

City of Dripping Springs

Report to the International Dark Sky Association 2014-2015



Background

The City of Dripping Springs was named the first International Dark Sky Community in Texas and the 6th in the world on February 11, 2014. The announcement and following media attention raised awareness of the International Dark Sky Places program throughout Texas. City staff and members of the local community have been called on to educate other communities and to assist Texas State Parks in efforts to reduce light pollution. Other Texas cities were positively influenced to adopt resolutions and/or ordinances to control outdoor lighting.

Better Lights for Better Nights Conference

On August 15th, 2014 the City partnered with IDA Texas to host an educational day for over 155 community leaders from all over the state of Texas. What a fun way to educate and influence others to reduce light pollution! The conference even inspired a new legal paper.

BETTER LIGHTS FOR BETTER NIGHTS CONFERENCE

Be part of the solution

- 10:00 a.m. Registration & Exhibits Open
- 11:00 a.m. Welcome
- 11:05 a.m. A New Measure of Light
Camille Wheeler
- 11:35 a.m. Lighting Demonstrations
- 11:50 a.m. The B-U-G Rating System
Klaus Bollmann
- 12:10 p.m. Lunch - ThunderCloud Subs
- 12:40 p.m. What Makes Good Lighting?
Andrew Gauld
- 1:05 p.m. Safety & Security and Roadway
Visibility Charles Thompson
- 1:40 p.m. Stretch Break
- 1:50 p.m. Save the Night
Cindy Luongo Cassidy
- 2:25 p.m. Perspectives Activity
- 2:35 p.m. Stretch Break
- 2:45 p.m. The Light at the End of the Tunnel is
not Necessarily a Good Thing
Dr Russel Reiter
- 3:25 p.m. Snack Break & Exhibits
- 3:45 p.m. Saving Our Common View of the Sky
& Protecting McDonald Observatory
Bill Wren

- 4:15 p.m. You Can Fight City Hall
Debbie Moran
- 4:35 p.m. Stretch Break
- 4:45 p.m. Current Laws and
Establishing a Lighting Ordinance
Alan Bojorquez
- 5:25 p.m. Enforcement Issues &
Unincorporated Areas
Ryan Turner
- 5:50 p.m. Stretch Break
- 6:00 p.m. Ordinance Implementation
Michelle Fischer and Ross Fischer
- 6:30 p.m. Local Decisions for an Ordinance
Cindy Luongo Cassidy and Bill Wren
- 6:40 p.m. Reception, Break & Exhibits
- 7:10 p.m. Dinner - The Salt Lick
Better Lights & Your Local Economy
Bill Neiman
- 8:25 p.m. Exhibits & Prep for Night Lights Tour
- 8:40 p.m. Tour of Lights in Dripping Springs



Todd Purcell
Mayor, City of Dripping Springs
Better Lights for Better Nights Conference Co-hosts



Cindy Luongo Cassidy
IDA Texas Section Leader

Community Growth

The City continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Building permits and sign applications come in a continuous stream. These examples provide a window into the tremendous work going on to preserve the night sky as well as to reduce glare and light trespass. The City has issued 210 residential building permits and 14 commercial building permits for Fiscal Year 2014-2015. In addition, numerous projects have been built in the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction that voluntarily complied with the City's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

Signage

The owners wanted the sign below to be brightly illuminated with a white face to reflect their standard company signage. That configuration would not be allowed by the City's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance. City staff worked with them to reduce the color temperature, reduce the amount of white on the sign during hours of darkness, and reduce the amount of light used to illuminate the sign. The result is their standard corporate sign during the day. At night, the color changes and you see a very gently illuminated sign that causes no glare and barely registers any light coming from the sign.



Day Time



Night Time

New Facilities

The new medical clinic and 24 hour emergency room is an example of the controlled lighting for which Dripping Springs is now known.



Current Outreach Project

The City of Dripping Springs is hard at work on a community outreach effort by partnering with IDA Texas and the Hays County Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist to host the Texas Night Sky Festival! The focus this time is on a free fun family-friendly celebration of the Texas Night Sky where attendees will be educated without even knowing it!

Participants of all ages will

- * Join in fun citizen science activities
- * Learn from engaging exhibits and speakers
- * Foster or deepen their interest in the universe
- * Get engaged with the night sky
- * View school projects and competition entries focused on the night sky and/or protecting it
- * Earn a related scouting badge
- * Explore the stars
- * See examples of good lighting for their home or business
- * Feast at food trucks
- * Take home a book or work of art inspired by the night sky

A FREE Celebration of the Starlit Skies of Texas

Texas Night Sky Festival

Saturday, March 5, 2016 * 3-10 PM
Dripping Springs Ranch Park

ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

Live Presentations * Hands-on Experiences
Education, Science, and Art Displays
Austin Planetarium Discovery Dome Star Show
Solar Observations
Night Sky Observing Party

texasnightskyfestival.org

HOSTED BY

