



Community Connection

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 account holder has paid the mandatory EMS Utility Fee.

If I live in the county but still in the Alvin EMS 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.



WATER / WASTEWATER RATES FOR FY 2019-2020

The City of Alvin continues to make improvements identified in the Comprehensive Plan, Utility Master Plan, and the corresponding Capital Improvement Program. The Utility Master Plan identified approximately \$92M in utility projects to be completed over the next 20 years. These improvements are necessary to replace aging infrastructure, improve efficiency, provide for future growth, and keep the City in compliance with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulations.

In May 2016, the City engaged Freese & Nichols Inc. to perform a water & wastewater rate study to develop a multi-year plan of rate increases that would provide sufficient revenue to implement the first 5 years of capital improvements identified in the Utility Master Plan. The total projected cost for the first five years of water & wastewater projects is approximately \$42M, and include:

- Construction of a 54" Eastside Interceptor from Bypass 35 to the WWTP.
- Lift Station Expansions/Rehabilitation
- Hwy 35 Bypass Gravity Main
- Waterline Improvements, and
- Ground Storage Tank Replacements

In February 2017, the City held a City Council workshop in which Freese and Nichols Inc. presented the results of a water and wastewater rate study. The study identified the need to increase water & wastewater rates to implement the first five years of improvements identified in the Utility Master plan.

On June 15, 2017, City Council approved Ordinance 17-J, adopting a 5-year schedule of water and wastewater rates, as recommended by Freese and Nichols Inc.

October 1, 2019 (FY20) begins the 3rd of the 5-year water & wastewater rate schedule. For FY20, a residential customer using 5,000 gallons of water and wastewater in a month will see an approximate \$12.40 increase in water and wastewater charges, taking the average monthly cost for the use of 5,000 gallons of water and wastewater from \$61.86 to \$74.27.

More information on the various improvements funded by water/wastewater revenue can be found in the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan located at www.alvin-tx.gov under the Engineering Department tab.

5-YEAR WATER AND WASTEWATER RATE SCHEDULE

WATER RATES	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Base up to 2,000 gallons					
Residential	\$12.95	\$15.15	\$18.18	\$19.27	\$20.43
Commercial	\$13.59	\$15.90	\$19.09	\$20.23	\$21.44
Per 1,000 (2,001-7,000)	\$3.31	\$3.87	\$4.65	\$4.93	\$5.22
Per 1,000 (7,001-above)	\$5.05	\$5.91	\$7.09	\$7.52	\$7.97

WASTEWATER RATES	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Base up to 2,000 gallons					
Residential	\$20.08	\$23.49	\$28.19	\$29.88	\$31.68
Commercial	\$20.66	\$24.17	\$29.00	\$30.74	\$32.59
Per 1,000 (2,001-above)	\$3.31	\$3.87	\$4.65	\$4.93	\$5.22

SENIOR CITIZEN WATER BILL DISCOUNT

If you are a senior citizen living in Alvin, Texas, you may qualify for a discount on your water and sewer bill. A 20% discount to the minimum base rate will be offered for the first increment of water usage up to and including 2,000 gallons. To receive the discount, you must:

- Be at least 65 years old
- Live at the address listed on the application
- Be a single-family residential customer
- Have the water/sewer bill in your name

To apply for the discount, you must complete an application form and establish proof of your age and address. A copy of one of the following is needed for eligibility:

- Texas Driver's License
- Texas Department of Public Safety Identification
- Birth Certificate
- Other legal documentation that states date of birth

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much is the current rate versus the discount rate?

A: With the discount, the charge for water up to 2,000 gallons, is \$14.54 (water). The same charge without the discount is \$18.18 (water). The discount does not apply to sewer or garbage charges. It only applies to base rate water charges.

Q: When will I see the discount take effect?

A: The discount will take effect on the next bill after submitting the application.

Q: If I live outside City Limits do I still qualify?

A: To qualify for the Senior Citizen Discount residents must reside inside City Limits.

Q: What if I am an eligible senior who lives in an apartment?

A: The senior discount would apply if you pay your water bill directly to the City.

Q: Where can I obtain an application?

A: Applications may be obtained at City Hall in the Utility Billing Department, or on the City's website at www.alvin-tx.gov Departments & Utilities / Water Utility Billing / Garbage Collection / Senior Citizen Water Bill Discount.

Q: How may applications be submitted to the City?

A: In-person delivery to the Utility Billing Department at City Hall, 216 West Sealy, Alvin Texas. Also, the application along with required documentation may be emailed ([u_utilitybilling@cityofalvin.com](mailto:utilitybilling@cityofalvin.com)), faxed (281-388-4265) or mailed to the Utility Billing Department. Applicants will be responsible for contacting the Utility Billing Office to ensure receipt of their application.

If you have any other questions about this discount, please contact the Utility Billing Department by phone 281-388-4264 or email u_utilitybilling@cityofalvin.com.