



COLLIN COUNTY

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
4300 Community Avenue
McKinney, TX 75071

MEMORANUDM

DATE: May 2, 2011
TO: Chief Deputy Rick Allen
Sheriff Terry G. Box
FROM: Major Chuck Ruckel *CR*
RE: Memo of Understanding

The attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will allow the County Dive Team to use the McKinney owned rock quarry located on Redbud for training purposes. This will be at no cost to the County. Attached is a copy of an email from Lt. Morrison explaining the need in more detail. Training at this Redbud location will only occur a few times per year.

CR/th

Chuck Ruckel

From: Scotty Morrison
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2011 9:47 AM
To: Chuck Ruckel
Subject: Use of Quarry for Dive Training
Major Ruckel,

The City of McKinney recently called upon the Collin County Sheriff's Office Dive Team to conduct an underwater search at the rock quarry located on Redbud in McKinney. The quarry is abandoned and filled with water. Additionally, the property is owned by the City of McKinney and is fenced off to prevent public access. During the search and recovery operation, I had the opportunity to evaluate the site and determined that the quarry would be ideal for Dive Team training. This is true for several reasons; the proximity of the site is such to reduce the logistical burden of training, the quarry is sealed off from the public which promotes safety for divers, and visibility conditions are ideal for training.

Typically, the Dive Team has conducted training at the City of Allen Natatorium or Lake Lavon. These two sites offer unique advantages, but also carry significant logistical problems and safety concerns. The natatorium provides the Dive Team with the ability to conduct training in confined water that has high visibility. While it is true that the vast majority of our operations are conducted in very low visibility, the training techniques need to be practiced and perfected in visibility conditions that are suitable both for the diver learning the technique and the trainers who are teaching and observing. The natatorium, while providing excellent visibility, is not always available for our use. Being a public facility, the site is often booked-up with recreational activities and cannot provide reliable perfunctory access to the Dive Team. The quarry, on the other hand, is available to us any time we choose. Lake Lavon, is available to us the vast majority of the time; however, the visibility conditions significantly reduces the ability of the diver to learn and practice techniques and the ability of the trainers to instruct or observe. The ability to utilize the quarry as a dive training site mitigates these logistical considerations and has the added benefit of being incredibly close to our office.

Training at Lake Lavon also involves safety considerations that are unique to a public lake with low visibility. Since Lavon is indeed a public access lake, there are often a number of recreational boaters, swimmers, and fishermen present. These factors are significant safety concerns for divers. While we strive to ensure that our divers are sufficiently identified in the water, it is impossible to guarantee that recreational boaters do not enter the dive site and pose a hazard to divers unaware of their presence. Submerged fishing lines, hooks, and tackle also represent significant underwater obstacles that are magnified in decreased visibility. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the low visibility at Lavon presents serious challenges to the inexperienced diver learning to properly utilize their life saving equipment.

The quarry provides the Dive Team with the ability to practice and perfect techniques in a realistic environment that has sufficient visibility and free of safety concerns that are unique to a public access lake. The quarry is available for us to use based on our schedules during any season and is closed off from the public. The availability of the quarry for use as a dive training site is a valuable opportunity that will benefit the Sheriff's Office in the aforementioned manner. Therefore, I strongly recommend that Collin County enter into agreement with the City of McKinney for the utilization of this site as such.

Lt. S. Morrison

4/29/2011