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## New Fire Fee- Effective October 1, 2022

Smith's Station Fire Protection District will now differentiate between types of occupancies to better reflect its size and the risk it represents. Whereas in the old fire fee system large apartment buildings paid the same amount as small single family residences, the new system will take into account the larger and commercialized spaces in our district, and collect a different amount from those spaces than we do from residential occupancies. The commercial spaces will instead be billed according to its individual square footage. The current \$50 fire fee paid to the County Commission annually cannot be discontinued until its expiration in 2036, so until that date, the amount billed by the fire district will be offset by that amount in order to ensure no one is overpaying or in effect "paying twice".

	Monthly	Yearly
Residential	\$16	\$192
Non-Profit	\$22-\$71	\$264-\$852
Commercial	\$26 - \$96	\$312 - \$1,153

Smith's Station Fire Protection District  
Rates (Effective October 1, 2022)

## Future Plans for the Department

With the funds that will become available with the new fire fee, Smith's Station Fire Protection District plans to resume ambulance operations in early 2023, with the hiring of six full time employees staffing a three shift rotation. We also intend to add a fully staffed fire truck of three to four firemen per day also working on this shift rotation by 2024. In time, as the department grows to reflect the growth of our community we anticipate the need to add additional paid personnel to our department in order to ensure that we can provide our citizens with expedient responses to their calls.



## Smith's Station Fire Protection District

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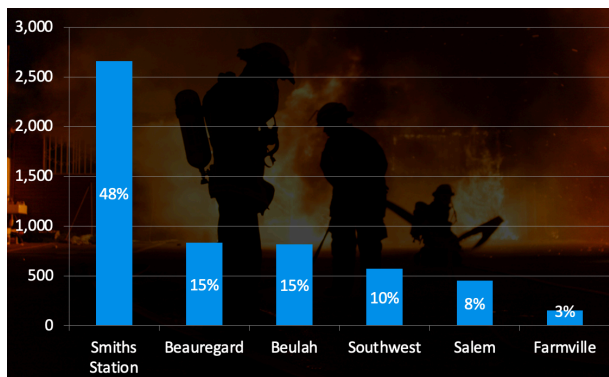
50 Lee Road 430  
Smith's Station, AL 36877  
[www.fire.smithsstational.gov](http://www.fire.smithsstational.gov)  
334.947.0911

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## Fire Fee Information Guide

## Department Overview

- Coverage area of roughly 72 mi<sup>2</sup>
- Serve a population of 35,000 people
- Respond to nearly 3,000 emergency calls each year
- Transported a little over 800 patients to the hospital each year that our ambulance was in operation
- Our apparatus and major equipment:
  - 6- Fire Stations
  - 1- 2,500 gallon Tanker/Engine
  - 1- Aerial Apparatus
  - 6- 1,000 gallon Engines (one of which is out of service beyond repair)
  - 4- Quick Response EMS SUVs
  - 2- Brush trucks
  - 1- Brush/Rescue truck
  - 2- full sets of extrication tools(JAWS)
  - 2- battery powered combi-tools



Percentage of total 911 calls in Lee County run by each volunteer department per year

## Where are we now—and what is changing?

The original fire fee established by Lee County to fund the volunteer fire departments in the county was \$25 per household per year, in 1989. This fee was set to expire in 2013, and in 2012 the new \$50 fire fee was put into effect. This current fire fee will stay in effect until 2036. At its inception, the fire fee was meant to help the volunteer departments provide services to their community, and a little over 30 years ago it was effective and allowed the departments to cover most of their costs each year. Over the years not only have the costs of providing emergency services to our communities gone up nearly exponentially, but our communities have also grown by leaps and bounds. Smith's Station has continued to grow into a thriving city with an ever increasing population, and our small volunteer fire department has done its best to keep up. Many years ago we saw a need in our community to provide an ambulance service to shorten the noticeably increasing ambulance response times in our area, and we operated this ambulance out of our fire department funds until it simply became unaffordable for our small department to continue its operation.

After our ambulance operations were suspended, we sought a solution to allow us to provide this service again and we looked to the future of the department in a growing community and know that what our community needs is to have a paid fire department, with firefighters and ambulance personnel on duty 24/7 for our citizens. After an extensive analysis of fire departments across our region and the state, it was determined that the solution is to bring our fire fee into line with comparable departments that better reflects the large population we serve.

	Fire Budget	Population	Per Capita	Households	Per Household
Smiths Station	\$ 565,000.00	35,218	\$ 16.04	14,087	\$ 40.11
Brewton	\$ 1,349,166.00	5,276	\$255.72	2,050	\$658.13
Tuskegee	\$ 1,503,539.00	9,395	\$160.04	2,936	\$512.10
Valley	\$ 2,800,000.00	10,529	\$265.93	3,654	\$766.28
Selma	\$ 3,115,274.00	17,971	\$173.35	7,568	\$411.64
Eufaula	\$ 3,774,752.00	12,882	\$293.03	4,969	\$759.66
Alexander City	\$ 4,407,292.78	14,483	\$304.31	5,710	\$771.86
Troy	\$ 5,919,400.00	17,727	\$333.92	6,853	\$863.77
Phenix City	\$ 6,026,178.00	38,816	\$155.25	14,716	\$409.50
Opelika	\$ 7,245,494.00	30,955	\$234.07	11,866	\$610.61
Auburn	\$ 9,118,459.00	76,143	\$119.75	23,500	\$388.02

The table above shows the current fire department budget, alongside departments of comparable size in our region. The reality is that if our department is going to be able to continue to provide quality and reliable service to the members of our community, something has to change.