

Marker #: 17662

Title: Conroe Fire of 1911

Index Name: Conroe Fire of 1911

Address: N Main Street

City: Conroe

County: Montgomery, County ID: 170

UTM Zone: 15

UTM Zone East: 263713

UTM Zone North: 3355892

Code: Fires

Year: 2013

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark: False

Local Description: Montgomery County Courthouse grounds, east side

Size of Marker: 27" x 42" with post

Marker Text: On February 21, 1911 around 1:30 in the morning, a fire broke out in the Capitol Drug Store on Chambers (today North Main) Street. The blaze was well underway before it was discovered and northerly winds began sweeping the flames southeastward toward the railroad tracks. The volunteer fire department had only one hose cart which was pulled by hand to fight the inferno and the lack of water pressure led to the fight being called off. The post office, meat market, saloon, grocery store and Masonic lodge were among the businesses caught in the path of the fire as well as the homes of their owners who lived above their stores. Sixty-five buildings, store inventories and personal belongings were lost that early February morning, costing an estimated total of \$150,000, over 3.5 million dollars in today's money. The following business day, the city council created an ordinance requiring buildings to have "fire proof" materials protecting the wooden structures. A year later, the city council voted to amend the ordinance to require buildings to be constructed out of brick and stone. The 1911 fire in downtown Conroe and the prompt response to its destruction by Conroe residents reflected the resilience of Texans as they settled, struggled and prospered in southeast Texas. Despite the tragedy caused by the fire, the resurrection of stately brick business buildings provides current city visitors with a picture of a bygone era with buildings over a century in age. It further echoes the town's nickname, "The town that faith built!" (2013)

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