

Fire Sprinkler Tap fees
Public Utilities Board
May 22, 2017



Fire Sprinkler Taps

- Fire sprinkler taps (FSTs) are a type of water line tap fee
- Fee amounts depend on tap size and installation - unpaved or paved
- Fees based on average installation costs (cost of service approach)
- Included in Utility Fee Schedule each year, adopted by ordinance
- If site conditions differ substantially from average conditions, or specific requirements are requested by Fire, charges are based on actual costs of installation.

History

- Fees were charged for Fire sprinkler taps prior to 1991.
- New Fire Sprinkler System Ordinance adopted in 1991
- Fire Sprinkler Tap fees waived because new ordinance requirements were more stringent than other metroplex cities (exceeded Uniform Building Code and Uniform Fire Code when adopted)
- Language was added to the Utility Code of Ordinances stating “*Upon written request to the Superintendent, the Utility Department shall waive installation charges for water taps exclusively dedicated to fire sprinkler taps. The Superintendent shall have sole discretion in the application of this subsection*”.
- Similar language included in Water Rate schedules since 1992.

History

- In 2000, conversations between Fire and Water Department staff indicated the Denton Fire Sprinkler ordinance was consistent with other metroplex cities.
- In 2001, the Water Department surveyed 41 cities (21 from Texas, 9 in the metroplex, 20 from around the U.S.). All required the developer / building owner to pay fire tap and connection fees
- An item was brought to the Public Utility Board (PUB) in March 2001 recommending charging for fire sprinkler taps.
- Based on PUB direction, staff began assessing fire tap fees in 2001. However, Ordinance language was not changed.

Recent Fire Sprinkler Tap Survey

- Staff conducted a survey of 19 area cities in March 2017
- Eighteen of these charge fire tap fees as part of the regular tap fees
- One charges separate fees for the water line tap plus a one time demand charge based on the tap size.

City Council

- The Mayor requested a work session item to discuss fire sprinkler taps during the February 14, 2017 Council. This work session was provided on April 18, 2017.
- **Council Direction**
 - Remove references to waiving fees for fire sprinkler taps from Section 26-126.1 of the Code of Ordinances and the Water Rate Schedule
 - Continue to collect fire sprinkler tap fees.
 - Clarify what is included in the standard Water tap and meter fees.
 - Clarify when a special price quote to perform nonstandard work (fees for installations not listed) applies

Staff Responses

- **Exhibits 2 and 3**: Removed the 1991 language about waiving fire tap fees from Section 26-126.1 of the Code of Ordinances and from the current and future Water Rate Schedule
- **Exhibit 3**: Added language to clarify what is included in the standard fees and when a special price quote for nonstandard work applies (fees for installations not listed).

Water Taps with Meters

- All taps and meters listed in this section include the installation of a water main tap, a service line from the main to the water meter, the meter box, and water meter. Water impact fees are not included. For situations where portions of this installation requires a pavement cut and repair or the water service line must be bored under the street, the Paved Street fee shall apply. For installations that require a full concrete panel section of pavement to be removed and replaced, or that require a meter larger than 2 inches, the Water Utility Department will provide a special price quotation (see “fees for installations not listed” section).

Water Meter Fees

- This section applies where there is an existing water tap and service line of sufficient size to install a water meter. Situations include water meter installations for new developments and existing properties requesting a larger water meter with an existing adequately sized water tap and service line. Fees include installation and setup of a new water meter and a new water meter box (if required). Water impact fees are not included. For a meter larger than 2 inches, the Water Utility Department will provide a special price quotation (see “fees for installations not listed” section).

Water Meter Relocations

- This section applies for relocations for existing water meters to remove them from conflicts with driveways, sidewalks and other surface obstructions. This standard fee covers relocation of the meter box and water meter and water service line up to 10 feet and does not include pavement removal or replacement. For distances longer than 10 feet, the Water Utility Department will provide a special price quotation in increments of 10 feet (see “fees for installations not listed” section).

Water Line Taps

- This section applies to the installation of all water main taps for extension of water mains, larger than 2 inch diameter service lines, and fire lines installed by a private contractor. The fees include the tapping sleeve and isolation gate valve, the installation of the tap, and the removal and restoration of the pavement for the water tap installation only. The contractor is responsible for installing the mainline extensions, service lines, and fire lines from the tapping sleeve isolation valve.
- Removed 1” and 2” taps
- For tap installations impacting concrete pavement that require a full concrete panel section to be removed and replaced, the Water Utility Department will provide a special price quotation. If requested, the Water Utility Department can offer to make a short extension of the main or service line to the back side of a street curb line or street right of way line based upon a special price quotation (see “fees for installations not listed” section).

FEES FOR INSTALLATIONS NOT LISTED

- For the installation of a tap, loop or meter for which a fee is not specified, the requestor shall pay in advance based upon the estimated cost of such installation, or similar work, plus an administrative charge of 20%.

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Questions

