

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

813



FROM: Riverside County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services (OES)

SUBMITTAL DATE:
February 8, 2011

SUBJECT: Cost Recovery Fee Study

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and File the attached Cost Recovery Fee Study; and,
2. Authorize the Riverside County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services, to work with the Auditor-Controller in establishing fees as recommended.

BACKGROUND: During a report from the Fire Chief on January 11, 2011, item 3.11, the Board of Supervisors requested that the Riverside County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services (OES) review the current cost recovery fees, as well as those of the surrounding cities and county's, and report back with the findings within 45 days.

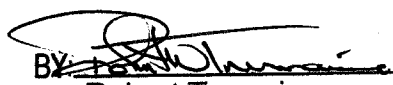
(Continued below)


 By Peter Lent, Deputy Director, County Fire, OES for
 John R. Hawkins, County Fire Chief

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	No
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	No
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	For Fiscal Year:	FY10/11

SOURCE OF FUNDS: None.	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE


 BY: Robert Tremaine
 Robert Tremaine

County Executive Office Signature

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL
 BY: *Synthia M. Gunzel*
 SYNTHIA M. GUNZEL
 Department Concurrence

Consent Policy
 Consent Policy

Dept Recomm.:
 Per Exec. Ofc.:

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 1/11/11 3.11 District: All Agenda Number:

3.16

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BACKGROUND (continued):

This was done in an effort to ensure that the County is recovering all applicable fees as well as to identify surrounding jurisdiction trends for possible future revenue opportunities.

Currently, OES is providing cost recovery for all wildland fires, civil (arson) fires, event standby requests and hazardous materials incidents. Within the past year, OES has processed \$1.3 million in billable incidents and received over \$830,000 in revenue for such incidents.

At present, the Department is utilizing all fees outlined in the current ordinance to bill to the extent of the law; however, the Department has not been billing for negligent vehicle incidents (i.e. drunk driving, driving while under the influence of drugs, reckless driving, vehicle pursuits and any other negligent vehicle act resulting in an emergency response by the Riverside County Fire Department).

A fee study was conducted by reviewing the rates of six counties and ten cities within the Southern California area. San Bernardino and Ventura counties proved to be the most proactive in their cost recovery and the study identified that the majority of the cost recovery efforts across the board involved seeking reimbursement for negligent acts.

For example, Ventura County bills for all violations of the Fire code, DUI and incidents deemed negligent or caused by arson. They also bill Edison and the Gas Company for fires caused by faulty wires and for calls that require fire equipment use until the companies mitigate the gas or electrical issue. They bill residents and business owners for false alarms when the false alarms are repetitive; restaurants that don't clean out their cooking vents that result in fire response; and business owners who store paint or chemicals improperly, resulting in an emergency response.

Additionally, many of the jurisdictions offer a voluntary annual fee for paramedic/ambulance service, which they consider over and above the taxes that residents pay for emergency services. The fee is per household and serves anyone living or visiting a particular address. The cost is nominal – the study average is \$49.50 – and is added as a charge to residents' utility or other service bill, as is the case with the City of Norco. Households that decide not to pay the annual fee and end up needing paramedic service during the year are billed for the actual cost of the service.

OES also researched the use of a nominal administrative fee to help recover the cost to provide the billing and collections functions. This method is an established standard and is implemented locally by San Bernardino and Ventura counties, as well as the State and FEMA level.

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In addition to fees, OES has also reviewed many of the surrounding jurisdictions' policies and procedures pertaining to cost recovery. The databases and systems that these jurisdictions use to capture the appropriate incident information are already in place within the County of Riverside and/or would be easy to modify and implement within a short time.

The Department makes the request to work with the Auditor-Controller's Office to establish cost recovery fees, which would include an administrative fee, fees for all illegal fires (i.e. bon fires), false alarms and theft of equipment, an annual fee for paramedic response and update the current fees to the median rates based on the attached fee study (Attachment A), through the appropriate procedures. Establishment of a cost recovery fee schedule may fall under Riverside County Ordinance No. 787. It is anticipated that in order to establish all the fees described, it may be necessary to amend Ordinance No. 787 or prepare a new ordinance. A request to adopt an order to initiate an amendment and/or create a new ordinance would be submitted under separate cover. A summary of anticipated amounts that could be collected from the fee schedule will be included when the request to initiate an amendment or preparation of a new ordinance is submitted.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
Cost Recovery - Fee Comparison

