

Fellow Citizens:

Yesterday morning at 7:32 a.m., many of us heard and felt a loud explosion which occurred on the east side of Watters Place in Westworth Village.

The explosion destroyed the residence, and an inhabitant was rescued from the home and flown by CareFlite to Parkland Hospital in Dallas. The last information we have is that the gentleman is in critical condition.

Another citizen was transported to an area hospital with apparent minor injuries.

Many buildings in the area, including city hall, have experienced some degree of damage resulting from the shock of the explosion. Thus far, five houses on Watters have been deemed uninhabitable by our building inspections team, and the Red Cross is currently assisting these displaced families.

The cause of the explosion is still under investigation.

Cleanup of Watters Place has begun, and most citizens have returned to their homes.

While all of us are to some degree still reeling from this explosion, and praying for those who experienced injuries, this is a crystal clear example of the excellent staff we enjoy here in Westworth Village. Chief Reaves and our police department, and City Administrator Brandy Barrett and our civilian staff, all responded immediately and professionally to react and take control of the surrounding area.

Special thanks also to the Fort Worth Fire Department for its prompt response, and to our surrounding municipalities of River Oaks, White Settlement, Westover Hills, and Fort Worth for providing traffic control and backup while our police officers were focused on the emergency.

I also commend Atmos and Oncor for their prompt response to this emergency. Atmos understandably shut off gas service to the residences on Watters until the gas lines could be pressure tested, but Atmos acted exceedingly promptly and has restored service to all the residences other than those deemed uninhabitable.

Our citizens responded as we knew they would. They positively responded to staff's request to stay out of the area to allow first responders to perform their duties, and our city administrator's office received numerous calls from our wonderful citizens asking how they could help those affected. Our local businesses Chick-fil-A donated breakfast to all the displaced citizens, and Starbucks donated coffee to all the first responders.

This is yet another reminder that we tend to take our emergency service providers for granted ... until we need them. We can rest assured that all our emergency responders acted immediately, professionally, responsibly, and at a level for which we are extremely thankful.

It's times like these when we can all truly appreciate what a wonderful city we all enjoy.

--Mayor Kelly Jones



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