

# Southlake residents can join wireless wave

City's new system is in place and available for free with registration

08:02 AM CST on Friday, February 10, 2006

By **MARICE RICHTER / The Dallas Morning News**

Multi-tasking in Southlake has never been easier.

The city's new wireless network makes it possible to catch the action at a local soccer game and surf the Web at the same time. Or send a few e-mails while dining alfresco at a café in Southlake Town Square.

But there's more: The system makes it possible to take pictures with a Web camera at the soccer or T-ball game and e-mail them to the grandparents without leaving the park.

And – for a one-year test period – there is no charge or limit on connection time.

The city set up this Wi-Fi system to test various technologies for city workers and give residents and visitors the opportunity to access the Internet from various city facilities, including Town Square, the Southlake Public Library and Southlake's two community parks, Bob Jones and Bicentennial.

"All you need is a laptop with a wireless card and you are good to go," said Gary Gregg, city technical services manager.

The council approved a contract with RedMoon Inc. of Plano last summer to install the network.

The system was recently turned on but only a handful of people have registered as users, which is required.

Anyone trying to use the system will be directed through registration.

City officials expect registration to increase quickly once more people become aware of the system.

"We think this will be a great benefit for our community," said City Manager Shana Yelverton. "We expect that a lot of people will take advantage of it."

Besides the wireless Internet service, the system includes wireless cameras in Bob Jones and Bicentennial parks that allow parks employees to monitor field conditions and any suspicious activity.

Officials with local sports associations can also turn the lights on and off by remote control.

The Department of Public Safety is expected to experiment with wireless technology to improve recording of police stops and other operations, officials said.

Southlake is among a growing number of communities including Dallas, Grand Prairie, Farmers Branch and Addison introducing wireless technology in municipal facilities and other areas.

Installation of Southlake's system was budgeted at \$72,846 but city officials said the total cost will be closer to \$65,000.