



Frederick-Firestone Fire Protection District

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Phone: 303.833.2742

www.fffd.us

Dear Residents and Business Owners:

Frederick-Firestone Fire Protection District (FFFPD) provides 24-hour fire and medical coverage to approximately 36 square miles that include the Towns of Frederick and Firestone, and a small portion of unincorporated Weld County. FFFPD currently serves over 30,000 residents, an increase of more than 660% since 2000. Growth within FFFPD is projected to continue at the rapid rate of 5-7% per year for both Towns. FFFPD's response area and boundaries grow as the Towns grow.

In the past five years, FFFPD's call emergency volume has increased by 50% due to the significant population growth. In 2017, FFFPD responded to approximately 2,500 emergency calls. Nearly 73% of its requests for service last year were related to emergency medical situations and 10% involved motor vehicle accidents. FFFPD also responds to residential, commercial, wildland and vehicle fires, hazardous materials emergencies, specialized rescues and emergency management for large scale incidents, such as the 2013 Flood.

While new home construction generates additional tax dollars, these revenues are not sufficient to address FFFPD's rising costs to meet emergency services demands. To maintain and enhance current service levels, FFFPD needs to add firefighters, paramedics, fire trucks, ambulances and fire stations. FFFPD is currently understaffed by 9 firefighter/paramedics. The apparatus fleet is aging, which includes a 1988 Water Tender and a 1992 Fire Truck that will need replaced. To maintain proper emergency response times and to keep all of its residents within approximately 5 miles of a fire station, an additional three fire stations must be built in the next 10 years. In addition to the cost of constructing a fire station, fire trucks and ambulances must be purchased, and personnel hired for each new station.

The FFFPD Board of Directors wants to make sure the communities it serves are aware of a constitutional provision that is impacting the property tax the voters have authorized FFFPD to assess. The Gallagher Amendment to the Colorado Constitution requires the percentage of property taxes paid by residential property owners in the State to be 45% of the total taxes paid. In every odd year, the Colorado Legislature is required to set the residential assessment rate at a level that will maintain the 45% tax share required by the Colorado Constitution. Due to the steady increase in residential property values across the State, since 1982 the residential assessment rate has been reduced from 21% to 7.96%. Then, in 2017, the Colorado Legislature further reduced the residential assessment rate to 7.2%. This approximate 9% decrease in the residential assessment rate resulted in FFFPD losing \$220,000 in revenue in 2018. Preliminary projections indicate the Colorado Legislature will further reduce the residential assessment rate to 6.11% in 2019, which will result in another 15% decrease and another approximately \$350,000 loss in property tax revenue.

The FFFPD Board wants to inform its communities that the Board is evaluating whether to conduct an election in November 2018 to seek voter approval to increase its mill levy to help fund the personnel, equipment and stations needed to maintain and enhance the fire and emergency services FFFPD provides its communities. FFFPD's mill levy has been unchanged since 2006 when its population was only a little over 14,000 residents. The FFFPD Board also is evaluating whether to seek voter approval to increase its mill levy to keep property tax revenues it will otherwise lose as a result of the Gallagher Amendment forcing further reductions in the residential assessment rate. In order to avoid collecting too much tax revenue, FFFPD would be required to reduce its mill levy should the Gallagher Amendment ever require the residential assessment rate to be increased. You may hear this concept called "de-Gallagherizing".

The FFFPD Board and I encourage your input on these important issues. The Board will make a final decision this August on whether to place measures on the ballot in November 2018. Please contact me with your input or if you have further questions. Email: jyoung@fffd.us or Phone: 303-833-2742.

Sincerely yours in service,

Jeremy A. Young EFO, CFO
Fire Chief



**2018
Planning
Update**