


MEMO

TO: Ald. Thomas Nardelli

FROM:  Jim Owczarski, Legislative Research Analyst

DATE: April 26, 2001

RE: Comparison of City and suburban ambulance conveyance rates

The following is in response to your request for a comparison of the rates charged by the City and its suburbs for Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance conveyance. As you are aware, ambulance charges are actually the sum of several smaller fees. In the case of the City, pursuant to s. 75-15-14 of the code, these fees are:

- ◆ **BLS ambulance rate:** Currently set at \$252.55, this rate applies to both residents and non-residents. It should be noted that most other communities in Milwaukee County have a different rate for resident and non-resident conveyances.
- ◆ **Oxygen charge:** Currently set at \$33.
- ◆ **Charges for Disposable Items:** Referred to as "ancillary charges" by the code, the City does not have a flat cost for these items, but instead itemizes for them on a use basis. West Allis is the only other community in Milwaukee County that itemizes as Milwaukee does.
- ◆ **Mileage Charge:** Currently set at \$6.74 per mile.

Attached, please find 6 charts comparing the rates charged for the above-mentioned services in the City of Milwaukee and in 17 surrounding communities. The data supplied is based on a phone survey, conducted April 25-26, 2001, and relies on conversations with supervisory personnel within the departments, account clerks responsible for billing ambulance charges or representatives of the billing companies to which several of these communities have contracted their ambulance billing operations. Please note that the North Shore Fire Department, which has adopted a uniform rate schedule for the communities it serves, actually represents 7 municipalities, namely Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay.

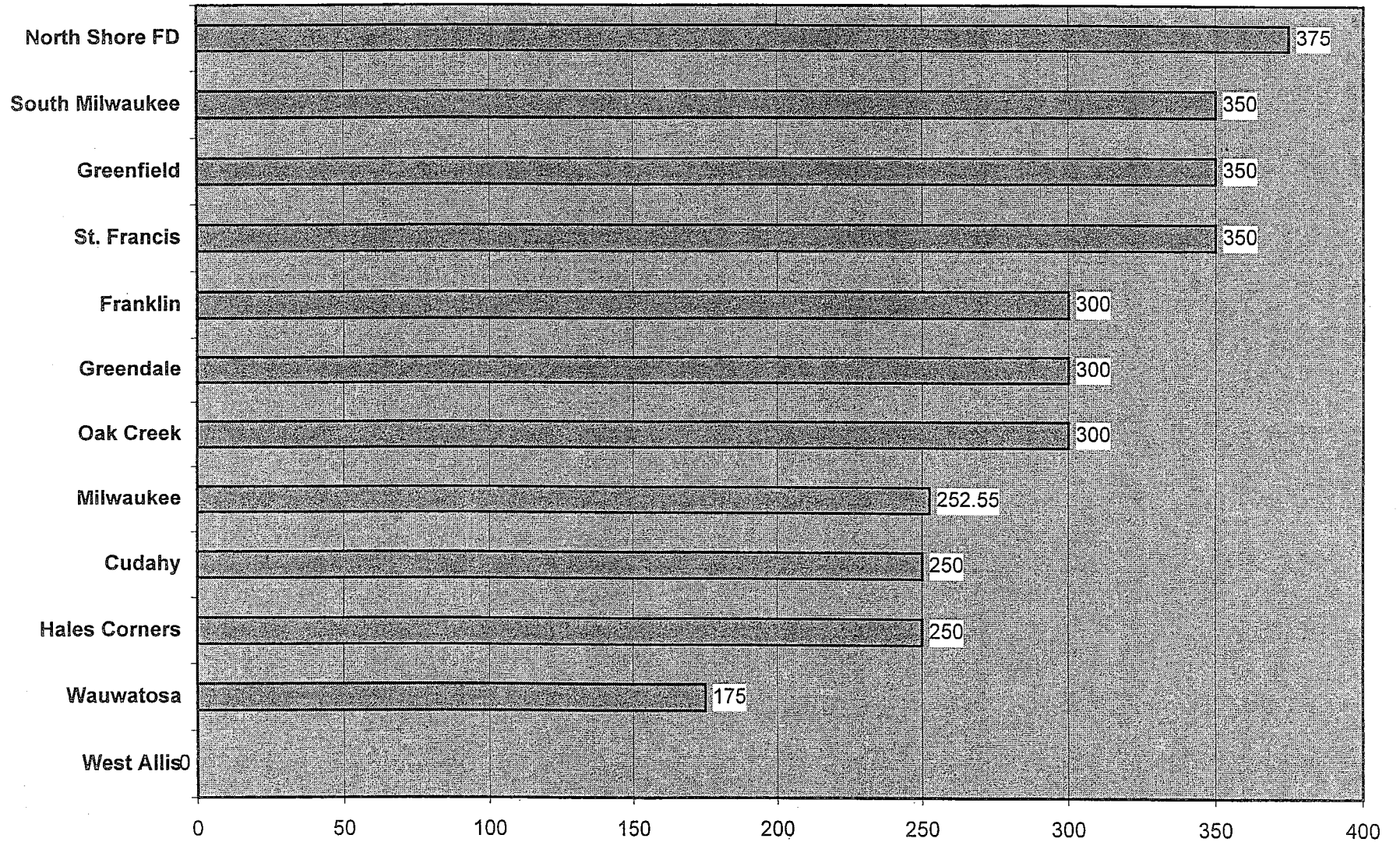
Some notes regarding particular charts are in order:

