

MCECD Charter and Fee Structure

9-1-1 Districts, such as the MCECD exist to improve emergency communications on both sides of the 9-1-1 call – for those in need of help, and by those 9-1-1 Telecommunicator's whose job it is to provide efficient and effective responses to 9-1-1 calls. Currently there are twenty-five 9-1-1 districts in the state. It is our mission to continually strive to improve the quality of 9-1-1 systems which in today's environment calls for a highly functional, intuitive, interoperable "system of systems," known as Next Generation 9-1-1, capable of handling and utilizing voice, video, and data to enable a more tailored response to every emergency. It is essential that today's 9-1-1 centers have the advanced technology needed to better serve 9-1-1 callers and the District is now in the process of installing such a system.

The MCECD is a separate governmental agency whose creation was allowed in 1986 under the re-codified Texas Health & Safety Code, 772.02, which supports 9-1-1 as the primary emergency calling number in the state and mandates that a District's primary purpose is to design, implement, and administer 9-1-1 systems for residents of the area it serves. The enabling legislation also established the make-up of the District and approved its funding mechanisms. The District is governed by a board of managers which consists of two members representing the county who are appointed by the Commissioners' Court; two members who are appointed by the 14 mayors of the cities and towns; one member who is appointed by the Montgomery County Fire Chief's Association (MCFCA), and one non-voting member who is appointed by the principal telephone service supplier.

Unlike other agencies that have taxing authority, the District is solely funded by a surcharge imposed on all local exchange access lines of telephone companies and on Wireless (Cellular) and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) carriers providing telephone service within the District's territory (Montgomery County boundaries). Thus, the District's funding and revenue stream is totally dependent on Telecommunications Market Generated revenues subject to the ups and downs of that market. As a separate governmental agency, MCECD has one of the smallest operating budgets in the county it significantly impacts every resident in the county.

9-1-1 service fees are used for the 9-1-1 network, telephone and 9-1-1 equipment, in some cases 9-1-1 call-takers, 9-1-1 database services, public education, training and staffing. The MCECD was created under state auspices with all the power to carry out its mission, which includes collecting a fee, not to exceed 6% of the primary telephone service provider's equivalent base rate which has now been reached.

The monthly fees start at \$0.62 for residential lines and range between \$1.29 to \$2.23 for business lines and static VoIP customers. These are not per calls fees but strictly monthly flat fees. The Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) collects a \$0.50 monthly flat fee from all wireless customers and returns \$0.35 to the District based on population densities while retaining \$0.15 for administrative purposes. Nomadic VoIP fees are \$0.50 monthly per line and are remitted directly to the District. Each telephone company retains funds for the administrative costs, currently set at one (1%) percent. Prepaid wireless fees have been mandated in 2010 by the State Legislature at 2% of the retail rate for those services although revenues to Districts as of yet have not been remitted by the state.

In addition to the service fees, there is a 9-1-1 equalization surcharge of 0.3 (three tenths of one percent) and a Texas Poison Control surcharge of 0.3 (three tenths of one percent) monthly on intrastate long distance calls. These surcharges were authorized by the Texas Legislature to finance

these services in counties without adequate population to support them. These fees are remitted to the CESEC.

The purpose of the 9-1-1 system is to deliver emergency telephone calls to public safety agencies' 9-1-1 call-takers. The District strictly coordinates and facilitates Enhanced 9-1-1 service and provides addresses and map location services for 9-1-1 call centers. Its primary purpose is to provide the 9-1-1 call taking network and equipment, including related databases, for the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), the Conroe Police Department (CPD), the Montgomery County Hospital District (MCHD) and the Woodlands Fire Department (WFD) as well as a 9-1-1 backup center to:

- Answer all 9-1-1 calls within seconds.
- Assure the center is connected to the correct agency.
- Train public safety personnel on the use of the 9-1-1 equipment and features.
- Assure that everyone has a physical address.
- Assure that location technology is in place for wireless 9-1-1 calls.
- Educate the public on when and how to use 9-1-1.

During these difficult economic times, the District and its Board of Managers are working diligently to be good stewards of the District's limited funds and budgets by making sure that expenditures meet 9-1-1 specific functions only while providing the residents of Montgomery County first rate 9-1-1 systems and networks.

9-1-1 EMERGENCY SERVICE FEE ON SERVICE USERS WITHIN THE PARTICIPATING JURISDICTIONS OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION DISTRICT

THAT, pursuant to Section 772.341(d), Texas Health and Safety Code, there be and is hereby levied and charged within each participating jurisdiction of the Montgomery County Emergency Communication District a 9-1-1 emergency service fee of *six (6.0%) percent* of the base rate and/or equivalent including the extended metro rate of the principal supplier per service user per month within such participating jurisdictions.

THAT, service fees are based on Southwestern Bell Companies' (SBC) **BASE RATE 5**, and are designated as:

SERVICE TYPE	TELCO CHARGE	9-1-1 SERVICE FEE
Residential Service (1-party)	\$ 20.57	\$.62
Business Service (1-party)	\$ 48.02	\$ 1.44
Business Service (multi-line hunting)	\$ 55.47	\$ 1.66
PBX Trunk	\$ 74.22	\$ 2.23
Hotel/Motel (measured trunk)	\$ 42.92	\$ 1.29
OTHER SERVICE TYPES		
Extended Metro- Residential Service (1-party)	\$ 30.10	\$ 1.80
Extended Metro - Business Service (1-party)	\$ 72.35	\$ 4.34
Extended Metro - Business Service (multi-line hunting)	\$ 83.20	\$ 4.99
Extended Metro - PBX Trunk	\$113.50	\$ 6.81
Extended Metro - Hotel/Motel (measured trunk)	\$ 62.15	\$ 3.72
VoIP – Nomadic Service	\$.50	
VoIP- Non-nomadic Service (Same as equivalent service type illustrated above)		

THAT, this order take effect and be in full force on and from August 8, 2005, until amended by this Board, unless otherwise amended as provided by law.

THAT, pursuant to Section 771.073(e), Texas Health and Safety Code, a service provider collecting fees may retain as an administrative fee an amount equal to *one (1%) percent* of the total amount collected.

THAT, pursuant to Section 771.071, Texas Health and Safety Code, all emergency service fees charged and levied by virtue of this Order shall be billed by the service suppliers to each service user within the participating jurisdictions, and upon collection by such service suppliers, such emergency service fees shall be remitted monthly to the Montgomery County Emergency Communication District. The service supplier shall remit the amount collected in a calendar month to the District not *later than the 30th day after the last day of the calendar month*.

THAT, pursuant to Title 1, Part 12, Chapter 255.4(a) of the Texas Administrative Code, the terms "local exchange access line" or "equivalent local exchange access line" mean the physical voice grade telecommunications connection or the cable or broadband transport facilities, or any combination of these facilities, between an end user customer's premises and a service provider's network, that when the digits 9-1-1 are dialed, provides the end user customer access to a public safety answering point through permissible interconnection to the dedicated 9-1-1 network. Each such connection (e.g. individual channel) provided to an end user customer shall constitute a separate "local exchange access line" or "equivalent local exchange access line." A service provider that bills federal subscriber line charges on all its retail lines and services to all its end user customers may use the federal subscriber line charge as an alternative definition and may bill, collect, and remit 9-1-1 emergency service fees on that basis.