

Home > News > Your Commute

YOUR COMMUTE

RSS Mobile Newsletters **MY YAHOO!**

NTTA begins cracking down on toll violators

Posted Monday, Jun. 02, 2014 2 comments Print Reprints Share Like 0

ARTICLE PHOTOS (1) COMMENTS

BY GORDON DICKSON
gdickson@star-telegram.com

About 4,050 Tarrant County car owners can expect to have their annual vehicle registrations blocked this year because of unpaid tolls, unless they pay up before the sticker expires, North Texas Tollway Authority officials said.

The agency, which earlier this month opened the new Chisholm Trail Parkway connecting Fort Worth and Cleburne, is getting serious about efforts to crack down on vehicle owners who drive on its toll roads without paying. A new state law allows the tollway authority to submit a list of its habitual violators to tax offices in Tarrant, Johnson, Dallas and other counties and place a block on vehicle registrations at their next renewal.

It's one of several steps being taken to get people to pay for use of Dallas-Fort Worth toll roads, which are playing an increasing role in the region's mobility. In Fort Worth, Chisholm Trail Parkway hasn't been open long enough for motorists to be delinquent with their tolls, so the Tarrant County residents who face having their vehicle registrations blocked most likely accumulated their past-due tolls on Dallas-area roads.

On Dallas-area roads, the tollway authority also is setting up electronic devices that scan the license plates of passing cars to identify vehicles with past-due accounts. In some cases, those vehicles can be pulled over by Texas Department of Public Safety highway troopers, and repeat violators can even have their automobiles impounded.

"Keep in mind that DPS troopers will check the banned list on routine traffic stops as well," said tollway authority spokesman Michael Rey.

The agency has sent notices to 32,675 car owners in eight counties regionwide who are habitual violators, said James Hofmann, tollway authority assistant executive director of operations. Generally, a habitual violator is a car owner who has accumulated at least 100 tolls without paying.

All electronic

Uncollected tolls became an issue in 2010, after the tollway authority completed the conversion of its entire system to electronic toll collection. Gone are the toll booths, with employees who make change. Instead, motorists simply use the open toll roads and pay electronically. If they have a TollTag on the windshield, tolls are deducted automatically as they drive under payment gantries built over the road. For cars without a TollTag, cameras photograph the license plate and the registered owner is sent a bill.

In all, 16,065 registrations could be blocked in eight Metroplex counties by the end of the year, including the estimated 4,050 in Tarrant County, Hofmann told the tollway authority board during a meeting last week.

The agency also has notified 969 people, including 117 in Tarrant County, that their vehicles have been banned from the tollways and that if they continue to use the roads their vehicles are subject to being impounded.



View photos

Have more to add? News tip? Tell us

CLOSEOUT SALE
4 Remaining Luxury Downtown Condos!
EXCELLENT BANK FINANCING!

BRAND NEW CONDOS AT BELOW BUILDER COST!
CLICK FOR DETAILS!

Statewide Remodeling

LIMITED TIME ONLY:
50% OFF INSTALLATIONS
+ a \$250 GIFT CARD FOR HOME IMPROVEMENTS

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE IN-HOME ESTIMATE
888-285-9034

MOST POPULAR

- Cowboys rookie WR injures shoulder
- Three wounded at Fort Worth pool hall
- Springtown woman arrested in shooting of caged dog
- No extras needed, TCU takes Fort Worth Regional with 6-1 win
- Frogs made quick work of regional finale

Although the crackdown is in its initial weeks, many scofflaws who have been contacted by the tollway authority about their delinquent accounts have already made payment arrangements worth an estimated \$7 million, according to Hofmann's presentation.

The agency lost an estimated \$12.5 million last year in unpaid tolls, officials have said previously.

Tarrant County

Tarrant County will collect \$5.24 from the tollway authority for each car owner whose registration is blocked, but who subsequently makes some sort of payment arrangement. The payment is intended to offset the cost of the paperwork and staff time needed to process the vehicle registration blocks.

The crackdown is just getting started in Tarrant County, said Ron Wright, Tarrant County tax assessor/collector.

"We haven't actually had to turn anyone away yet," Wright said. "I expect with the opening of Chisholm Trail Parkway that over time there will be people turned away. We do expect that in the coming months."

The county tax office also plans to embark on an education campaign, including placement of informational signs in county offices, to let car owners know about the toll rules.

About 2 million vehicles are registered in Tarrant County, he said. Of those, about 500,000 are issued titles, and 1.5 million are renewed.

Chisholm Trail Parkway, a 28-mile toll road from Interstate 30 near downtown Fort Worth to U.S. 67 in Cleburne, isn't yet a part of the crackdown, Rey said. The toll road opened May 11, but several important connections needed to drive large amounts of traffic onto its lanes — including ramps at Interstates 30 and 20 — aren't expected to open until September or October.

Gordon Dickson, 817-390-7796 Twitter: @gdickson

1 CALL FIX IT ALL!!!!
Kitchens, baths, floors, tile/laminate & paint
817-521-4954



Carney's Hauling
Cheap Haul Offs! I pick up ANYTHING! Scott 817-284-9882

A Tree Surgeon
Trim, Removals, 27yrs exp. Danger zone expert. Insured Sr Disc 817-428-8781



A+ Hauling and Demo
We do it all! Anything & Everything...GONE! Fully Equipped. 817-733-3202

Allen Conner Tile Service
Complete Tile Service, Showers, Floors & Backsplash (817) 789-8598

Trending Offers and Articles

ADVERTISEMENT



Surprisingly simple solution to help your joints. See why these ingredients are flying off shelves



These are 9 of the most dangerous superbikes in the world--even for skilled riders.



In less than 2 hours stores completely sell out of this #1 MOST important item in a crisis. [VIDEO]



Irving - New rule allows many Texas residents to get car insurance at half-price.

[Looking for comments?](#)

Driving Directions

freedrivingdirectionsnow.myway.com

Recent Maps & Driving Directions. w/ the Free Map Homepage App for PC

[TERMS OF SERVICE](#) [PRIVACY POLICY](#) [ABOUT OUR ADS](#) [COPYRIGHT](#) [CONTACT US](#) [REPORT A PROBLEM](#) [ADVERTISE WITH US](#) [FIND N SAVE](#) [ABOUT THE MCCLATCHY COMPANY](#)

[ARLINGTON CITIZEN-JOURNAL](#) [COLLEYVILLE COURIER](#) [GRAPEVINE COURIER](#) [KELLER CITIZEN](#) [MANSFIELD NEWS-MIRROR](#) [SOUTHLAKE JOURNAL](#) [TIMES-REGISTER](#) [WEATHERFORD TELEGRAM](#)

