



Clallam County Fire District 3

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Clallam County Fire District 3 makes local tax dollars stretch further *Grants, apparatus replacement plan, and gently-used equipment are key*

SEQUIM, WASH. – Clallam County Fire District 3 has qualified for a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to replace the breathing apparatus used by firefighters. The grant for \$541,000 comes as a relief as the Fire District did not have the funds to replace the equipment.

“We are very thankful to have received this award,” said Fire Chief Ben Andrews. “Grants don’t replace regular funding, but every bit helps – especially now.”

Chief Andrews is referring to the agency’s ability to respond to an increased demand for service without adequate and sustainable revenue. Call volumes have increased to the point where Clallam 3 is dedicating almost everything it has to daily operations. It predicts that the cost to provide service will exceed revenue in 2019 and start draining reserves to maintain current service levels.

And, qualifying for grants doesn’t always mean you can accept them. The Fire District had to turn down another grant for emergency personnel last year because of how the matching funds requirement would have impacted it financially.

“The fact that we qualify for these grants demonstrates a real financial need,” said Chief Andrews. “That’s why we’re asking our community to consider a levy lid lift in November.”

Voters originally approved a general levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value in 2004. Since that time, the general levy has fallen to \$1.26. If approved, the 24-cent lid lift would be approximately an additional \$5 per month for the owner of a \$250,000 home. Funding can be used to provide matching funds for future grant applications.

The Fire District is revising its Apparatus Replacement Plan that keeps emergency vehicles like fire engines and ambulances in service longer so long as they remain safe and reliable. The plan calls for regular maintenance and reducing the amount each piece of apparatus is used as it ages. By extending the usable lives of fire engines and ambulances, Clallam 3 hopes to avoid approximately \$1 million in ambulance replacement costs over the next 10 years.

Clallam 3 also saves money by purchasing gently-used equipment from surplus property auctions or larger departments. The Fire District just saved around \$3,000 by purchasing a used mobile light plant for scene lighting during large-scale overnight incidents and training drills. It’s a great way to stretch the Fire District’s resources further, as long as the used items meet its strict safety standards. Clallam 3 also sells its own surplus equipment to achieve the highest market value.

“We actively look for ways to make local tax dollars go further,” said Chief Andrews. “This is part of being good stewards of the public’s resources.”

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Since 1914 residents of Clallam County have volunteered their time and financial support to provide emergency services for the greater Sequim community. Today Clallam County Fire District 3 provides a 24-hour fire and emergency medical response to 30,000 people with a combination of volunteer, part-time, and full-time personnel. We respond to an average of 7,300 emergency calls per year, and appreciate the support from our community.