



— 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

CITY OF SWEETWATER, TEXAS

The City of Sweetwater City Council, Boards, Commissions, and staff work year-round to create a vibrant, secure community for all. In this report, you will find a recap of the work completed by several departments during the 2023 calendar year, as well a look ahead to 2024.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

“WE LEAD WITH TRUST AND RESPECT TO PROVIDE A VIBRANT, SECURE COMMUNITY FOR ALL.”

OUR VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM | INTEGRITY | CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT | TEAMWORK



MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Dear City of Sweetwater Residents,

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, it is both a privilege and an honor to reflect upon the journey we have shared in 2023 and to look forward with optimism and hope to the opportunities that await us in 2024.

Throughout the past year, our community has demonstrated resilience, unity, and a remarkable spirit of cooperation. Together, we have faced challenges head-on, celebrated our triumphs, and continued to build upon the foundation that makes Sweetwater such a special place to call home.

From our dedicated City employees and first responders to our passionate community leaders, businesses, and volunteers, your commitment to the betterment of our City is truly commendable. It is this collective effort, fueled by our shared values of professionalism, integrity, continuous improvement, and teamwork, that propels us forward and sets the stage for continued success.

As we bid farewell to 2023, let us carry forward the lessons learned, the memories cherished, and the bonds strengthened. Let us embrace the promise of 2024 with enthusiasm, determination, and a renewed sense of purpose. Together, we will continue to shape the future of Sweetwater, ensuring that it remains a place where dreams are realized, opportunities abound, and community thrives.

In closing, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your contributions, your passion, and your unwavering belief in the potential of our great City. Here's to a bright and prosperous New Year filled with joy, prosperity, and endless possibilities.

Warmest Regards,


CITY MANAGER | CEO



2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CITY OF SWEETWATER, TEXAS

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

Significant investments were made in upgrading our City's infrastructure, including road repairs, water and sewer system improvements, and the implementation of sustainable energy solutions, such as LED lighting in our City facilities. These efforts have not only improved the quality of life for our residents but also positioned Sweetwater for future growth and development.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Several community engagement programs, such as our social media policy, were launched to foster dialogue, collaboration, and a sense of belonging among residents. These initiatives have empowered our community members to play an active role in shaping the future of Sweetwater.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, we have attracted new businesses, supported local entrepreneurs, and created job opportunities for our residents. These efforts have strengthened our local economy and expanded our tax base, allowing us to invest further in essential services and amenities.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

In alignment with our commitment to sustainability, we have implemented various green initiatives, including the expansion of recycling programs, the promotion of renewable energy, and planning to enhance our green spaces. These actions reflect our dedication to protecting our environment for future generations.



LOOKING TOWARD 2024

CITY OF SWEETWATER, TEXAS

INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENT

Continue to invest in infrastructure improvements, focusing on road maintenance, water and sewer system upgrades, and the implementation of smart city technologies to enhance efficiency and connectivity, including high-speed internet access for our community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

Attract new businesses and industries to Sweetwater, while supporting existing businesses through incentives, training programs, and access to resources. Foster entrepreneurship and innovation by creating a supportive ecosystem for startups and small businesses.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Expand recycling and waste programs, promote energy efficiency, and explore renewable energy sources to preserve our natural resources. Implement green infrastructure projects, such as parks and tree planting initiatives to enhance quality of life for our residents.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Support educational institutions, programs, and initiatives that provide quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for residents of all ages. Foster partnership between schools, businesses, and community organizations to create a skilled workforce and promote economic growth.

In closing, these goals reflect our commitment to building a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable City for current and future generations. By working together, embracing innovation, and leveraging our collective strengths, we can make Sweetwater a model City where everyone thrives. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our community.


CITY MANAGER | CEO



— ABOUT SWEETWATER

ALL DATA FROM THE US CENSUS BUREAU

POPULATION:
10,622

MEDIAN AGE;
35.7

MEDIAN
HOUSEHOLD
INCOME:
\$44,306

EMPLOYMENT
RATE:
57.2%

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ADMINISTRATION

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The City of Sweetwater employs 134 full-time and 10 part-time employees. In 2023, the City hired 23 full-time employees in 2023. Meanwhile, four employees retired, including the employee with the longest years of service to the City, Water & Utilities Director Eddy Campbell. Mr. Campbell served the City of Sweetwater for 34 years.

