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Chief's Corner

By Chief Ben Andrews



EMS Levy Renewal

During the 2019 November election, Clallam County Fire District 3 (District) will seek voter approval for a 10 year renewal of the current Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy. This is a renewal, not a new (or addition-al) tax. The EMS Levy renewal would begin in 2021 and sunset in 2030. If the voters approve this Levy renewal, it authorizes the continuation of the EMS levy at a rate not to exceed \$0.50 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation. This Levy was originally adopted in 1999 and renewed in 2009. Revenue from this levy can only be used to maintain EMS. The vast majority of the work the District does is EMS related. In 2018, the District responded to 7464 calls for service. Of those calls, 6,273 were EMS related; 84% of the District's total call volume. This renewal is vital for the District to be able to continue to provide the high level of care citizens have become accustomed to. If not renewed, the Levy will expire in 2020 and the District will lose approximately 25% of its total annual revenue.

We look forward to your continued support during this election!

Additional information can be found on our website at www.ccf3.org. I also am personally available to answer questions at (360) 683-4242 or bandrews@ccfd3.org.

Making the Most of Tax Dollars

Clallam County Fire District 3 (District) is primarily funded through two property Tax Levies:

- The General Tax Levy, which, thanks to the citizens of Eastern Clallam County, was passed in November of 2018; provides 75% of the District's annual budget.
- The EMS Levy, which is on the ballot this November for renewal; provides 25% of the District's annual budget.

District staff are and continue to be very budget conscious stretching valuable tax dollars as far as possible. An example of this is a recent grant award the District received for radio replacement. The District relies heavily on radios to communicate internally and with other first response organizations. Our current radios have lived past their useful lives, therefore in an effort to conserve funds the District applied for and received an Assistance for Firefighting Grant (AFG) from FEMA in the amount of \$321,576. The District's cost-share of the AFG grant is 10% or \$32,158 for a grand total of \$353,734. Grant funds cannot substitute for regular funding, but allow the District to maximize tax dollars received.



Insurance Rating Information

The District was re-rated by the Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) in May 2019. The WSRB rates fire department capability using a scale of one to ten, with one being the highest (best) rating a fire department can receive. Intended to reflect a fire department's performance capability, the higher the rating, the more capable a community is of providing fire prevention and suppression services.

WSRB ratings are one of the many factors insurance carriers consider when determining insurance premium rates for home and business owners. How this rating impacts premiums, if at all, varies from insurance carrier to insurance carrier.

TIP: When shopping for homeowners insurance, ask about the impact of the WSRB rating for your home.

The District's protection class rating for homes and businesses located more than five miles from a fire station is Class Nine. Areas outside the City and within 5 miles of a station are rated at a Class Five. Areas within the City of Sequim are rated at a Class Four. The Diamond Point station received a Class Nine rating due to this station currently only having four volunteer firefighters living within five road miles of the station. Once the number of volunteer firefighters is above six, the rating will return to a Class Five.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are a vital part of our organization. Volunteer Firefighters, EMT's and support personnel are needed to ensure the District can continue to deliver a high level of service. To become a volunteer, please visit our website at www.ccfid3.org and submit a volunteer interest card or stop by the headquarters station located at 323 N. 5th Ave. in Sequim.