



FORT BEND COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL

Fort Bend County, Texas

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County Fire Marshal

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MEMO

Date: August 19, 2014
TO: Commissioners Court
From: Mark Flathouse, Fire Marshal
RE: Fire Run Reimbursement Rate

I have submitted an agenda item for consideration on the August 26, 2014 meeting of Commissioners Court concerning the reimbursement rate paid by Fort Bend County to participating agencies that perform fire runs in the unincorporated areas of the County. This action item will be the recommendation to move away from a formula based on last year's emergency service runs in favor of a specific annual flat rate for each participating agency, specific amounts attached. Contracts will auto renew with the same amount each year. Contracts will only go back to court only if court or the individual fire departments want to change the amount or other contract item. I further recommend that the county continue to make the one lump payment during the first quarter of our fiscal year.

The benefits of the flat rate are:

- Eliminating the "look back" approach of counting every single emergency run in the unincorporated areas for the prior year to determine the next year's amount;
- Establishes a specific and clearly stated amount, which makes it easier to budget for the fire departments and the County;
- Contracts can be customized to fit the department/city and the territory they cover; and
- Acknowledges that areas may change over time and allows the county to address a specific fire department while not affecting the others.

My recommendation of an annual flat rate will create a payment that is easier to understand for all parties and will result in getting funds into the hands of the agencies quicker, with greater efficiency for all parties.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Mark Flathouse
County Fire Marshal