In 2023, the City of Sweetwater updated the retirement plan eligibility from 25 to 20 years of service, or age 60. The City also adopted a flexible work schedule policy. Several flexible work schedule options are available in multiple departments, allowing alternating schedules.

Looking ahead to 2024, the City of Sweetwater will remain committed to welcoming new employees. Staff will work to update the onboarding process and streamline the application process, with online forms that can be instantly submitted to Human Resources.

23

FULL-TIME
EMPLOYEES
HIRED IN 2023

4

RETIREMENTS
IN 2023

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COMMUNICATIONS

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The City of Sweetwater Communications Department oversees external and internal messaging from the City, Police Department, Fire Department, and Senior Nutrition Activities Program (SNAP). This includes social media posts, Nixle text message notifications, website content and maintenance, newsletters, press releases, media advisories, and much more.

In 2023, the Communications Department responded to 66 media requests, resulting in news coverage across the Big Country and the state of Texas. Media coverage in 2023 included fire response, arrests in major criminal operations, installation of new playground equipment, and much more.

In 2024, we will work to continue our positive relationship with both the community and our local media partners. We will also work toward implementing new social media strategies to keep our residents informed.

66
MEDIA
REQUESTS
ANSWERED

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FINANCE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The City of Sweetwater City Council adopted the FYE 2024 Budget on Tuesday, September 12, 2023. The approved budget includes the General Fund totaling \$15,363,482.

Residents will notice the City of Sweetwater decreased the Property Tax Rate from 0.50750 to 0.50715. However, the budget includes an increase in the water and sewer rates due to the increased cost of maintenance and materials.

Another significant change in the budget is the purchase of a ladder truck for the Sweetwater Fire Department. This aerial apparatus will be purchased using a certificate of obligation.

Additionally, the budget is funding a Lead Service Line Inventory project for the Water & Utilities Department. In December 2021, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revised the Lead and Copper Rule, targeting water running through lead service lines. The largest modification to the rule requires municipalities throughout the country to conduct a complete inventory of service lines by October 2024. More information on this project and the FYE 2024 budget can be found on the City of Sweetwater website, www.sweetwatertx.gov.

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FINANCE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

BUDGET HISTORY

FYE 2022	FYE 2023	FYE 2024
\$11,387,599	\$12,757,845	\$15,636,482

PROPERTY TAX HISTORY

FYE 2022	FYE 2023	FYE 2024
0.54400	0.50750	0.50715

The City of Sweetwater works to maintain transparency during the budget process. Property Tax information as well as adopted budget for FYE 2024 and previous years can be found on the City of Sweetwater website, www.sweetwatertx.gov.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

In the past year, the City of Sweetwater Information Technology department has implemented significant technological upgrades in training rooms and offices, aiming to enhance daily activities and meetings. Our commitment to staying current with technology for the City means that we will continue making improvements and staying up to date.

The Water Department and IT department collaborated to install smart water meters, which now enables the City to utilize software for monitoring leak detection. Through our app, MyMeterInfo, customers can conveniently track their water usage and receive notifications for burst, leak, and continuous flow alerts. We also collaborated with the Water Office to implement text and email alerts for your water account. These alerts will furnish you with important details such as your account number, billing date, total amount owed, and payment deadline.

In order to prioritize the safety of our users, we have introduced training initiatives that focus on cyber security, safeguarding passwords, and raising awareness about phishing. Our aim is to educate users about the risks associated with hacking. These efforts will persist throughout the upcoming year. Additionally, we will work to enhance the technology in the Police Department patrol fleet, which will involve installing new laptops.

As part of the IT Department's efforts to provide fiber internet, we are working with a company to make this service available for residents.

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PLANNING & OPERATIONS

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Planning and Operations Department made great strides in 2023. Below are a few of the projects that were completed in 2023.

Planning Inspections:

- City Council approved and adopted the International Property Maintenance Code
- Annexation of properties at Southwood Terrace subdivision
- Oversight of developer completion of infrastructure at new 94-lot Creekside subdivision
- Fixed Base Operator hired at Municipal Airport
- Administration of asbestos abatement for former Sweetwater Collision Center burn structure at 125 Pecan

Cemetery:

- 106 cemetery plots sold
- New cemetery ordinance revised for concrete edging and coverings
- New regulation signage designed
- Maintenance, mowing, and weed control

Solid Waste:

- City-wide Garage Sale in partnership with Sweetwater, Nolan County Chamber of Commerce
- Spring and Fall Community-wide Cleanups
- Storm Brush Cleanup

