



# THE TEXAS MUNICIPAL LAW BULLETIN™

A Supplemental News Bulletin Published by the Bojorquez Law Firm, PC ★ October 2016

## Holiday Decorations on City Property

As the holidays draw near, city officials should be aware of a recent A.G. opinion on displaying religious symbols on public property. Although this can be an issue throughout the year, concerns become more prevalent during the holiday season. The Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution reads, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” More commonly known as the separation of church and state, this idea applies to all levels of governmental entities.

This time of year, it is common for local governments to string holiday lights and create fun wintertime activities as a display of holiday wishes. Because these decorations are occasionally associated with certain religious holidays, the Attorney General of Texas released an opinion on the matter—providing clarification on whether local governments are allowed to expend funds on holiday lights and decorations. According to A.G. Paxton, under Texas Local Government Code 381.004, county commissioners courts are allowed to use county funds on holiday lights/decorations on county buildings and facilities. Op. Tex. Att’y Gen. NO. KP-00116 (October 10, 2016). The A.G. stated that a court is unlikely to hold that the purchasing of such holiday light displays violates the Establishment Clause. For more information on the legality of having religious displays, see [Religious Displays at City Hall](#).

**BOJORQUEZ**  
**LAW FIRM, PC**  
TexasMunicipalLawyers.com

*This educational message was sent to clients, friends and colleagues of the Firm. If you do not wish to receive such email messages in the future, please reply to the sender, or e-mail your request to be removed from this mailing list to [Info@TexasMunicipalLawyers.com](mailto:Info@TexasMunicipalLawyers.com). This document does not constitute legal advice.*

12325 Hymeadow Dr., Ste 2-100, Austin, Texas 78750 ★ Phone: 512-250-0411 ★ Fax: 512-250-0749 ★ TexasMunicipalLawyers.com

© 2016 Bojorquez Law Firm, PC. All rights reserved. Bojorquez Law Firm, PC and the Bojorquez Law Firm, PC logo are trademarks of Bojorquez Law Firm, PC.