



Spokane Valley Fire Department

Levy Lid Lift

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is on your August 2nd Ballot?

SVFD is asking our voters to consider restoring our Regular Fire Levy rate to the previously voted \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This is called a Levy Lid Lift. The current fire levy rate has fallen to \$1.0457 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The last time voters were asked to restore this fire levy was in 2007; 15 years ago.

2. What does a “Yes” vote mean?

SVFD will be able to ensure sustainable funding for:

- Hiring of additional Firefighter EMTs and Firefighter Paramedics.
- Maintain and Enhance Firefighter and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Training. EMS responses account for 82% of our total incidents.
- Continued replacement of aging equipment, aging first responder vehicles, and aging staff vehicles.
- Maintain and work to improve our current Washington State Rating Bureau (WSRB) Insurance Rating.

3. What will this cost?

- If approved by voters, the Levy Lid Lift would restore the Regular Fire Levy to \$1.50 per \$1000 of assessed property value and cost \$0.45 cents per \$1,000 (or approximately \$15.14 per month for the owner of a \$400,000 home).
- RCW 84.55 limits the Fire District to a 1% revenue increase per year. Due to the 1% limit, most taxpayers are paying less to the Regular Fire Levy each year as property values increase. The amount collected by the Fire District is not keeping up with the cost of inflation.

4. Why is SVFD asking for a Levy Lid Lift?

- SVFD has seen significant increases in emergency responses with more than a 44% increase** over the last seven years (2015-2021). The unbalance of levy funding, increase in 911 call volume, and increase in operating expenses are why we are asking our voters to consider this Levy Lid Lift.
- SVFD currently funds roughly 61% of our daily operations and our capital replacement needs through our Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Levy. The Levy Lid Lift is for our permanent Regular Fire Levy. Currently, this levy accounts for roughly 39% of our overall budget. This is a dangerous position to put our fire department in because SVFD is too dependent on funding from a non-permanent special levy (M&O). **The Levy Lid Lift will help change this position and make us less dependent on our current M&O Levy. The result will be a more financially secure fire department** able to continue services to our community in the manner they have become accustomed.
- Levies are the primary funding source for fire and emergency services** provided in the Fire District. Levies pay for staffing, equipment, operating expenses, structure and wildland fire suppression, advanced life support-paramedics, fire prevention, and other essential services to our citizens.

5. What Does a “No” Vote Mean?

If the Levy Lid Lift does not pass in the August 2, 2022, Election SVFD will re-apply in the November Election Ballot. If it does not pass there, SVFD will continue normal operations. However, SVFD will ask for more funding in 2023 for the M&O special levy for the 2024 – 2027 cycle. The M&O Levy requires a supermajority (60%) to pass. If the M&O Levy does not pass, in conjunction with a no-pass Levy Lid Lift, then there will be significant changes to the department, such as reduction in staffing, closure of fire stations, loss of advanced life support-paramedics, and emergency services in general.

6. What is Spokane Valley Fire Department (SVFD) doing to make tax dollars stretch further?

SVFD has strong management and financial practices, passing all State of Washington financial audits. The district is always seeking grant opportunities to supplement daily operations.

7. Does Spokane Valley Fire Department (SVFD) receive money from the state or county?

No. SVFD is separate from Spokane County or State of Washington governance and receives no money from them or any sales tax. Levies are the funding sources for fire and emergency services provided within the Fire District.

For more information, visit www.spokanevalleyfire.com or email LevyCommittee@spokanevalleyfire.com