11

DILAPIDATED
STRUCTURES
DEMOLISHED

114

CODE
ENFORCEMENT
VIOLATIONS

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PLANNING & OPERATIONS

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Streets Improvement:

- Excavation/dirt work for Fitness Court, Pickleball Court, and Newman Park Playground
- Remove and chip storm debris after wind storm
- Repair cart paths at Municipal Golf Course with asphalt millings from TXDOT
- Repair roads at RV Park
- Maintain Well Field Roads
- Remove brush and complete dirt work behind Lake Sweetwater Bait Shop
- Seven days of Demolition of Dilapidated Structures
- Dig up pipeline for repair at Lake Trammell
- 5 linear miles of chip seal (96,215 square yards)
- Road Patching
- Painting of Downtown parking spaces and crosswalks
- Mowing of lots and right-of-ways
- Maintenance of City buildings
- Maintenance of street signs and visibility
- Street sweeping

Recreation:

- Lighting installation at Jones Park Softball Field
- Pickleball Court Installation
- Fitness Court Installation
- Mosquito spraying as needed
- Mowing and maintenance of City-wide drainage areas
- Maintenance of all parks, including baseball and softball fields

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PLANNING & OPERATIONS

PLANNING FOR 2024

The Planning and Operations Department will continue to focus on improvements to our community in 2024. Below are a few of our ongoing projects and goals for 2024.

Projects Scheduled to be Completed in 2024:

- Electricity at Landfill
- Cemetery signage installation
- Newman Park Playground equipment
- Zoning Code Update

Projects Scheduled to Begin in 2024:

- New subdivision ordinance
- New airport ordinance
- New Airport Advisory Board formation
- Lighting at Newman Park
- New scoreboards at five ball fields
- Infill housing development with developer-public-private partnership
- Newman Park Walking Train drainage improvements

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SENIOR NUTRITION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Senior Nutrition Activities Program (SNAP) works to serve seniors in our community a hot, fresh meal every day. This includes delivering meals to several homebound seniors. We could not do this without the support of our donors and dedicated volunteers. We would like to thank everyone who donated their time or made a monetary donation to SNAP in 2023.

Additionally, we are proud to partner with various organizations in the community to provide presentations, education, and services to our seniors. This includes regular blood pressure clinics, fraud prevention lectures, exercise classes, and performances from local entertainers.

We had a successful year and look forward to serving our clients in 2024. If you are interested in volunteering at SNAP, visit our [website](#) to sign up or learn more.

IN-PERSON MEALS SERVED

2023	2022
5,361	3,819

HOMEBOUND MEALS SERVED

2023	2022
31,561	27,092

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WATER & UTILITIES

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

The City of Sweetwater Water and Utilities Department is proud of the work and upgrades done in 2023 and we look forward to providing our customers with excellent water and service in 2024 and the years to come.

4,497
TOTAL
CUSTOMERS
IN 2023

3,562
RESIDENTIAL
CUSTOMERS
154
COMMERCIAL
CUSTOMERS

This year, every City of Sweetwater commercial and residential water customer received a meter upgrade. These new AMI smart meters allow our staff to remotely read a customer's meter. Additionally, customers can download the MyMeterInfo app on their phones and monitor water usage, get leak alerts, and receive water conservation tips. For more information on the smart meters of the app, you can visit our website, www.sweetwatertx.gov.

It was also a busy year with replacement projects. Below are a few of the replacement projects completed:

- 200 foot of 10" waterline at the Wilson Well Field property replace din March
- Oil leak on 900 kW generator at the Wastewater Plant in July
 - All oil seals replaced, another backup generator was brought in for standby
- 10" water leak repaired at 12th & Beall in August
- Pump impeller assembly repaired at the Alabama Pump Station in October
- Pump impeller assembly repaired at Highland Pump Station; motor was replaced in October

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WATER & UTILITIES

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

In addition to replacement projects and meter upgrades, the City of Sweetwater Water and Utilities Department also made significant technology upgrades in 2023. Below are some of the upgrades to technology we made in 2023.

- Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant SCADA computer replacement
- Water Treatment Plant PLC Upgrades
- Water Treatment Plant SCADA system automation upgrades
- Water and Wastewater Plant Win 911 system upgrades

In 2023, the City of Sweetwater Water and Utilities Department also launched the Lead Service Line Inventory Project. This is a project required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This project works to identify water running through lead service lines. Municipalities throughout the country are required to conduct a complete inventory of service lines by October of 2024. Customers received a postcard in the mail and were asked to submit their water line material information. If their information is unknown, City crews will work with residents to determine their line material by the required deadline. You can learn more about this project on our website, www.sweetwatertx.gov.

