



Spokane Valley Fire Department

Levy Lid Lift

Information

The Spokane Valley Fire Department Board of Fire Commissioners unanimously voted to place a multi-year Levy Lid Lift on the August Primary Election ballot. If approved by voters, a Levy Lid Lift allows the Fire District to restore the levy rate, previously approved by voters in 2007, for emergency services, to \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Collection would be in 2023, allowing for the five succeeding years to be authorized at 1% or the percentage allowed by the consumer price index (CPI) increase not to exceed 6% as reported each June.

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.

What does a "Yes" vote mean?

SVFD will be able to ensure sustainable funding for:

- Hiring of additional Firefighter EMTs and Firefighter Paramedics.
- Maintaining and Enhancing Firefighter and Emergency Medical Response Training. 82% of our response is for EMS incidents.
- Continued replacement of aging equipment, aging first responder vehicles, and aging staff vehicles.
- Maintaining and working towards the improvement of our current Washington State Rating Bureau (WSRB) Insurance Rating.

What will this cost?

1. 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).
2. 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 fire levy each year as property values increase. The amount collected by the Fire District is not keeping up with the cost of inflation.

Why is SVFD asking for a Levy Lid Lift?

1. **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.
2. 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 counts 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.
3. **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.

What Does a "No" Vote Mean for me?

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.



Spokane Valley Fire Department

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What does a Yes Vote Mean? Sustainability.

Through:

- *Hiring more paramedics*
- *Replacing aging equipment & fire trucks*
- *Maintaining neighborhood fire stations*
- *Keeping up with community growth*

Join us for an informational
meeting:

Monday, July 11, 2022
6 p.m.

Visit www.spokanevalleyfire.com
for more information.

VOTE AUGUST 2, 2022



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