



For Immediate Release

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES UTILITY FEE

The City of Alvin provides advanced 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to its citizens and visitors. To continue offering such high-quality service, it is necessary to charge users a fee for ambulance service. Ambulance fees are established by City Ordinance and are comparable with other local emergency ambulance providers. Currently, the EMS emergency ambulance transport fees include a base fee of \$1,802, a \$15 per mile of transport (patient loaded) and a “no transport” fee of \$175.

The City’s Emergency Medical Services Ordinance previously allowed residents and commercial businesses to subsidize the cost of maintaining EMS operations in the City by voluntarily contributing a minimum donation to the EMS Fund on a monthly basis. About 44% of residents participated in this program at some point, but not every month. In return, for those who voluntarily contributed, the City would waive ambulance transport fees; not covered by a 3rd party insurance carrier.

After assessing the EMS Fund for the past several years, it has been determined that the voluntary donations are not sufficient to curb the net operating losses that the EMS Fund has incurred over the past few years – primarily due to the reduction in the receipt of private and public insurance payments, the reduction in the number of transports, and the increased cost of daily operations.

On Thursday, September 5, 2019, City Council amended the City’s Comprehensive Fee Ordinance to establish an EMS Utility Fee; which will be added to the monthly water bill beginning October 1, 2019. The new EMS Utility Fee will be required, and it will take the place of the “minimum voluntary and elective contribution” that had previously been offered.

The EMS program will use the revenue from the mandatory EMS Utility Fee to offset the operating cost of maintaining an EMS program in the City. ***In return, per the amended City Ordinance, the City will waive emergency ambulance transport fees not covered by a third-party insurance carrier.***

How much is the EMS Utility Fee?

- Residents (a person who lives in the City Limits) - \$6.00 per month (covers every family member who resides in the home)
- Apartment Complex or mobile home park serviced by a master meter (per each occupied unit) - \$6.00 per month

- Commercial businesses - \$10 per month
- Non-Residents (a person who lives outside the City Limits) - \$144 per year

What would be the financial impact on a resident who is transported 10 miles from his/her home to an emergency room, via ambulance, and is covered by a 3rd party insurance carrier?

EMS Charges	
EMS Transport Fee	\$1,802
EMS Mileage Fee	\$150
Average 3 rd Party Insurance Coverage	-\$750
Net Transport Fee	\$1,202
Waived by the City	-\$1,202
Total Due from Resident	\$0

When is the required *EMS Utility Fee* effective?

The *EMS Utility Fee* is effective October 2019. The *EMS Utility Fee* will be assessed to residents and businesses who have water accounts; and will be added to the monthly water bill.

Who is eligible to receive this benefit?

Everyone who resides in a household or apartment unit; or is employed by a business in which the water account holder has paid the required *EMS Utility Fee*.

Do I need to register and/or provide insurance information (in advance) for this service?

Prior registration is not required for this service. Only when ambulance services are provided to you will your information be taken and verified.

Does this benefit cover EMS transport and non-transport fees?

Yes, any ambulance service cost will be waived as long as the person receiving service is a resident of Alvin and the utility account holder has paid the mandatory *EMS Utility Fee*.

If I live in the county but still in Alvin EMS’s response area, am I eligible to receive this benefit?

There is a non-resident annual fee of \$144 which must be paid prior to any medical service or transport for the fees to be waived. Otherwise the patient will be responsible for the amount due after any insurance payments.

Who do I call if I have more questions?

Alvin EMS, (281) 388-4363