- ◆ **Resident BLS Conveyance Rates:** West Allis has no BLS conveyance charge for residents.
- ◆ **Disposables:** As was mentioned earlier, Milwaukee and West Allis do not have flat fees for disposables, although they both charge for them, opting instead to charge on an itemized use basis. St. Francis does not charge for consumables. Hales Corners charges for only one disposable, namely a neck collar for which it charges \$15.
- ◆ **Mileage:** Hales Corners actually charges a flat \$15 rate, regardless of mileage. All others listed charges are per loaded mile driven.
- ◆ **“Typical” Conveyance:** Again, given the many different types of conveyances, there is a certain hesitancy to designate any one as “typical”. That said, the attached chart assumes the conveyance of a resident, with the use of oxygen, and allows for 3 miles’ worth of mileage charges. As for disposables, the amount allocated to both Milwaukee and West Allis is the average of the other communities’ charge for these items.

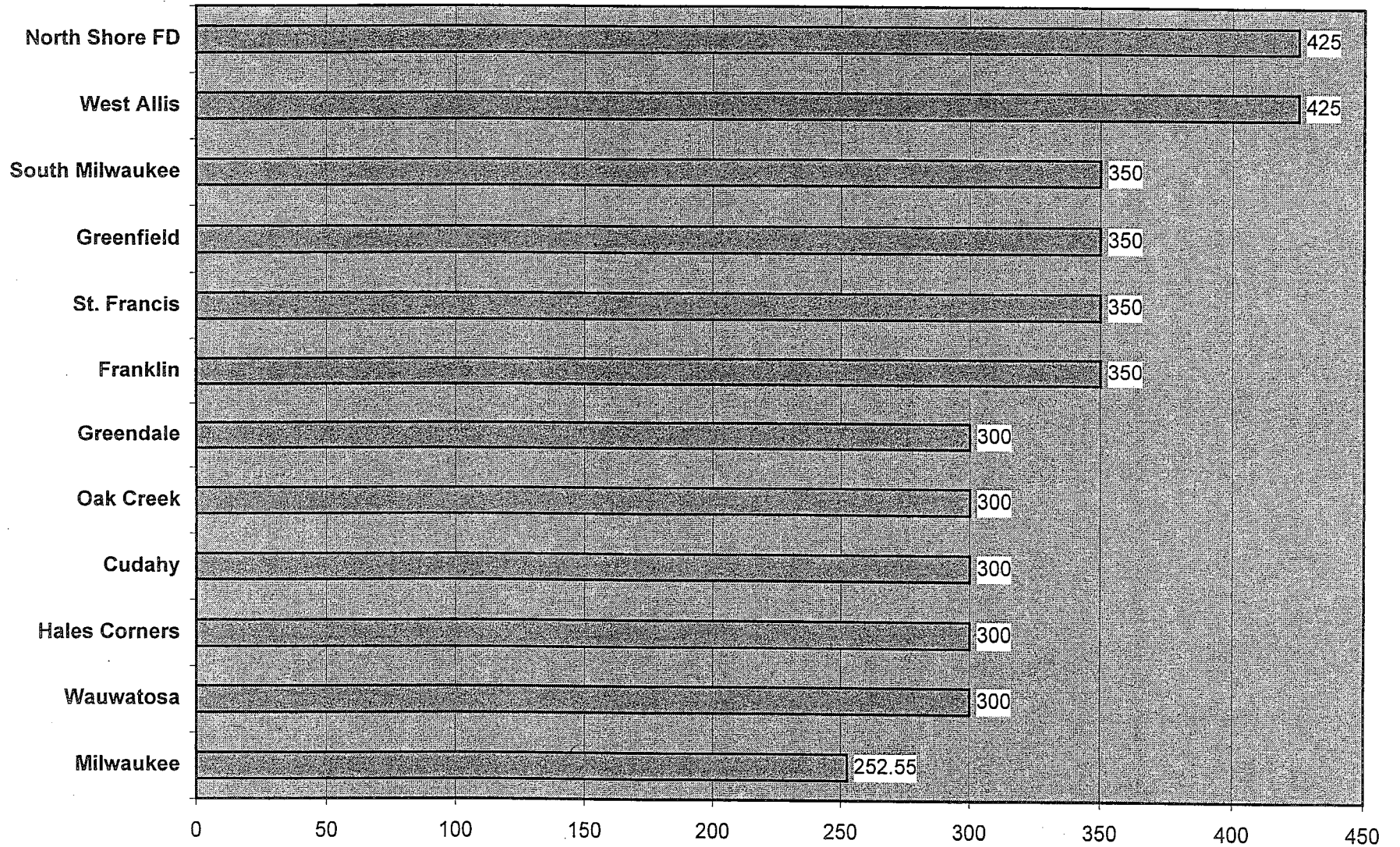
As you can see on the **“Typical” Conveyance** chart (the last in the attached pack), the cost of a typical ambulance ride in Milwaukee County ranges from a low of \$57.50 (West Allis) to a high of \$499 (North Shore Fire Department). The City of Milwaukee charges \$334.77.

