



HOUSE BILL 445: Brunswick Fire Protection Fees.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	Date:	June 20, 2017
Introduced by:	Reps. Iler, Butler	Prepared by:	Cindy Avrette Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	Second Edition		

OVERVIEW: House Bill 445 would increase the maximum fee amounts that may be assessed for fire protection in Brunswick County.

CURRENT LAW & BILL ANALYSIS: Brunswick County has the authority to establish fee-supported fire districts to provide fire protection services throughout the county. "Fire protection" includes furnishing emergency medical, rescue, and ambulance services to protect people in the district from injury or death. The board may provide fire protection to the district by contracting for the services with someone else or by providing the service itself if it maintains or creates an organized fire department in the district. There are 37 fire districts and 22 fire departments in the county; 7 of the departments are owned and operated by the municipal governments.

Each district has a committee that exercises control over the fee-setting process. The committee must conduct an inquiry into the amount of funds required by the district to meet its needs and recommend a fee to the board of commissioners. The board then sets the fee. The fee may not exceed the cost of providing fire protection services within the district, and the amount is based on the class of property as set out in the table below. The fee may be included on the property owner's property tax bill.

The board of commissioners has passed a resolution seeking to amend the maximum fee amounts because the current amounts are outdated and insufficient to meet the needs of the growing population. The fees were last increased in 2007. If this legislation passes, the commissioners intend to implement a 25% across the board increase.

Class of Property		Current Law (Maximum Fees Per Site/Per Year)	Proposed Increase in House Bill 445 (Maximum Fees Per Site/Per Year)
A single-family dwelling or manufactured or mobile home, and appurtenant structures, plus up to 5 acres of surrounding land. ¹	<1,000 sq. ft	\$50.00	\$100.00
	>1,000-<2,000 sq. ft	\$100.00	\$200.00
	>2,000-<3,000 sq. ft	\$200.00	\$400.00
	>3,000-<4,000 sq. ft	\$300.00	\$600.00
	>4,000-<5,000 sq. ft	\$400.00	\$800.00
	>5,000-<6,000 sq. ft	\$500.00	\$1000.00

¹ Each unit in a multiple-family dwelling is treated as a single-family dwelling for purposes of this fee.

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Director



Legislative Analysis
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	>6,000-<7,000 sq. ft	\$600.00	\$1200.00
	>7,000-<8,000 sq. ft	\$700.00	\$1400.00
	>8,000 sq. ft	\$800.00	\$1600.00
Unimproved land other than the 5 acres of land classified as part of a single-family dwelling or manufactured or mobile home.	<5 acres	\$10.00	\$20.00
	>5 <25 acres	\$20.00	\$40.00
	>25 <50 acres	\$50.00	\$100.00
	>50 <100 acres	\$100.00	\$200.00
	>100 <200 acres	\$150.00	\$300.00
	>200 <300 acres	\$200.00	\$400.00
	>300 <400 acres	\$300.00	\$600.00
	>400 <500 acres	\$400.00	\$800.00
	>500 acres	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
An animal production or horticultural operation	Per site	\$10.00	\$20.00
A commercial facility other than an animal production or horticultural operation.	<5,000 sq. ft	\$200.00	\$400.00
	>5,000<10,000 sq. ft	\$400.00	\$800.00
	>10,000<20,000 sq. ft	\$800.00	\$1,600.00
	>20,000<30,000 sq. ft	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
	>30,000<40,000 sq. ft	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
	>40,000<50,000 sq. ft	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
	>50,000<60,000 sq. ft	\$3,000.00	\$6,000.00
	>60,000<70,000 sq. ft	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00
	>70,000<80,000 sq. ft	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
	>80,000<90,000 sq. ft	\$6,000.00	\$12,000.00
	>90,000<100,000 sq. ft	\$7,000.00	\$14,000.00
	>100,000sq. ft	\$8,000.00	\$16,000.00
	Any other class of property selected by the county		\$100.00

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act is effective when it becomes law.

**Trina Griffin, Staff Attorney for the Legislative Analysis Division, contributed substantially to this summary.*