



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Benton County Fire District 4 offers Q&A sessions on levy lid lift
Residents encouraged to learn more before returning Aug. 4 ballots

WEST RICHLAND, Wash. – Benton County Fire District 4 is inviting residents to attend one of two public information sessions before the Aug. 4 election to learn more about the proposed fire levy lid lift. The proposal would restore the district's voter-approved fire levy rate after it declined through levy erosion, helping the district keep pace with rising costs and continued community growth.

Residents may attend on Thursday, July 23, at 6 p.m., or Saturday, July 25, at 10 a.m. Both sessions will be held at Station 420, 2604 Bombing Range Rd. in West Richland. Fire district leadership will explain how emergency services are funded, why the measure is on the ballot and what it would mean for emergency response throughout the district.

Six years ago, voters approved the district's fire levy at \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Since then, Washington's levy laws have limited annual revenue growth while rising property values have steadily reduced the levy rate to \$1.31—a process known as levy erosion. The proposed levy lid lift would simply restore the rate voters previously approved.

If approved, the funding would help cover increasing operating costs, hire six firefighters, replace an aging fire engine, and strengthen the district's water rescue and fire and life safety prevention programs. The measure would cost the owner of a \$350,000 home approximately \$5.54 per month, or \$66.50 per year.

"Our goal is to restore the voter-approved levy rate so we can continue providing the level of service our community expects," Fire Chief Paul Carlyle said. "We invite residents to come learn more, hear the facts and decide for themselves."

Residents who cannot attend one of the sessions can learn more about the proposal at bcfd4.org/levy-info/.

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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.