Should you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience. I am at extension x2299.

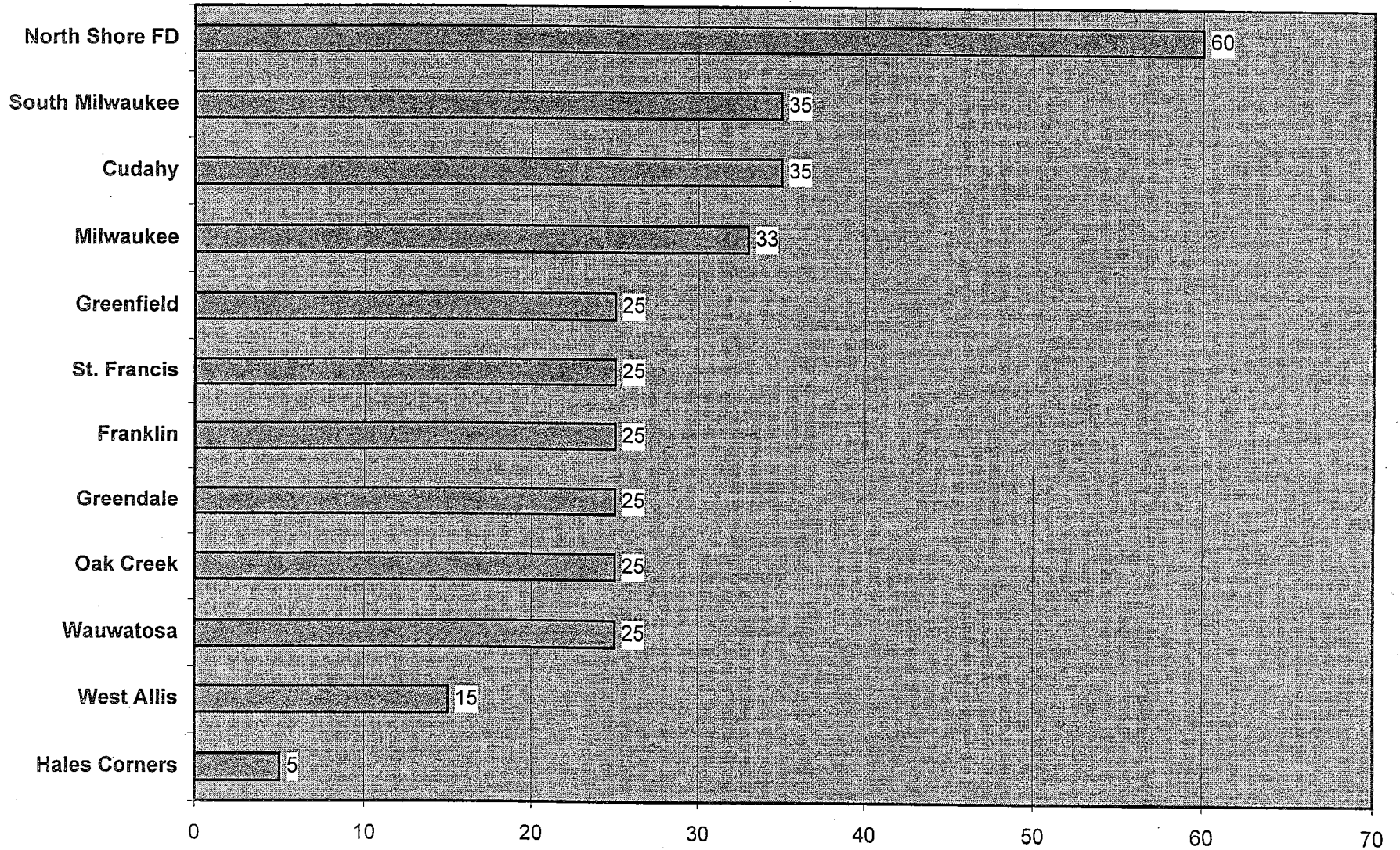
Resident BLS Conveyance Rates (04/25/01)



