

# LEOH Trip

## West University Police & Fire Departments

March 19, 2024



The police and fire departments are housed in the city's Public Safety Facility at 3800 University Blvd.

Upon arrival, LEOH travelers were divided into two groups. One group toured the police department while the other group toured the fire department; the groups then switched to tour the other department.

Officer Wilson conducted the Police department tour.

The Dispatch Center was off limits for photos; however, members were able to see and hear personnel handling calls and monitoring the views from the 40 cameras stationed throughout the city. The state-of-the-art camera system comprises a "virtual gate" around the city, by covering all entry points to the city. It is designed to alert the dispatch staff and patrol officers to stolen vehicles, as well as vehicles associated with violent crimes. It can also be used for other purposes, such as assisting in locating a missing person.

The system allows for potential future technological advances, such as facial recognition.

(A few of us wondered if we may have been spotted slightly exceeding the speed limit as we drove to the department that morning!)

Personnel work 12-hour shifts. Dispatch personnel handle 911 calls among their call duties. They can communicate and coordinate with surrounding cities such as Bellaire, Southside Place, and Houston, as needed.





There were a few rooms in the building that were off-limits on our tour, such as the Armory and the Squad Room; however, we enjoyed seeing one of the interview rooms, where a suspect might be interrogated.

Surprise! No 2-way glass, and the room's furnishings were quite nice as well as comfortable.

Do these suspects look guilty of something?



Officer Wilson discussed the department's ability to perform basic drug testing.

The various items in this room included the clear plastic bags that are used to store evidence.

Officer Wilson explained that any evidence that is wet with a liquid is placed in a paper bag to maintain its integrity.





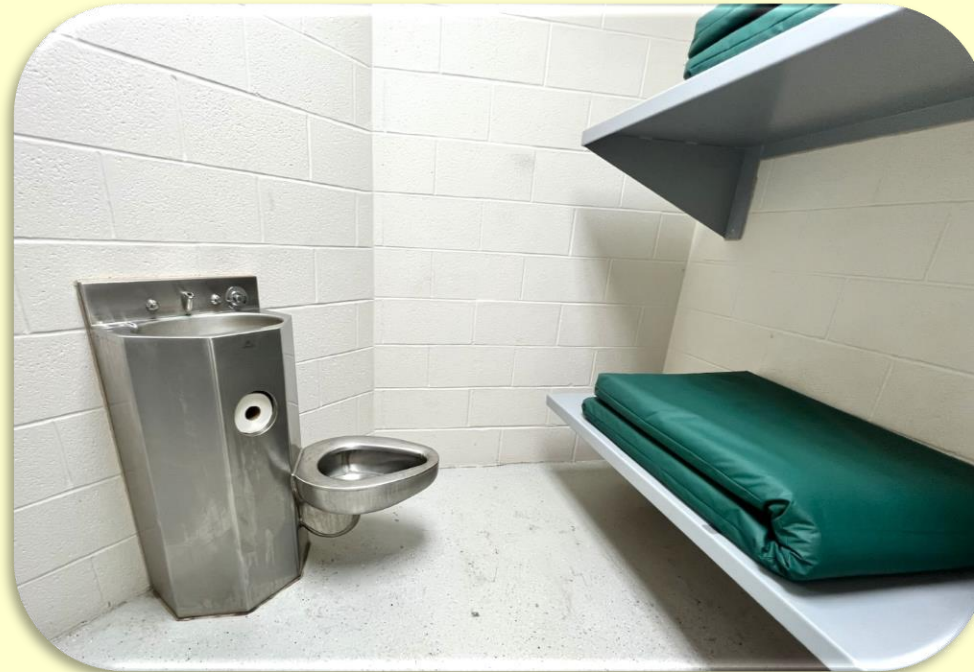
AUTHORIZED  
PERSONNEL ONLY

BOOKING

HOLDING

CELLS

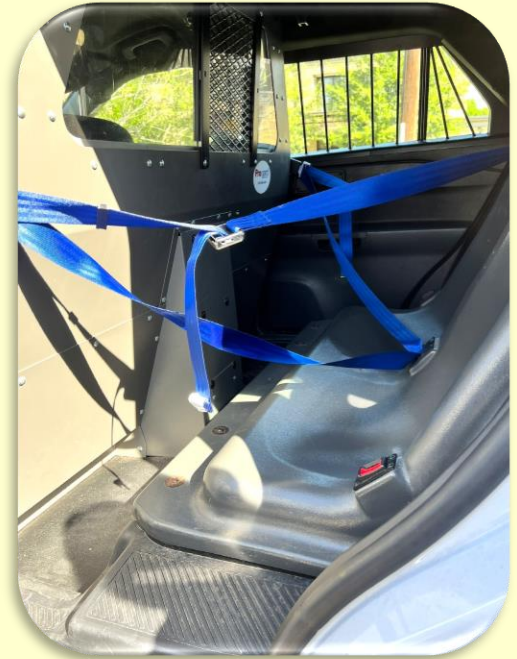
YOU ARE IN JAIL AT THE  
CITY OF  
WEST UNIVERSITY PLACE  
POLICE DEPARTMENT  
3800 UNIVERSITY BLVD  
713-668-0330



If you are unfortunate enough to be detained for awhile, you might spend some time in this holding cell. It is very clean but not very inviting!

