

# *AIRLINE BAGGAGE FEES*

## **Trap**

Due to a family emergency, Bill and Linda had to get the next flight to Denver. Bill checked the airline's Web site and booked two seats but failed to review four pages of information regarding baggage fees. Since they were only taking a carry-on and one large suitcase Bill wasn't concerned. The next morning, while checking in, their large suitcase weighed 74 pounds. The ticket agent asked them for the normal \$20 checked baggage fee plus an additional \$50 overweight fee. Seventy dollars for one suitcase?

## **Tips**

Airlines are finding new and creative ways to increase their bottom line. Charging for baggage is just one of them. Before packing your suitcase, consider these tips:

- Checked baggage fees vary from airline to airline. European carriers allow up to 45 pounds and North American airlines up to 70 pounds (although some domestic carriers may have a 40 pound limit). In addition, some airlines may charge an additional fee for carry-on baggage that won't fit under the seat. Take your time before booking your flight to avoid problems at the gate by reading the disclosures carefully.
- Use your bathroom scales to weigh your bag before heading to the airport.
- If you are told your bag is overweight, offer to quickly repack some items into your carry-on or travel partner's bag. Take a coat out and carry it over your arm.
- Along with the weight of your bag, make sure the suitcase dimensions do not exceed the airline's limitations. Check with the airline for specifications.
- With some airlines, it can actually cost less to check in an additional piece of luggage than to pay for one that is overweight. If this is the case, bring a collapsible "soft bag" or ask the agent for a box.
- Plan/Pack carefully and get to the ticket counter minimum of one hour before your flight.

**For more information, call Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at 561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray residents call 1-888-852-7362 toll free)**