



## **PRESS RELEASE**

October 12, 2022

### **County Secures State Grant to Outfit Deputies With Tactical Body Armor**

Caldwell County Commissioners this week authorized Grants Administrator Dennis Engelke to move forward with finalizing a grant that will outfit 57 officers with the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office and Caldwell County constables' offices with custom-fit rifle-resistant body armor units.

The state grant made available through a Texas Department of Public Safety program covers the \$42,804.15 cost of the vests and requires no match from the county.

The grant application was submitted in February, said Engelke, who noted that vests would help better protect sheriff's deputies and deputy constables who are working traffic stops and serving eviction notices amid stressful situations where members of the public could potentially behave violently. On its application, Caldwell County mentioned its growth of 20-plus percent over the past decade, having responded to seven natural disasters in 11 years and an increased frequency of incidents of violent behavior during what used to be routine encounters.

"This allows us to keep our employees safe and able to return home to their families at night while saving us significant money," Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden said. "Kudos to our grants administrator for spotting this opportunity and ensuring Caldwell County could reap the rewards."

Engelke was notified last week that the grant had been approved.

"With approval, we can move forward with the DPS to secure the vests, which will be custom fitted per each employee," said Engelke, who noted that it would take time to receive the vests due to their being individually fitted.