

House Calls



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9

SUMMER 2012

INSIDE

PROP. 1

WHAT IS EMS?

FIRST AID & CPR
CLASSES

Look for your
ballot in the
mail starting
July 20th.

Your Vote
Counts!

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Spokane County Fire District 9 has been proudly serving north Spokane since 1948

YOU, THE CITIZENS CREATED THE DISTRICT TO PROVIDE FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AND TO ENSURE YOU OBTAIN REASONABLE FIRE INSURANCE RATES.

Today, Fire District 9 serves a population of about 45,000 across 122 diverse square miles in north Spokane County.

We understand how much you value the peace of mind it brings to know trained help is just minutes away. With more than 160 career and volunteer personnel operating from nine neighborhood fire stations, the District provides protection for your home and property as well as advanced emergency medical services.

In addition, Fire District 9 has earned an excellent fire insurance class rating, saving you hundreds of dollars in homeowner's insurance every year. We take our responsibility seriously, and we consider it an honor to serve you.

Every two years, we bring a Maintenance and Operations (M&O) levy before you to request renewal. That gives you the chance to make sure we're held accountable for how we manage your fire district. And for 24 years, you've expressed your approval for the job we do and passed the continuation of the levy. We appreciate your continued support.

YOU'LL FIND A M&O LEVY RENEWAL FOR 2013 AND 2014 ON YOUR AUGUST BALLOT.
LOOK INSIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION.



THE DISTRICT HAS FACED
DECLINING REVENUES DUE TO
DECLINING PROPERTY VALUES THE
LAST 4 YEARS.

RECOGNIZING THE CURRENT
TOUGH ECONOMY, THE DISTRICT
REQUESTED \$623,000 LESS THAN
WHAT VOTERS HAD APPROVED FOR
SPECIAL LEVY REVENUE FOR 2012.

THE DISTRICT PAID OFF ITS LAST
REMAINING BOND A YEAR EARLY IN
ORDER TO SAVE TAXPAYERS.

*Please remember
to vote.*

What Prop. 1, the Replacement M&O Levy Ballot Measure, Means to You

FUNDING FOR SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9 COMES SOLELY

FROM PROPERTY TAXES. The regular property tax levy generates about 40% of our revenue, and an annual M&O levy – approved by the voters – generates the remainder. Revenue from the regular levy supports the District's basic fire services with our volunteer personnel, while the M&O levy supports 24/7 career staffing, advanced life support (paramedic) and emergency medical services. Together, these funding sources support the existing level of service district-wide.

The current M&O levy expires on December 31, 2012, and the proposed M&O levies will replace the expiring levy and provide funding for 2013 and 2014. These annual M&O levies are for specific dollar amounts so they will not increase if assessed property values increase. Instead, any further increase in assessed value will result in a reduction of your tax rate for the M&O levy.

You'll find the 2013 and 2014 M&O levy renewals on your August 7 ballot.

THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Why are the M&O levy renewals on the August ballot?

We chose to present the 2013 and 2014 M&O levy renewals on the August 7 primary ballot to help achieve the necessary 40 percent election validation requirement. In addition, by sharing the ballot with other election issues, we reduce our election expenses.

How much will the proposed M&O levies cost me?

Homeowners will pay an estimated* \$1.73 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (\$260 on a \$150,000 home) in 2013 and \$1.77 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (\$266 on a \$150,000 home) in 2014. The current 2012 rate is \$1.75 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. (\$263 on a \$150,000 home.)

Is this a new tax?

No. The M&O levies are for one year each (2013 and 2014), and they would replace expiring levies for maintenance and operation costs of your fire and emergency medical protection services.

Does it really matter if I vote?

Yes. In order for the District to continue serving you with existing fire and medical services, the M&O levies must pass with a 60 percent supermajority. In addition, to validate the election voter participation must equal at least 40 percent of the number of voters who participated in the general election last November.

Who do I call if I have questions?

We'd be pleased to talk to you about the proposed M&O levies. You can reach the District administration office at 466-4602.



WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT OF THE M&O LEVIES OVER THE LAST 24 YEARS AND WE DON'T TAKE THAT SUPPORT FOR GRANTED, ESPECIALLY IN THESE TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES.

