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Commercial Railroad Car Fee

Last Modified:

The AQI program inspects commercial railroad cars arriving at land ports in the customs territory of the United States from Mexico and Canada.

User fee regulations ([7 CFR 354.3\(a\)](#)) define a commercial railroad car as: “A railroad car used or capable of being used for transporting property for compensation or hire.” Commercial railroad car fee regulations are listed in [7 CFR 354.3\(d\)](#).

The Cost and What It Covers

The current commercial railroad car fee is **\$2.00** per railroad car per crossing or **\$40** per railroad car per calendar year (see [7 CFR 354.3\(d\)](#)). This fee covers the direct and indirect costs of clearing a railroad car, including:

- Reviewing manifests and documentation with incoming cargo
- Targeted, risk-based cargo inspection or clearance
- Inspecting agricultural and agricultural-related commodities, containers, compliant wood packaging material, and packing materials to screen for plant pests and contaminants, ensure compliance with regulations, and determine entry status
- Inspecting railroad cars for contaminants, pests, or invasive species
- Identifying pests found during inspection

- Monitoring the storage and removal of regulated international garbage from the railroad car to ensure consistency with all regulatory requirements
- Safeguarding shipments pending APHIS' decision on treatment or final disposition
- Issuing phytosanitary permits for commodities moved by rail

Exemptions

Some categories of commercial railroad cars are exempt from paying an AQI user fee (see [7 CFR 354.3\(d\)\(2\)](#)).

Paying the Fee

As described in [7 CFR 354.3\(d\)](#), the commercial railroad car user fee can be paid for each arrival or prepaid for the calendar year. APHIS personnel run periodic audits to verify compliance.

Reimbursable Overtime Services

Customers may request and receive AQI services associated with activities typically covered by an AQI user fee outside the normal tour of duty of the employee(s) providing the requested service. In such cases, overtime charges may be assessed as outlined in [7 CFR 354.1](#).

APHIS Reimbursable Overtime Services

Refer to the [APHIS Reimbursable Overtime Services](#) web page for additional information including how to pay the reimbursable overtime fee.

CBP Reimbursable Overtime Services

Any requests for agriculture reimbursable overtime will be made in accordance with CBP port policy. Please contact your [local CBP Port of Entry](#).

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