Finally, we would like to recognize our dedicated employees who were promoted and/or obtained new certifications in 2023:

- Charlie Martinez - Promoted to Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator
- Adolfo Garza - Promoted to Senior Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator
- Justin Carver - Promoted to Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection Supervisor
- Josh Hartin - Promoted to Water Production Foreman
- Zack Cornett - Promoted to Water Treatment Plant Operator
- Ryan Mercer - Obtained D Water License
- Jeff McElyea - Obtained D Wastewater Treatment License
- Justin Clowers - Obtained Wastewater Treatment B License
- Justin Clowers - Promoted to Director of Water & Utilities Department

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FIRE DEPARTMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Words alone cannot express how blessed every member of this community is by the caliber of personnel who make up the Sweetwater Fire Department. Providing both fire and advanced life support ambulance services, every member of this Fire/EMS department is second to none.

Training is a major component of Fire and EMS response. Our firefighters and officers train daily to be prepared for whatever situation you can conceivable imagine. Just when you think you have seen everything, the next 911 call comes in. This daily training and preparation are one of the many reasons that Sweetwater has such an amazing force of Firefighters, EMTs, and Paramedics. In fact, this year alone, Division Chief of Training Lt. Tad Bard has obtained donations and grants totaling nearly \$51,000 toward the training and development of our emergency services personnel.

Moving forward to 2024, we are remaining focused on service delivery and whatever we are called to handle. In order to do just that, we are strategically planning out the purchase of the various equipment and vehicles, such as fire apparatus and ambulances. One of our main goals is for every member of the community to know that Sweetwater Fire Department strives to be a good steward of the resources provided to us by the citizens of Sweetwater. We will never compromise on being a good steward of our resources.



CHIEF DEWEY COY
SWEETWATER FIRE DEPT.



2023 YEAR AT A GLANCE

SWEETWATER FIRE DEPARTMENT

EMS CALLS FOR SERVICE

2023	2022
2,386	2,525

579
CALLS FOR SERVICE

FIRE CALLS FOR SERVICE

2023	2022
579	618

9
STRUCTURE FIRES

MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION CALLS

2023	2022
52	68

30
GRASS, WILDLAND,
BRUSH,
VEGETATION FIRES



FIRE DEPARTMENT

UPGRADES

The Sweetwater Fire Department is committed to maintaining a top-of-the-line EMS and Fire fleet. In 2023, the department purchased a 2022 Ford Explorer PPV to allow the Fire Chief to access scenes, while leaving vehicles that can handle rough terrain to Battalion Chiefs. This vehicle was purchased for \$65,650 and delivered in May 2023.

Looking toward the future, the department placed an order for the purchase of a Spartan 100-foot mid-mount aerial apparatus. The ladder truck was purchased for \$2,041,688 and is expected to be delivered by January 6, 2025. Previously, the department has utilized Abilene or Snyder Fire Departments when a ladder truck is needed, making response time at least 30 minutes, time that could be used to fight a blaze. This purchase will allow our personnel to cut out that wait time and provide immediate aerial response.



FIRE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- **OCTOBER 2023**

- Fire Prevention Week 2023

- Presentations made to nearly 1,000 kids at Sweetwater ISD, Cornerstone Christian School, and Children's Day Out
 - Grade levels focused on Pre-K thru 5th grade