	Date of Last Fee Update:																	% of Variance				
	7/1/07	5/27/10	6/22/10	7/23/09	8/15/10	4/28/09	10/8/96	7/10/10	1990	6/10/08	4/28/09	12/2010	6/16/04	1/20/98	6/6/95	3/15/10	Unkn					
	Average	Riverside County Fire	Los Angeles County	OCFA	San Bernardino County	San Diego Fire-Rescue	Ventura County	North County	FEMA	Big Bear Fire	Corona Fire	Fullerton Fire	Garden Grove Fire	Hemet Fire	Huntington Beach Fire	Norco Fire	Ontario Fire	Redlands Fire	Riverside Fire	Torrance Fire		
Gator	\$300.00	\$8.00												\$300.00								3%
Chipper	\$195.59	\$10.60			\$91.17									\$300.00								5%
Communications Unit 1 (Daily)	\$300.00	\$2,400.00												\$300.00								800%
Communications Unit 2 (Daily)	\$300.00	\$1,500.00												\$300.00								500%
Water Tender	\$159.14	\$38.00		\$38.00	\$193.46		\$161.00			\$65.00+				\$300.00				\$103.26				24%
Breathing Support	\$300.00	\$43.25												\$300.00								14%
Small Pick-up	\$151.17	\$7.40		\$2.33						\$15.00 + .25/mil				\$300.00								5%
Large Pick-up	\$141.11	\$11.20		\$2.33						\$15.00 + .25/mil				\$300.00								8%
Engine-Type 1	\$250.81	\$75.00	\$376.27	\$95.00	\$392.05		\$266.00			\$50.00+				\$400.00				\$148.86	\$97.00	\$231.27		30%
Engine-Type 2	\$275.34	\$43.00	\$376.27	\$75.00	\$392.05		\$266.00			\$40.00 +				\$400.00				\$142.73				16%
Engine-Type 3	\$269.60	\$39.80	\$376.27	\$75.00	\$321.78		\$266.00			\$30.00 +				\$400.00				\$178.52				15%
Van-Passenger	\$110.00	\$11.00		\$2.67	\$27.34									\$300.00								10%
Utility-Stakeside	\$162.78	\$25.00			\$27.34					\$25.00 + .50/mile				\$300.00								15%
Dozer	\$192.74	\$70.00	\$228.58	\$70.00	\$185.10		\$180.00							\$300.00								36%
Dozer Transport	\$185.00	\$82.50		\$70.00										\$300.00								45%
HOURLY RATES: PERSONNEL (Hazmat)																						
Firefighter	\$47.41	\$12.67			\$47.41																	27%
Fire Apparatus Engineer	\$53.64	\$14.73			\$53.64																	27%
Fire Captain	\$92.92	\$17.23			\$92.92																	27%
Battalion Chief	\$118.21	\$16.93			\$118.21																	14%
HOURLY RATES: PERSONNEL																						
Firefighter I	\$57.70	\$23.11	\$91.78	\$57.07	\$18.00		\$75.00										\$60.25	\$34.18	\$67.62			40%
Firefighter II	\$61.61	\$25.38	\$91.78	\$57.07	\$45.39		\$75.00										\$60.25	\$34.18	\$67.62			41%
Firefighter II Paramedic	\$67.24	\$28.54	\$107.98	\$62.11	\$49.18		\$82.00										\$60.25	\$41.53	\$67.62			42%
Fire Apparatus Engineer	\$71.76	\$28.97	\$109.32	\$65.15	\$51.62		\$86.00										\$71.78	\$44.83	\$73.64			40%
Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic	\$77.57	\$32.68	\$109.32	\$70.19	\$55.41		\$86.00										\$71.78	\$44.83	\$105.47			42%
Fire Captain (A)	\$85.04	\$35.40	\$129.28	\$74.88	\$60.90		\$105.00										\$84.88	\$54.63	\$85.70			42%
Fire Captain (B)	\$93.17	\$38.05	\$129.28	\$74.88	\$60.90		\$105.00										\$84.88	\$54.63	\$142.63			41%
Fire Captain Paramedic	\$101.16	\$39.85	\$152.10	\$79.92	\$64.69		\$105.00										\$84.88	\$54.63	\$166.91			39%
Battalion Chief (Non-supervisory)	\$114.22	\$41.11	\$161.64	\$101.39	\$116.19		\$121.00										\$110.01	\$71.97	\$117.32			36%
Battalion Chief (Non-supervisory)	\$129.73	\$43.36	\$161.64	\$101.39	\$123.28		\$121.00										\$110.01	\$71.97	\$218.85			33%
HOURLY RATES: PERSONNEL (Prevention/Planning)																						
Battalion Chief	\$135.86	\$150.23	\$161.64				\$112.00										\$121.55		\$148.25			111%
Fire Safety Supervisor	\$74.94	\$85.00			\$74.94																	113%
Fire Captain	\$108.72	\$111.00	\$129.28				\$112.00										\$84.88					102%
Fire Systems Inspector	\$80.54	\$72.00			\$66.96														\$102.89			89%
Fire Safety Specialist	\$57.49	\$85.00			\$59.92												\$55.05					148%
Fire Protection Engineer	\$102.25		\$87.97				\$112.00										\$77.94		\$131.09			new fee