It's important that we communicate significant impacts a levy failure would have on current levels of emergency service:

- Elimination of half of our 24/7 staffed stations
- 60% revenue loss to the Fire District in 2013 and 2014
- Increased risk to public safety
- Increased property insurance costs due to decreased service level
- Reduction in 24/7 career staffing
- Elimination of paramedic (advanced life) services
- Longer response times
- Fewer responders

*Because the levies are for an exact dollar amount, the tax rate (cost per \$1,000 of assessed valuation) may vary depending on how properties within the District are appraised by the County Assessor's office.

What is EMS and what does it mean to me?

WHEN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) IS DISCUSSED, WE OFTEN USE THE TITLES PARAMEDIC AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT). We also use the acronyms ALS and BLS. What is the difference between ALS and BLS, paramedics and EMTs?

BLS IS AN ACRONYM FOR BASIC LIFE SUPPORT. The basic life support system is comprised of EMTs who have completed more than 300 hours of classroom and practical education in trauma care, cardiac and stroke care, CPR, advanced first aid, child birth and basic medication administration.

EMT'S ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE ENTIRE EMS SYSTEM. Their skills and abilities are essential to a positive medical outcome. All of the fire district's career personnel and nearly all volunteer fire personnel are trained to at least the EMT level.

ALS IS AN ACRONYM FOR ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT. The ALS system is comprised of paramedics who have received more than 3,000 hours of training in aggressive cardiac life support, pediatric life support, severe trauma and more than 200 other life-threatening emergency medical conditions. Paramedics can administer more than 30 advanced medications and medical procedures. They work to orchestrate and direct medical operations at the emergency medical scene.



More than 70 percent of the emergency calls for the fire district are for EMS related incidents. Due to this common fact we operate ALS engine companies 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Each ALS engine is staffed with EMT's and at least one paramedic. In urban and suburban areas we may send just one ALS engine. In rural areas we will send a BLS and ALS engine as part of a tiered response. This allows EMT's to arrive on scene quickly and then support paramedics when they arrive.

MORE THAN 70 PERCENT OF THE EMERGENCY CALLS FOR THE FIRE DISTRICT ARE FOR EMS RELATED INCIDENTS.

So we have talked about what we do for you, now let's talk about what you can do to help us if we have to respond to your house on an EMS call. If possible, assemble any and all medications the patient is currently taking, information about patient allergies, and gather information about medical history. This will help our paramedics form a plan for treatment. You can also attend our CPR and First Aid classes. For more information about our classes, call 466-4602 or visit scfd9.org.



FREE First Aid/CPR & CPR Classes

for Spokane County Fire District 9 Citizens and Businesses

For more information, please call Administration at 466-4602 or visit our website, www.scfd9.org.



House Calls

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HOUSE CALLS is a publication of
Spokane County Fire District 9

Bob Anderson, Chief
Michael R. Atwood, Commissioner
Thomas R. McGarry, Commissioner

If you are a resident of the District and
would like a FREE address post, please contact:
District Administration, 466-4602



KEEP YOUR BARBECUE PLANS FROM GOING UP IN FLAMES

WE LOVE A GOOD BARBECUE AS MUCH AS ANYONE. We just don't think 911 is the best way to get invited. Please stay safe by following these helpful tips:

PREVENT BURNS:

- Do not wear loose clothing.
- Keep a safe distance by using long-handled utensils.
- Establish a 3' radius "cook's zone" to keep kids, pets and others from harms' way.
- Apply lighter fluid ONCE, BEFORE lighting a match.
- In case of burn, cool under running water for 10-15 minutes. If in doubt, call 911.

PREVENT FIRES:

- Never leave barbecue unattended.
- Grill away from flammable vegetation.
- Keep a fire extinguisher close at hand, just in case.
- Do not grill under stairwells, carports, wooden decks or eaves.
- Store used briquettes/ashes AWAY from house, in metal container, doused with water and secured with a tight lid.

HANG STAIN RAGS TO DRY, KEEP YOURSELF IN THE CLEAR

STAINING YOUR DECK THIS SUMMER? Well, before you relax, play it safe by disposing of your rags properly, or you could be setting yourself up for sure-fire disaster.

Did you know as little as 3 ounces of stain on a rag can catch fire if not disposed of properly? And that stain rags can sit for days before igniting?



We've responded to many fires because someone tossed their stain rags in a pile, without a second thought.

Wood stain contains animal and vegetable oils that break down and release heat when contained within a combustible material not adequately ventilated. This heat builds up, causing the rags and anything nearby, to catch fire.

The common safe practice? Soak your stain rags in water and hang to dry outside (NOT in a clothes dryer). However, manufacturers' disposal methods may be different so please read and follow instructions carefully.