Drivers will get extra info on floods

By John W. Gonzalez

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Avoiding dangerously flooded roads in suburban Bexar County is about to get easier.

Later this month, the county's pilot program of 10 high-tech, high-water-detection systems will be expanded to 53 trouble-prone locations — including some sites where motorists have drowned in floodwaters.

Motorists at low water crossings equipped with HALT technology will be met with flashing lights rather than just barricades or nothing at all.

Especially dangerous spots will be outfitted with automatic, railroad-style crossing arms.

Another feature will help motorists steer clear of problem areas. Before setting out during storms, motorists will be able to go online to check for flooded crossings in their path.

Most of the new equipment will be concentrated in the southwest and northeast quadrants of the county.

Officials soon will launch a publicity campaign to explain the HALT
program, which stands for High-water Alert Lifesaving Technology.

Public meetings and brochures are tentatively planned for mid-January, after installation of the newest equipment that includes radio transmitters for real-time reporting of high water conditions.

The county website to tell motorists which crossings are flooded and closed will be unveiled later.

Ten of the devices have been installed since 2009 in a $250,000 pilot program.

Outfitting 43 more sites and creating interactive capabilities will cost nearly $3 million, county engineer Renee Green said.

“We also had to get dedicated (radio) frequencies for these systems and we had to upgrade our communications tower,” she added.

“We've tested the system with the 10 we've already got and everything's ready to go,” Green said.

The goal is to save lives at crossings notorious for dangerous flooding, she said.

More than 160 crossings in suburbs and unincorporated areas of the county were considered for the new technology.

“Sites that we picked are sites that we routinely have to close because of high water. Because they are rural, they may not warrant an improvement to a bridge or a low water crossing ... to use our dollars wisely, we're going to put in these low water crossing signals to alert citizens that there's water up the road,” she said.

The initiative is part of the county's 10-year, $500 million flood
High-water-detection system expands

In mid-January, Bexar County unveils an expanded system of high-water-detection devices that are being installed at dangerous suburban low water crossings. Ten devices were installed as part of a pilot program, and now another 43 crossings will be outfitted with flashers or automatic gates at a cost of more than $3 million.

Proposed site locations
- Flashers only
- Flashers and gates
- Gates only

1. Weir Rd @ Cibolo Creek
2. Blanco Rd @ Cibolo Creek
3. Bulverde Rd @ Cibolo Creek
4. Specht Rd @ Cibolo Creek
5. Smithson Valley Rd @ Cibolo Creek
6. Schaefer Rd @ Cibolo Creek
7. Toutant Beauregard @ Pecan Creek
8. Cagnon Rd @ Medina River
9. Gross Ln @ Medina River
10. O’Brien @ Polo Cat Creek
11. Jarrett Rd @ Elm Creek
12. Pearse Rd @ Live Oak Creek
13. Jarrett @ Live Oak Creek
14. Pearse @ Elm Creek
15. Shepherd Rd @ Live Oak Creek
16. Robert Glenn @ Live Oak Sough
17. Senior Rd @ Elm Creek
18. Macaw Rd @ Macaw Creek Upper
19. Zimont @ Chupaderas Creek Tributary
20. Abbott Rd @ Martinez Creek
21. Abbott Rd @ Saltillo Creek
22. Abbott Rd @ Woman Hollering Creek
23. Ulrich Rd @ Cibilo Creek
24. Bواشن City Rd @ Post Oak Creek
25. Bexar Bowling @ Cibolo Creek
26. Gable Rd @ Martinez Creek
27. Hollowell Rd @ Polo Cat Creek
28. Wheeler Rd @ Elm Creek
29. Pfie Rd @ Saltillo Creek Tributary
30. Sevans Rd @ Post Oak Creek
31. Le Vernia Rd @ Dry Hollow Creek
32. Quintana Rd @ Post Oak Creek
33. Keller Rd @ Polo Cat Creek
34. Beverly Hills @ Culebra Creek
35. Wixonville @ Culebra Creek
36. Dohny @ Culebra Creek
37. FM 1560 @ Culebra Creek
38. Galm Rd @ Culebra Creek
39. Antonio Dr @ Los Reyes Creek
40. New Berlin @ Woman Hollering Creek
41. Jungman Rd @ Medina River
42. Jarrett Rd @ Wheeler Rd
43. Baxtershire @ Culebra Creek

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