- **FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAININGS**

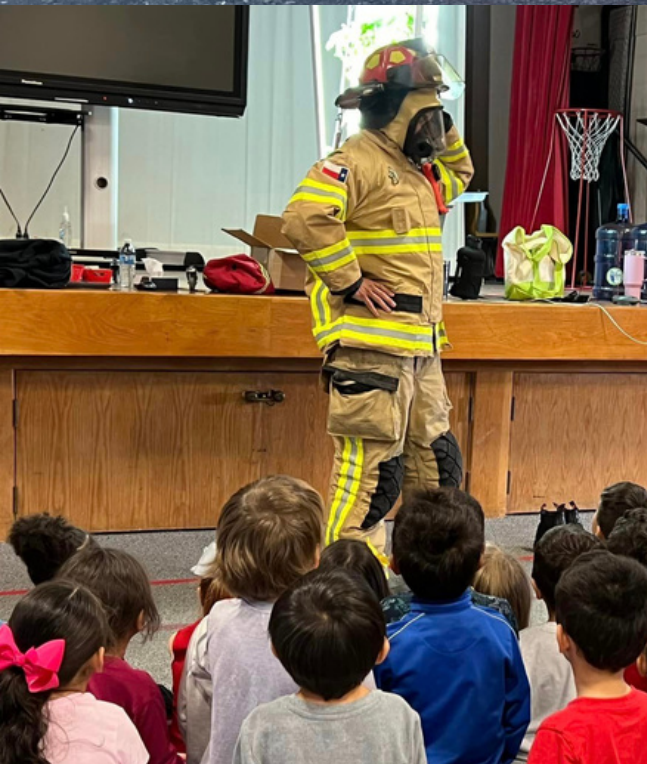
- Performed for multiple businesses including:

- Ludlum Measurements
 - Buzzi Unicem USA
 - Turkey Track Windfarm
 - Sterling Hills Nursing Facility



FIRE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



POLICE DEPARTMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

2023 was a great year for the Sweetwater Police Department and Sweetwater Animal Control. We made great strides in our services to the community. The Police Department was very proactive in patrol, which resulted in reductions in homicides, aggravated assaults, burglaries, and robberies. We were able to accomplish this while answering a heavy volume of calls for service. In 2023, the Sweetwater Police Department took an estimated 24,000 calls for service. Our telecommunicators played a huge role in our success. We were also extremely busy in our Criminal Investigations Division with multiple investigations and trials. In addition, we continue to monitor and report registered sex offenders within the community to ensure they are in compliance.

Animal Control has also had a great year. Upgrades to the adoption process and to our social media sites have increased our animal adoptions significantly. Our staff has also participated in adoption events within our community. These events have been well received.

It is our goal to provide excellent services to the Sweetwater community in 2024. As always, it is also our mission to continue to make Sweetwater a safe, vibrant, and secure community.



CHIEF BRYAN SHERIDAN
SWEETWATER POLICE DEPT.



2023 YEAR AT A GLANCE

SWEETWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT

HOMICIDES

2023	2022
1	3

24,019

CALLS FOR SERVICE

AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS

2023	2022
76	81

22,020

NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

BURGLARIES

2023	2022
77	164

18,105

CALLS RESPONDED TO

ROBBERIES

2023	2022
5	24

Top Crimes of 2023

1. ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY
2. CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY A MINOR
3. AGGRAVATED ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON
4. RESIST ARREST SEARCH OR TRANSPORT
5. BURGLARY OF A HABITATION



POLICE DEPARTMENT

INITIATIVES, TASK FORCES, AND OPERATIONS

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

The Sweetwater Police Department, in partnership with Texas Department of Public Safety Criminal Investigation Division, State Troopers, Game Wardens, and Nolan County Sheriff's Office investigated numerous co-conspirators for a multi-jurisdictional Organized Criminal Activity offense. A total of four houses were targeted and large mounts of stolen property and contraband were located. This investigation and operation lead to seven arrests.

OCTOBER 9-12, 2023

The Sweetwater Police Department conducted a criminal investigation of numerous co-conspirators for a multi-jurisdictional crime suppression operation. Over the four day operation, Abilene Department of Public Safety Criminal Investigation Division, in conjunction with Texas Highway Patrol, Nolan County Sheriff's Office, and the Sweetwater Police Department conducted traffic stops, consensual encounters, knock and talks, and search and/or arrest warrants to identify and apprehend criminal offenders. Officers established surveillance on designated places of interest in an attempt to identify suspicious activity such as narcotic transactions, unlawful carrying of weapons, stolen vehicles, and other criminal activity in the community. The Task Force was a huge success and numerous arrests were made. The investigation continues on several individuals suspected of dealing narcotics in the community. Additional arrests are anticipated.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

UPGRADES

In November 2023, the Sweetwater Police Department officially launched Power Engage. This is a new citizen satisfaction and feedback solution that utilizes text messaging to keep citizens informed and provide feedback after a non-life threatening interaction with our dispatchers and officers.

Additionally, the Sweetwater maintains its dedication to providing up-to-date training technology for our officers. The department now has an Axon Virtual Reality Training simulator. This simulator and software is a training tool for our department to use in everything from use of force scenarios to firearms and taser proficiency.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

