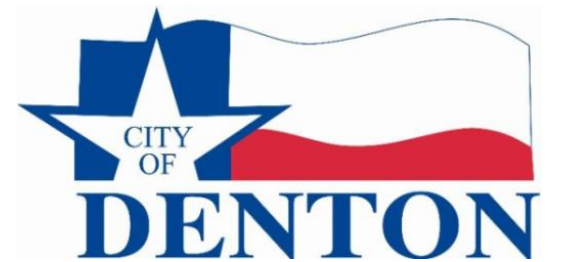


Fire Sprinkler Tap fees
City Council
April 18, 2017



Fire Sprinkler Taps

- Request for work session item during February 14, 2017 Council.
- 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 Utility Rate and Fee 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, Code of Ordinance language was not changed.

Current Survey and Recommendations

- 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 connector box installation, a tap fee, and a one time demand charge based on tap size

Recommendations

- Staff recommends continuing to collect fire tap fees
- For consistency, Staff recommends removing the 1991 language about waiving fire tap fees from Section 26-126.1 of the Code of Ordinances and similar language from future Utility Rate Schedules.

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Questions

