



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Prosecutor Preparing to File Charges Against Drivers Who Have Unpaid Tolls on Toll 49**

(Tyler, TX) – Drivers who have used Toll 49 without paying may find themselves in court soon. Beginning in late July, the Smith County Prosecutor will initiate legal proceedings against vehicle owners who have repeatedly ignored requests for payment.

“The vast majority of our customers pay for their use of Toll 49,” says Everett Owen, Interim Executive Director of the NET RMA. “Those customers who pay their fair share expect that we are enforcing the law.”

Drivers who use Toll 49 without a valid Toll tag are sent a bill in the mail. Roughly 35% of the drivers who use Toll 49 are sent toll bills under the “Pay-By-Mail” program. If the bill is not paid within 30 days, the tolls are converted to violations and a violation notice is issued. If the violation notice goes unpaid, the registered owner of the vehicle can be charged with a misdemeanor and face fines and fees in excess of \$250.

The NET RMA has contracted with Municipal Services Bureau (MSB) to handle the billing and violation enforcement program on Toll 49. Vehicle owners may be able to avoid court by contacting MSB at 1-888-923-2808 to discuss payment options.

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### **About Pay-By-Mail**

Pay-By-Mail customers are not required to prepay or register. Anyone who does not have a Toll tag account automatically becomes a Pay-By-Mail customer when they pass through the electronic toll plazas on Toll 49. Equipment on the toll road takes a picture of their license plate and that information is used to identify the registered owner of the vehicle. A bill for the tolls is then sent to the registered owner's address.

Due to the administrative costs associated with identifying vehicle owners and distributing bills, Pay-By-Mail customers are charged a slightly higher rate than Toll tag customers and incur a \$1.00 convenience charge per bill. Customers have 30 days to pay their bill either by mail, in person, over the phone or online at [www.paynetrmatoll.com](http://www.paynetrmatoll.com).

Pay-By-Mail customers who fail to pay their Toll Bills are subject to the following violations policy:

- Failure to pay a Toll Bill within 30 days will result in the vehicle owner receiving a Notice of Toll Violation. An additional \$15 administrative fee is added to the original Toll Bill.
- Failure to pay a Notice of Toll Violation within 30 days will result in the vehicle owner receiving a Final Notice of Toll Violation. An additional \$15 administrative fee is added to the original Toll Bill.
- Failure to remit payment within 30 days of receiving a Final Notice of Toll Violation will result in the vehicle owner being referred to collections.
- If the collection process is unsuccessful, the vehicle owner may be charged with a misdemeanor.

The additional fees are intended to cover the cost of pursuing unpaid toll bills.

### **About the North East Texas Regional Mobility Authority (NET RMA)**

The NET RMA is an independent government agency created to accelerate the development of transportation projects in North East Texas. Our mission is to implement transportation solutions that will enhance the quality of life and the economic environment in our area. The NET RMA is governed by a 19-member board of directors that represent each of the member counties: Bowie, Kaufman, Cherokee, Gregg,

Harrison, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Wood and Van Zandt. Texas RMAs were made possible through an initiative passed by State Legislature in 2001. The NET RMA was established in October 2004.

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