



FACT SHEET TOWN OF MERTON FIRE PROTECTION FEE

Wis. Stat 60.55 requires the Town Board to provide fire protection for the Town. Over the past year, the Town of Merton has undertaken a detailed and comprehensive work effort to determine the best way to fund the necessary service of fire protection to its residents.

The Town Board approved a decision to implement fire service fees that enable the Town to accomplish the following goals:

- Protect the lives and property of all Town of Merton residents and businesses through fire protection, emergency management, education and prevention.
- Ensure that there is adequate funding for the necessary operation, staffing and training for fire protection.
- To calculate the cost of providing fire protection services in the most fair and equitable way to all properties in the Town of Merton.

A special charge for fire service fees will be listed on the yearly tax bill and the Town's tax levy has been lowered to reflect this change.

FAQ's

What is a fire service fee? A fire service fee is a charge for having fire protection services provided by Western Lakes, Hartland Fire Department and Merton Fire Department. The revenue collected by this fee can only be used for the provision of fire protection.

Who is required to pay a fire service fee? All properties – residential, commercial, institutional and tax exempt – within the Town of Merton are required to pay a fire service fee.

How are fire services fees calculated? The Town of Merton will establish a fire fee formula. The formula is calculated through different variables including; acreage, building square footage and outbuilding square footage. By including all these variables, the fee is more equitably divided by the billing unit or Domestic User Equivalent (DUE), to determine each parcels fire service fee.

Is this just another tax? A fire service fee is not a tax. Although the service fee is a charge to property owners, it is not a tax because it bears no relation to the taxable value of a property. Instead, property owners are charged based on the acreage and building square footage that would require a response from the fire in the case of a fire on their property.