



SKAGIT COUNTY
Fire District No. 6



Skagit Co Fire Dist. 6

www.skagitfire6.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Revenue is not keeping up with demand for emergency services

Fire levy lid lift would fund additional personnel to reduce response times

BURLINGTON, WASH. — Skagit County Fire District No. 6 reports call volumes and costs to provide emergency services have increased significantly. Call volumes have increased 102 percent since 2016, and as a result, response times are increasing.

“We rely on part-time and volunteer personnel, and right now, we are struggling to respond to calls with our current staffing levels,” Fire Chief Ed Tjeerdsma said. “Revenue is not keeping up with our community’s demand for services, and we need additional personnel to respond to calls.”

On average, Skagit FD6 responds to 1,200 calls per year – of which 67 percent are for emergency medical service (EMS). Costs to provide service are also going up. For example, the cost to outfit a firefighter with a breathing/oxygen tank and protective gear have doubled along with fuel and medical supplies.

That is why the Board of Fire Commissioners approved a resolution to place a fire levy lid lift on the November 7, 2023, general election ballot.

If approved by voters, the fire levy lid lift will fund:

- Two additional firefighters to reduce response times
- Replace an aging ambulance, breathing/oxygen tanks and protective gear for firefighters
- Renovations to add more sleeping quarters at the fire station to increase 24-hour emergency response coverage

The fire district plans to pay cash for these capital items as opposed to borrowing money which costs taxpayers more in interest payments. These improvements will also maintain or improve the fire district’s risk rating, which is connected to what homeowners pay in insurance premiums.

Skagit FD6 is asking voters for a \$0.35 lid lift to return the fire levy rate to \$1.05 per \$1,000 of assessed property value (the same rate voters approved in 2018). The lid lift would cost the owner of a \$400,000 home an additional \$140 per year or \$11.67 per month.

More information can be found at www.skagitfire6.com. Fire Chief Ed Tjeerdsma welcomes your questions at etjeerdsma@skagitfire6.com or 360-757-2891.

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Skagit County Fire District No. 6 serves 6,800 people over 27 square miles, bordering Farm to Market Road to the west, Highway 20 to the south, District Line Road to the east, and Interstate 5 at Bow Hill Road to the north. The fire district relies on part-time and volunteer emergency personnel who respond to an average 1,200 calls per year – a 102 percent increase since 2016. Of total calls, 67 percent are for emergency medical service (EMS). Skagit FD6 operates under a balanced budget and has passed all independent audits by the state.