

City Council Approves Emergency Medical Services Fee

The Irving City Council voted on Aug. 6 to add an Emergency Medical Services fee to the monthly municipal services bills to help fund EMS operations and equipment. Effective Oct. 1, utility bill customers will be assessed a monthly fee of \$1.50 (\$18 per year) which will result in reduced transport fees for Irving residents. Following are the new ambulance transport fees.

- Residents – reduced from \$500 to \$450
- Senior citizens – reduced from \$500 to \$400
- Nonresidents – to remain at \$600

Irving now has the second-lowest rate for trip fees for residential service and is the only city in the area to have a separate rate for senior residents. The senior rate of \$400 is the lowest trip rate in the Metroplex.

Emergency medical services are a highly demanded service by residents. In the 2007-08 fiscal year, Irving's emergency services responded to nearly 14,000 calls for service. The city's 54 paramedics and eight ambulances are supported by an annual budget of \$6.7 million allocated for emergency medical services. The latest figures show cost recovery for services rendered are at an average of 45 percent. To assist with cost recovery, new state legislation allows Texas municipalities with populations between 200,000 and 250,000 to add fees for emergency medical services to monthly municipal services bills.

Thanks to the adoption of the EMS fee, new revenue will be generated to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality service without affecting property tax rates. In the city's 2009 resident survey, responders rated the service of the city's emergency responders with a 98 percent satisfaction rating, and Irving's emergency services have the highest cardiac survival rate in the state and the second highest in the nation.

Aug. 6, 2009