

# The Pulse



## PROPOSITION 1 Fire District Funding Measures on the Fall Ballot

Both North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKF&R) and Poulsbo Fire Department (PFD) have funding measures on this fall's general election ballot that, if approved, will provide revenue necessary to maintain levels of service through concurrent growth in emergency response staffing and the capital investments necessary to support them.

By state law, fire protection districts have limited funding options. The districts receive no on-going revenue from federal, state or local governments and operate independently of the city of Poulsbo and Kitsap County. Around three-quarters of the districts' funding comes from local property taxes. The remainder comes from contracts for service, reimbursement from out-of-area wildland and other disaster deployments, and billing to recover costs related to ambulance transports.

Annual increases in tax revenue for fire districts are also limited by state law, which affects the districts' ability to keep pace with inflation and growth in the community. Unless an alternative is approved by local voters, these laws cap growth in tax revenues at 101% of the

highest previous amount plus revenue from new construction. In 2022, new construction produced less than 1/2 of 1% of the districts' combined tax receipts. Annual inflation has averaged more than double the annual 101% cap since 2000, and fire districts' costs are rising faster than revenues.

Typically, fire districts have proposed bond issues for large projects such as station construction. Current economic conditions make it possible to fund both operations and capital investments through the restoration of the regular fire levy.

In the upcoming election, voters will have the opportunity to consider proposals from their fire districts and determine the levels of service that will be funded. For more information about each district's proposal, see inside.

The Pulse, published jointly at least once every year, is one of many cooperative efforts between your two local fire departments:

### **NORTH KITSAP FIRE & RESCUE**

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@nkfandr facebook/nkfire



911 NE Liberty Rd  
Poulsbo, WA 98370  
(360)779-3997  
www.poulsbofire.org  
@poulsbofire facebook/poulsbofire

**Also In This Issue:**  
**Kids Corner**  
**Fire on the Rise in Kitsap**  
**Escape Planning Contest**



# Poulsbo Fire Department

**Kitsap County Fire Protection District No. 18  
(Poulsbo Fire Department)  
Proposition No. 1  
Regular Property Tax Levy Lid Lift  
for Fire Protection  
& Emergency Medical Services**

The Board of Commissioners of Kitsap County Fire Protection District No. 18 (Poulsbo Fire Department) adopted Resolution No. 22-05 (as amended on July 22, 2022) proposing an increase in the fire district's regular property tax levy. To fund fire protection and emergency medical services for six years, this proposition authorizes a maximum levy rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000.00 of assessed valuation for collection in 2023 (and supersedes the lid lift currently in effect for collection years 2023 and 2024) and sets the limit factor for each subsequent year at 100% plus the annual percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (as described in the Resolution) not to exceed 6%, or be less than 1%, whichever is greater. The final year's levy dollar amount would be used to compute limitations for subsequent levies. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes [ ]  
No [ ]

the fire levy rate to \$1.50 will result in a total fire tax rate in 2023 that's just about \$0.16 per \$1,000 higher than in 2022.

In addition to providing the resources necessary to maintain current levels of service, the fire levy lid-lift will also provide funding to increase emergency response capabilities concurrent with growth in the community. This includes the construction and staffing of a new station on the Viking Avenue corridor as called for in the department's strategic plan. This new station will reduce emergency response times to the west side of the City of Poulsbo and the Scandia/Keyport area by several minutes. The new station will also reduce response times throughout the fire district



as the need for units from other stations to respond to this area will decrease, improving their reliability for emergency response. The Poulsbo Fire Department has not added a new fire station since 2005, when the fire station on Pioneer Hill Road was built.

Restoration of the fire levy will cost the owner of the

median home an additional \$176.15 (or \$14.68 per month) in 2023, the measure's first year. In the measure's remaining five years and to ensure that the district can accomplish its stated goals as prices rise, the fire levy would be

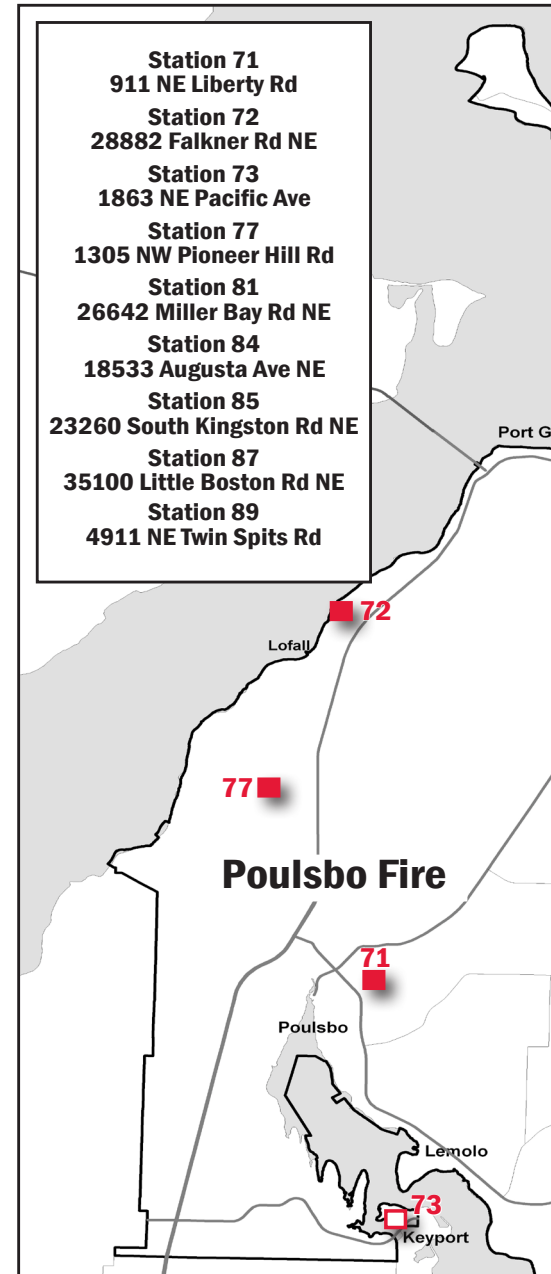
limited to annual increases of 1% or the rate of the consumer price index, not to exceed 6%. The effects on individual taxpayers will vary with increases or decreases to each property's AV.

For more information about the fire levy or the department, see the district's website ([www.poulsbofire.org](http://www.poulsbofire.org)), send an email to Fire Chief Jim Gillard ([jgillard@poulsbofire.org](mailto:jgillard@poulsbofire.org)) or call the district at (360)779-3997.

Poulsbo Fire Department (PFD) placed a measure on the November general election ballot that, if approved, will restore the fire levy rate to the previously-approved level of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation (AV). This levy lid lift was recommended by the department's Citizen Strategic Advisory Board to provide the funding necessary to maintain service levels and implement the adopted capital improvement plan, in lieu of asking the community to approve both a capital bond and fire levy renewal in successive years.



The proposed fire levy lid-lift would allow the district to collect \$1.50 per \$1,000 of AV in 2023. Due to caps on property tax revenue increases, fire district levy rates have decreased as AV has increased. In 2022, PFD is collecting about \$1.28/\$1,000 of AV. Because increasing AV is causing other levy rates to fall, it's estimated that restoration of



**Poulsbo Fire**

**Service Area:** 54 square miles

**Population Served:** 26,897 (2020 OFM Estimate)

**2021 Expense Budget:** \$10.1 million

**2021 Total Calls:** 4,243

**2021 Medical Calls:** 2,993 (71%)

**Civilian Employees:** 6

**Uniformed Employees:** 46

**Volunteers:** 12

**Fire Insurance Rating:** 4

**Fire Chief:** Jim Gillard

# North Kitsap Fire & Rescue



North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKF&R) placed a measure on the November general election ballot that, if approved, will maintain levels of service by restoring the fire levy rate to the previously-approved level of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation (AV),

replacing funding from an expiring special levy. Proposition 1 will also provide resources to finance replacement of the district's outdated Suquamish station, replace aging apparatus and add additional firefighter positions.

The proposed fire levy lid-lift would allow the district to collect \$1.50 per \$1,000 of AV in 2023. Due to caps on property tax revenue increases, fire district levy rates have decreased as AV has increased. In 2022, NKF&R is collecting about \$0.97 per \$1,000 on its fire levy. Its special maintenance and operations levy ends after this year. Because the voter-approved measure is expiring and increasing AV is causing other levy rates to fall, it's estimated that restoration of the fire levy rate to \$1.50 will result in a total fire tax rate in 2023 that's \$0.11 per \$1,000 higher than in 2022.

Funds will finance construction of a new Suquamish fire station and fund the district's apparatus replacement program. NKF&R's Suquamish station is the district's oldest. Originally built in the middle of the last century, it wasn't designed to withstand an earthquake or meet other modern safety standards. Each of NKF&R's four staffed stations are interdependent and vital to the district's emergency response. The Suquamish station's replacement will ensure reliable response to the community by providing firefighters with a safer and healthier work environment. The funds will also be used

**North Kitsap Fire and Rescue  
Proposition No. 1  
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& Emergency Medical Services**

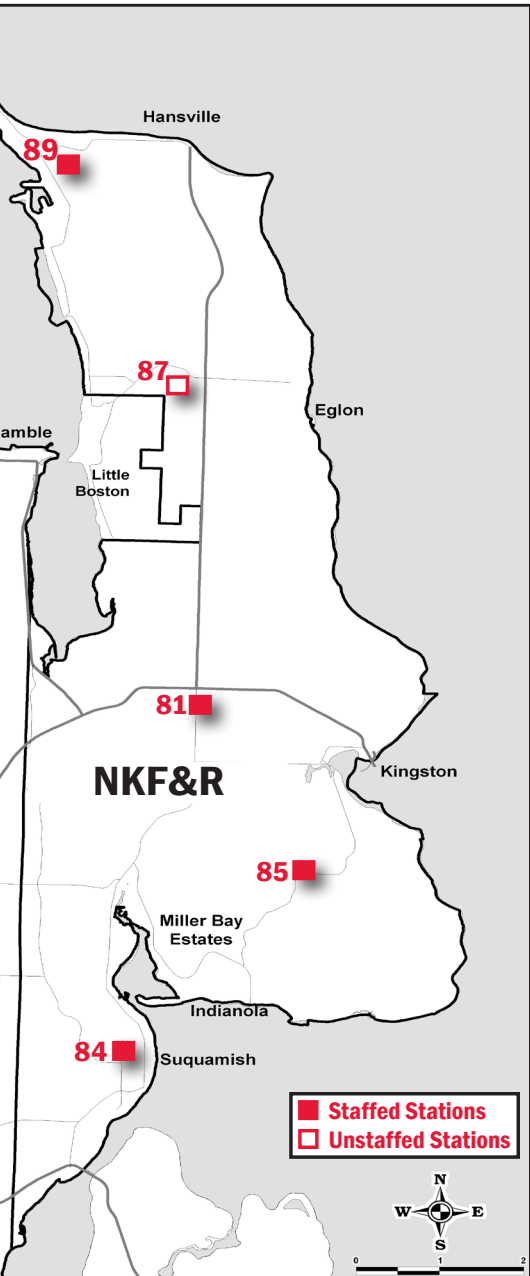
The Board of Commissioners of North Kitsap Fire and Rescue adopted Resolution No. 2022-13 proposing an increase in the fire district's regular property tax levy. To fund fire protection and emergency medical services for six years, this proposition authorizes a maximum levy rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000.00 of assessed valuation for collection in 2023 and authorizes annual adjustments for the five succeeding years based on the greater of the statutory 1% or the annual percentage change in the Consumer Price Index referenced in the Resolution, not to exceed 6%. The final year's levy dollar amount would be used to compute limitations for subsequent levies. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes   
No

to purchase one new ambulance and for rebuilding existing ambulances. Additionally, the district will replace an engine that's nearing the end of its reliability as a first-out apparatus. NKF&R will also add three firefighter positions.

It's estimated that restoration of the fire levy would cost the owner of the median home an additional \$230 (or \$19 per month) in 2023, the measure's first year. In the measure's remaining five years and to ensure that the district can accomplish its stated goals as prices rise, the fire levy would be limited to annual increases of 1% or the rate of the consumer price index, not to exceed 6%. The effects on individual taxpayers will vary with increases or decreases to each property's AV.

For more information about the fire levy or the department, see the district's website ([www.nkfr.org](http://www.nkfr.org)), send an email to Fire Chief Dan Smith ([smith@nkfr.org](mailto:smith@nkfr.org)) or call the district at (360)297-3619.



**NKF&R**

**Service Area:** 46 square miles  
**Population Served:** 20,609 (2020 OFM Estimate)  
**2021 Expense Budget:** \$10.2 million  
**2021 Total Calls:** 3,360  
**2021 Medical Calls:** 2,279 (68%)  
**Civilian Employees:** 7  
**Uniformed Employees:** 48  
**Volunteers:** 11  
**Fire Insurance Rating:** 4  
**Fire Chief:** Dan Smith



# Fire is on the Rise in Kitsap

In 2022, the incidence of house fires in North Kitsap has nearly doubled the previous annual average to date. While it appears that no single fire cause is driving the current trend, every fire includes lessons that can be applied to help keep everyone safer from fire:

Working smoke alarms more than double the chance of surviving fire in the home. Your fire departments can help you be sure that your family has the best protection possible.

## 1. Plan and practice the family's fire escape.

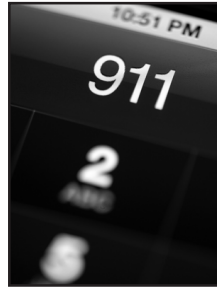
Choose one meeting place outside and verify that there are two different ways out of every room. Practice the plan to improve chances that everyone will know what to do when fire strikes.



**2. Make sure smoke alarms are properly placed, well maintained and less than ten years old.**

delay the call for help because seconds can make a difference in both life and property loss.

**5. Consider the safety of yourself and others before attempting to extinguish a fire.** Use a fire extinguisher



## 3. Close before you doze.

Sleep with bedroom doors shut to provide added protection from smoke and heat in the event of a fire.

## 4. When fire strikes, call 9-1-1 early.

Don't

only if you can do so safely. Make sure that other occupants have evacuated and 9-1-1 has been called. The fire must be small and there must be a clear escape route in case efforts to extinguish the flames aren't successful.



**6. When evacuating a burning structure, the last person out should close the door behind them.** An open door will provide the additional air flow that a fire needs to grow.

# Escape Planning Contest

**Protect Your Family! Win Gift Certificates and Ice Cream Parties!**

Firefighters know better than anyone that the best way to keep families safe from home fires is with working smoke alarms and a practiced fire escape plan. Every year, firefighters put their money where their mouths are and sponsor ice cream parties for the classroom at each school with the highest return rate of correctly executed escape plans. This year, from the pool of correctly executed plans, we'll randomly draw the names

of five lucky participants to receive nice gift certificates for treats from local businesses for the Kids Corner contest in this edition of the Pulse.

Visit the fire districts' websites ([www.nkfr.org](http://www.nkfr.org) and [www.poulsbofire.org](http://www.poulsbofire.org)) or the National Fire Protection Association's website ([www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org)) to find escape planning forms and

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guidelines for making the best possible plans.

## Kids Corner

Some teachers have assigned the escape plan activity as homework, but every family can

participate by submitting their plans directly to the fire departments via email to [laboda@nkfr.org](mailto:laboda@nkfr.org) no later than November 14.

### FIRE COMMISSIONERS

North Kitsap Fire & Rescue	Poulsbo Fire Department
Patrick Pearson, Chair ( <a href="mailto:pearson@nkfr.org">pearson@nkfr.org</a> )	Jeff Uberuaga, Chair ( <a href="mailto:juberuaga@poulsbofire.org">juberuaga@poulsbofire.org</a> )
Gillian Gregory ( <a href="mailto:gregory@nkfr.org">gregory@nkfr.org</a> )	David Ellingson ( <a href="mailto:dellingson@poulsbofire.org">dellingson@poulsbofire.org</a> )
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Wilson Stewart ( <a href="mailto:stewart@nkfr.org">stewart@nkfr.org</a> )	Chris Quinn ( <a href="mailto:cquinn@poulsbofire.org">cquinn@poulsbofire.org</a> )



Fire is FAST! It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill your home.

Fire won't wait. Plan your escape at [fpw.org](http://fpw.org).

