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Benton County Fire District 4 Board adopts 2026 budget
Commissioners begin discussions about future funding needs

WEST RICHLAND, Wash. – The Benton County Fire District 4 Board of Fire Commissioners has approved the District’s 2026 operating budget, following a series of public meetings held last fall.

The adopted budget maintains current levels of fire and emergency medical service while addressing rising operational costs and ongoing demands on the District. Like fire agencies across the region, Benton County Fire District 4 continues to face increasing call volumes, higher costs for staffing, equipment, training, and facilities, along with growing expectations for emergency response and community risk reduction.

“The adopted budget supports our current operations while planning responsibly for the future,” Fire Chief Paul Carlyle said.

As part of its long-term financial planning, the Board of Fire Commissioners has begun discussing potential options to ensure the District can continue to meet service demands in the years ahead. Those conversations may include consideration of asking voters to approve a fire levy lid lift in 2026. No decisions have been made.

The public is welcome to attend all Board of Fire Commissioners meetings, which are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 5 p.m. at Station 420, located at 2604 Bombing Range Rd. in West Richland.

“The Board is focused on transparency and long-range planning,” said Board Chair Garrett Goodwin. “We want to make sure our community understands the challenges facing emergency services and has opportunities to be part of those conversations.”

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Benton County Fire District 4 provides fire and emergency medical service to approximately 25,000 people over 52 square miles. While the service area includes the city of West Richland and its immediate

unincorporated areas, BCFD4 is a separate taxing district. BCFD4 firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics respond to over 2,350 calls annually, over two-thirds of which are EMS-related. Visit www.bcf4.org.