

CITY OF PRESTON STREET LIGHT FEE



The City Council of the City of Preston recently adopted a street light fee to be billed monthly to all utility customers. The fee will first appear on utility bills mailed out in early May.

The fee is \$2.35 per bill.

Why did the City Council adopt a street light fee?

The City is facing significant reductions in local government aid. To make up for this loss of revenue, the City Council has cut nearly \$150,000 of expenses over the last two years. Facing the real possibility of reducing or eliminating valued local services, the Council made the difficult decision to fill a portion of the budget gap by increasing revenue with this street light fee.

How much does the City spend on streetlights in a year?

In 2009, the street lights in the City of Preston used approximately 228,000 kilowatt hours of electricity. That's enough electricity to power 35 homes in Preston. The total cost of the electricity for 2009 was \$20,268.

Isn't the City already collecting property taxes to pay for streetlights?

Is this 'double-dipping'?

The City did collect property taxes to pay for street lighting. However, starting April 1, 2010, the Council redirected those property tax dollars to pay for other City services. Services that may otherwise have been cut.

Why do I have to pay this fee, I don't have (or don't want) a streetlight near my home?

Streets lights are a valuable tool to keep our community safe. Streetlights help ensure traffic and pedestrian safety. Anyone who drives or walks in our community after dark benefits from streetlights. Streetlights may also reduce crime—a benefit to the community as a whole.

What can I do if I am paying multiple fees or feel that I am unfairly billed for this fee?

Please contact City Hall 507-765-2153 and we will be glad to discuss your situation with you.

Why aren't businesses charged more than homes?

The City Council wanted to keep the fee simple to understand and implement. A more complex fee schedule that was based on feet of frontage was considered, however, in the end the Council determined a flat fee per bill was the best fit for Preston.

Other Questions? Please contact City Hall at 507-765-2153