

Wildfire Early Detection Systems



Wildfire Early Detection Systems

- The early detection system consists of a computer based configuration of high-resolution optical sensors.
- Sensors work within a range of 6 to 25 miles.



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- The image processing software analyzes the motion, structure, and brightness of smoke plumes and automatically alerts monitoring personnel.



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- Early detection systems have been studied and in use since the early 1990s.
- In 2013, West Lake Hills became the first American city to employ the FireWatch America system.



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- There have been many studies over the years regarding the practicality and effectiveness of smoke sensor detectors.
- There is an overall consensus that the detector technology is still in its infancy and improvements need to be made to reduce the number of false alarms.
- There is, however, a strong argument that the detectors could be used to supplement current detection methods, particularly at night or in remote areas.



Wildfire Early Detection Systems

- Based on our research, The AFD recommends a joint purchase where the City of Austin and Travis County each purchase one sensor.
- Use in conjunction with the existing sensor in West Lake Hills.
- We believe this will provide coverage of our more remote areas while giving us the opportunity to evaluate the cost benefit of the technology.

