the system. They then supply the results to the fire department, warning them when conditions are ripe for fires.

## THE CLIENT'S VIEW

"In some areas, sirens are unheard of. As part of our Code Red system, we utilize our DTN/Meteorlogix solution to notify the sheriff's office of potential storms."

Steve Deffibaugh, fire marshal, Collin County, Texas

*DTN/Meteorlogix, DTN's brand of commercial weather services, delivers industry-specific weather management capabilities for its customers to manage business risks, maximize personal safety and minimize financial loss.*

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