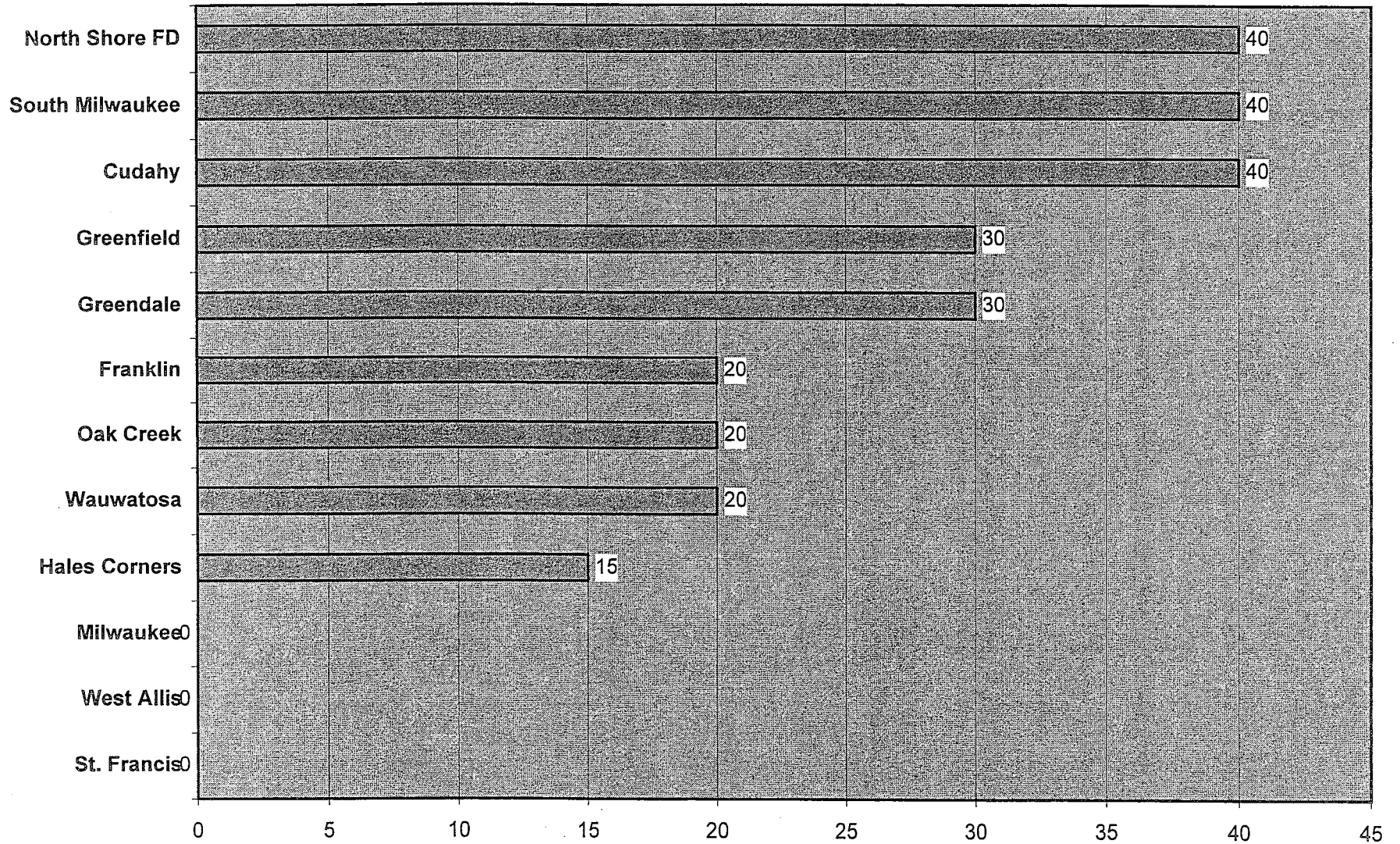
Non-Resident BLS Conveyance Rates (04/24/01)



