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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**BCFD4 commissioners approve August ballot measure**  
*Proposed levy lid lift to maintain emergency response as costs rise*

WEST RICHLAND, Wash. – The Benton County Fire District 4 Board of Fire Commissioners voted this week to place a fire levy lid lift on the Aug. 4, 2026 primary election ballot.

If approved by voters, the measure would help the district hire six firefighters, replace an aging fire engine, and strengthen water rescue and fire and life safety prevention programs as demand for emergency services continues to grow.

The proposal would restore the district's fire levy to \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The rate has gradually declined to about \$1.31 due to state limits on annual property tax revenue growth.

The proposed adjustment of \$0.19 per \$1,000 of assessed value would cost the owner of a \$350,000 home about \$5.54 per month, or \$66.50 per year.

“Fire and EMS services are something we all depend on,” said Fire Chief Paul Carlyle. “This proposal is about maintaining reliable emergency response and making sure we have the staffing, equipment and training needed to serve the community as it continues to grow.”

Benton County Fire District 4 provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 25,000 residents across 52 square miles. Firefighters, EMTs and paramedics responded to 2,350 calls last year, about 69 percent of which were medical emergencies.

District leaders say rising demand for service and higher operating costs are putting increasing pressure on the district's budget. In the past year alone, cybersecurity upgrades increased 251 percent, parts and maintenance for emergency apparatus rose 220 percent, and firefighter protective equipment increased 129 percent.

Additional information about the proposal is available at [bcfd4.org/levy-info](http://bcfd4.org/levy-info). Fire Chief Carlyle plans to meet with community groups this spring and hold public Q&A sessions this summer.

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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 2,350 calls annually, 69 percent of which are EMS-related. Visit [www.bcf4.org](http://www.bcf4.org).*