As you look out through the bars, you can read on the opposite wall (in case you're not sure where you are) that you are enjoying a stay in the West University jail.





As you might expect, the front area of this patrol car is loaded with equipment; however, it still looks like it would offer a comfortable ride.

The back seat is a slightly different story. A metal seat and complicated harness greet you. How would it feel to go over a pothole?!

A short walk around the building brought the group to the Fire Department.

Their website describes their mission, which is commitment to everyone's health and safety through exceptional service. The stated fire department's goals are to protect citizens from fires as well as other disasters; to provide high quality Emergency Medical Services for the sick and injured; to provide high quality customer service; and to support and maintain a reliable, responsible, well trained, physically fit and motivated work force.

The fire station staffs 3 shifts of 7 employees on each shift; they include a captain, a lieutenant, and 5 fire fighters/paramedics. Shifts are 48/96 (48 hrs on, followed by 96 hrs off).



Half of our tour group were completing their tour, as the other half arrived.



Firefighter/paramedic Cassandra Durrett described the variety of supplies and equipment carried on the fire engine. Even the front of the fire engine has a compartment for supplies. Additional hoses and fire apparel are available as needed on the truck, as well as within the firehouse.

The truck carries up to 750 gallons of water. As for fuel, they fill their tank at the nearby public works department; in a pinch, you might see the truck at a regular gas station!



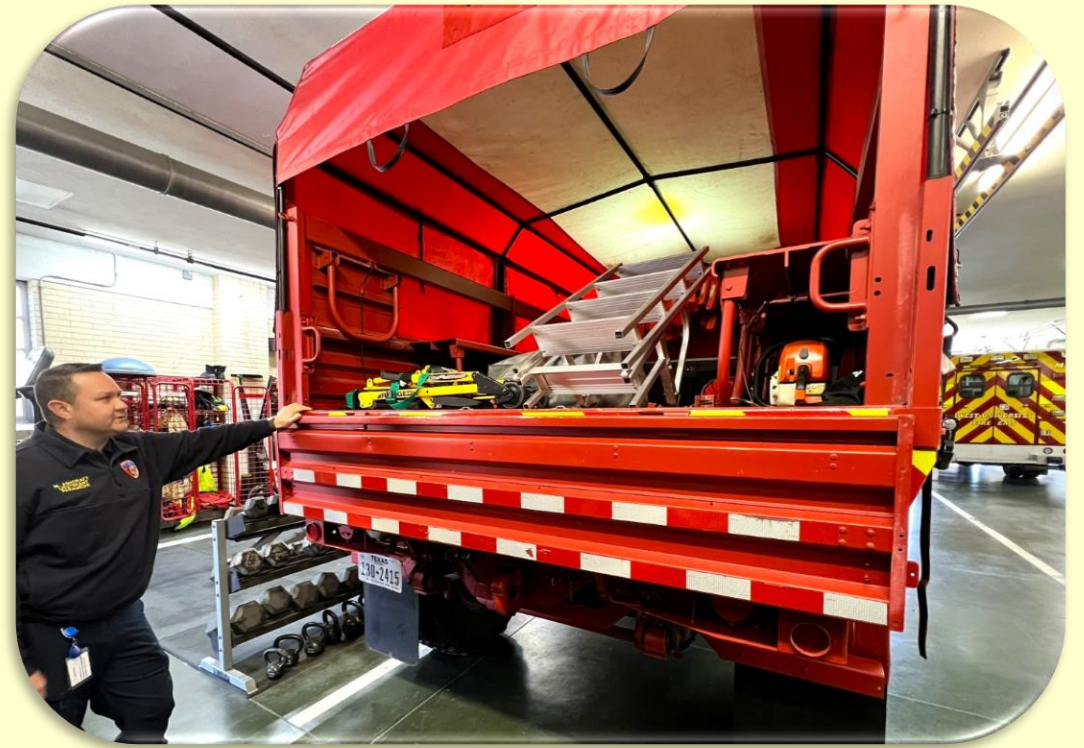


Firefighter/paramedic Preston Elder described the additional emergency equipment they carry on the truck, such as the jaws of life and heavy-duty cutting tools.

We were able to peek inside the ambulance, which contains IV, breathing, and other equipment, plus a variety of medications, including Narcan for drug overdoses, and clot-busting agents for improved stroke outcomes.







Lieutenant Michael Ashcraft discussed their high-water special response vehicle, acquired in 2016 as a generous gift from benefactor Beverly Loftis.

It has been used on numerous occasions; it carries an impressive amount of equipment for rescue purposes.

Note the long hose attached to the side of the truck. All fire vehicles have this type of hose, which attaches quickly by magnetic closure, and ensures safe exhaustion of carbon monoxide from the building.

Find out more about the police and fire departments, or West University in general, at [westutx.gov](http://westutx.gov).



Lunchtime!

We traveled a short distance to Molina's Cantina at Bellaire and Auden. Interesting artwork on shelves added to our dining experience.

*Thank you,* trip coordinator Ann Fairchild, for another entertaining and educational trip!

