



1185 Tucker Road  
Hood River, Oregon 97031

**Election Day is May 21, 2024**

*Please remember to vote.*

## *West Side Fire Replacement Levy Information*

### ***Local Option 5-Year Replacement Levy on May 2024 Ballot***

*West Side Rural Fire Protection District is asking voters to improve emergency response services in the District by levying 97¢ per \$1,000 assessed value for five years beginning in 2025-26. The levy would replace the current 50¢ per \$1,000 local option levy.*

This newsletter answers questions about the replacement levy, which will be on the May 21, 2024 ballot.

#### **What is the levy for?**

The levy would provide funding to ensure at least 1 fully-trained/licensed firefighter/EMT is on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently at least 1 firefighter/EMT is on duty

daily 7 am to 5 pm. During evenings & nights, the District relies on volunteers.



## How is the District currently staffed?

Currently the District employs 3 individuals - 2 firefighter/EMTs & 1 Chief who is also a firefighter/paramedic. This staffing allows for at least 1 firefighter/EMT to be on duty daily from 7 am until 5 pm.

Evenings & nights, when about 60% of calls occur, the District relies on volunteers, who may also assist during the day. The District currently has about 40 volunteers. However, while volunteers provide vital support services, most of these individuals are not trained firefighters or EMTs. Currently only 2 are trained firefighters. None are EMTs.



## What happens if the levy is approved?

Two additional fully-trained firefighter/EMTs would be hired if the levy is approved. This additional staffing would result in:

▶ **24/7 coverage by at least 1 fully-trained firefighter/EMT.**

▶ **Faster response times.** Because a firefighter/EMTs would be on duty 24/7, residents would experience faster response to both medical & fire emergencies, especially during evenings & nights.

▶ **Better cardiac arrest survival rates.** Time is critical during these types of events. Because a fully-trained firefighter/EMT would be available to respond to calls 24/7, cardiac arrest survival rates should improve.

## How would the levy impact my property tax bill?

The proposed 97¢ per \$1,000 of assessed (not market) value is an increase of 47¢ over the current levy rate. For a District-average home with an assessed value of \$218,000, the cost of the replacement levy would be approximately \$211 a year, or \$17.58 a month. This is a \$102

per year or \$8.50 per month increase over the current levy.

## What happens if the levy does not pass?

The current levy expires in 2025. If a new levy is not approved, the District would need to reduce current staffing from 3 to 1 firefighter/EMT & increase its reliance on volunteers. However, as people's lifestyles have changed over the past decades & the skills needed to provide emergency medical & firefighting services have increased, the District, like fire districts nationwide, are finding it harder to recruit, train, & retain volunteers.

## What services does West Side Fire provide?

West Side Fire is the first responder for medical emergencies (both basic & advanced life support) & fires (structural & wildland). Fire prevention, fire investigation, public education, rescue, hazardous materials, & disaster preparedness services are also provided.



## How can I find out more about the levy & West Side Fire District?

To learn more about the District, the levy, or what you can do to prevent fires & help save lives, visit us at:



1185 Tucker Road  
Hood River, Oregon 97031  
Station phone: 541 386-1550  
[www.westsidefire.com](http://www.westsidefire.com)

Chief Administrative Officer, Doug Kelly  
*Emergency: Call 9-1-1*