



## **BRYAN COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES TACKLES INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

**BRYAN COUNTY, GA – December 20, 2019** – Bryan County Emergency Services recently wrapped up a comprehensive renovation on Station 9 and will soon complete construction on a new Station 1, both of which are in South Bryan County.

The BCES crew just moved back into Station 9 last week and is now fully operational at that location, according to chief Freddy Howell. The renovation included the addition of a bay on one side to house tankers and other equipment, as well as a new second floor inside the station. That second floor houses three more bedrooms and two more bathrooms, bringing the total to five bedrooms. This leaves room for the inevitable growth the county’s leaders predict, as the revamped station can accommodate two additional crew members, when and if they’re needed.

A fire truck and an ambulance are stationed at the facility at all times, allowing the hardworking crew to respond to fires and medical emergencies quickly and efficiently. Work on the station, which was originally built in 2009, began about six months ago. The renovation was done by Lavender and Associates, based in Statesboro.

Over the past five years the county has increased its 24-hour ambulance coverage from 4 units countywide to 7.

“Keeping ahead of the curve on ambulance coverage and response times is a top priority of the County and has been for the past several years,” according to County Administrator Ben Taylor. “These two stations help to strengthen the effectiveness of that mission.”

Bryan County’s combined fire and EMS department allows for its ambulance response to be more versatile therefore making it more effective. Having all personnel cross-trained and certified in both fields allows firetrucks to respond to EMS calls that don’t require medical transport or dictate quick medical response tactics.

“This is a growing norm for modern emergency services and makes a lot of sense for a community such as ours,” Howell said.

In the realm of fire safety, “We just purchased four 3,000-gallon tankers. Having the recently upgraded station and the new tanker trucks is all part of BCES’ ongoing efforts to lower the county’s ISO rating whenever possible. Doing so could provide cost savings for many residents,” the chief said.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) creates ratings for fire departments and their surrounding communities. The ratings calculate how well-equipped fire departments are to protect lives and property in their communities. ISO provides this score to homeowners’ insurance companies, and insurers use it to help set homeowners insurance rates. The more well-equipped a fire department is to put out a fire, the less likely a life is to be lost and nearby homes are to burn down. And that makes a home less risky, and therefore less expensive, to insure.

“Station 9 serves a pretty large area – Waterford subdivision and others all down Belfast Keller and Belfast River roads, a lot of the new subdivisions going out there and all those schools. Now, we’ve got a great station less than a mile from all those places,” Howell said.

Construction on Station 1 is nearly complete as well. The structure, built new from the ground up at the corner of 144 and Mathew Freeman Drive, is slated to open in January. That project began in February 2019.

The chief said work crews are putting down floors, finishing up the interior, and hooking up electricity. He expects walk-throughs to be done next week, during which time Howell and his team will create a “punch list” of minor things to be corrected or tackled before January’s move-in.

The process has gone very smoothly, according to the chief, who had a big hand in helping to decide on the station’s appearance, layout and interior design. Outwardly, the station will resemble the larger government administration building. The new Station 1 has a second floor, guaranteeing the facility will be utilized for many years down the road.

In addition to providing added safety and security for Bryan County residents, Howell thinks the revamped Station 9 and new Station 1 will benefit his crews and potential employees.

“Having these great facilities helps boost morale among the BCES staff and widens our applicant pool,” he said. “Applicants from around the area are seeing the progression of the fire

and EMS service here in Bryan County and the new equipment and new stations being built, and they want to be a part of it.”

For more information about Bryan County Emergency Services, please visit [www.bryancountyga.org/government/departments-a-g/emergency-services](http://www.bryancountyga.org/government/departments-a-g/emergency-services) or follow the agency on Facebook: @BryanCountyEmergencyServices.

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