

41,000 mistakenly charged for DFW Connector tolls



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The Texas Department of Transportation erroneously charged more than 41,000 motorists for driving the new DFW Connector during what was marketed as a free period. It was unclear late Monday why the agency billed for more than 192,000 transactions made from May 27 to July 6.

“We’re taking steps to rectify it,” said Tony Hartzel, a spokesman for the agency.

The problem came to light after people started getting their monthly bills through the North Texas Tollway Authority. That entity did not build and does not operate the DFW Connector, but it has an agreement with TxDOT to bill customers who use state-developed toll lanes.

The DFW Connector, near Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, is the second state-developed managed toll lane project to debut in North Texas. Within five years, the area will have more than 100 miles of managed toll lanes, the most in America. Revenue from the toll lanes finances construction on highway renovations and widenings.

NTTA spokesman Michael Rey said his agency will credit all TollTag users who were wrongly billed. The total amount was about \$171,000.

Hartzel said drivers who do not have TollTags will not be billed for trips made during the free period because those bills have not been mailed.

Rey said his agency didn’t have a process in place to catch the error because it assumed TxDOT wouldn’t send NTTA owed amounts for the free period.

“There’d be no reason for us to have a fail-safe set up because TxDOT is the one who guaranteed the nontolled passage,” Rey said.

While NTTA only provides billing services for state-developed projects like the DFW Connector and LBJ Freeway, it is a large transportation agency in its own right. NTTA owns, builds and operates several area toll roads, including Dallas North Tollway and Bush Turnpike.

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