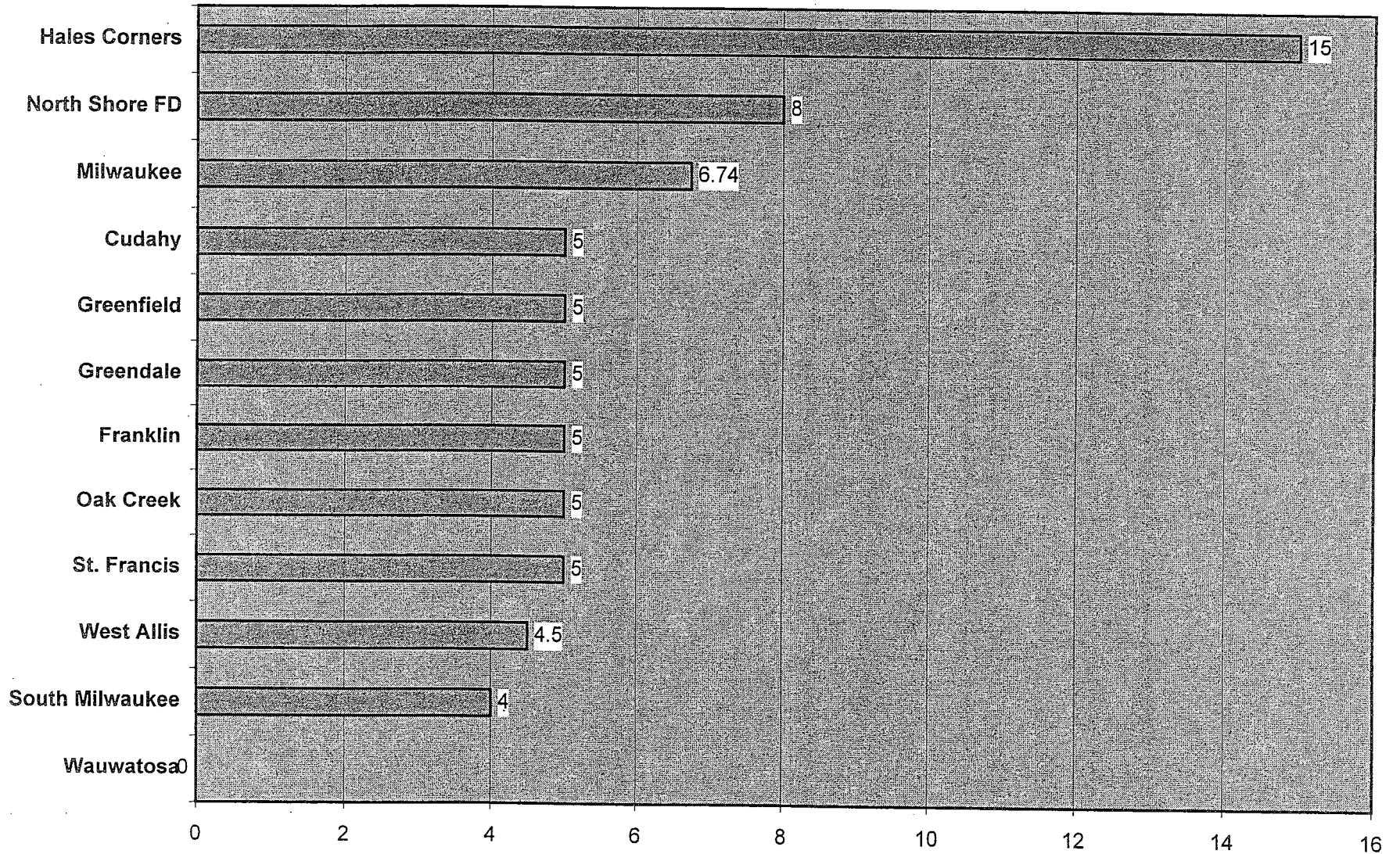
Oxygen Charge (4/25/01)



Charge for Disposables (4/25/01)



Mileage Charge (4/25/01)



Total Charge for "Typical" Resident Ambulance Conveyance (04/25/01)

