



What Is That Emergency Service Fee On My Water Bill?

You are probably aware of the Tiki Island Volunteer Fire Department's (TIVFD) Emergency Service Fee that is listed on your monthly water bill. You may or may not know why the fee is on that bill. Back in 2012, the TIVFD realized that they did not have enough volunteer firefighters to staff the fire department 24/7. It was determined that they needed to hire firefighter/paramedics to provide 24/7 coverage. This would make the department a combination Volunteer/Paid fire department. This would require more funds than just voluntary donations to be able to continue to provide fire protection to the community. In Texas, there are only 2 ways that a Volunteer Fire Department can collect a fee for services. It can be done either as a taxing authority called an Emergency Service District OR through an agreement and plan with the local Galveston County Water district under the rules of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The latter method was chosen. In May of 2012, the GALVESTON CO. F.W.S.D. #6 (our water district) filed the TIVFD Fire Protection Plan and Fire Protection Agreement with the TCEQ and an election was held to approve the fee. As part of that Agreement, our Water District (GALVESTON CO. F.W.S.D. #6) collects the Emergency Service Fee on their monthly water bill and then pays the collected fees to TIVFD each month. In 2022, the TIVFD Board of Directors determined that the fee had to be increased in order to continue to provide the same level of services, including the replacement of our, then, 21 year old engine. An election was held and the proposal passed to increase the monthly fee from up to \$17 per month to up to \$45 per month.

The fee appears on the monthly GALVESTON CO. F.W.S.D. #6 water bill as a separate line item titled "EMER SVC FEE" and is currently \$42 per month. This fee has allowed us to purchase our new engine and cover other operating costs that continue to rise. Although the fee is collected by the water district, it is TIVFD's Fire Chief and Board of Directors that are responsible for implementation of the Fire Protection Plan and managing the departments finances. If you have concerns or questions about the fee or TIVFD, please contact a TIVFD Board member by email at boardsecretary@tikiislandfirerescue.org or scunningham45@yahoo.com. Visitors are welcome at our monthly Board of Directors meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm at the Public Safety Bldg. 747 Tiki Dr., Tiki Island, TX 77554 (check the Village of Tiki Website Event calendar for schedule changes).

Tiki Island Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors