



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE

770 NE Midway Blvd., Suite 201 | Oak Harbor, WA 98277
(360) 675-1131 | www.nwfr.org | [f@northwhidbeyfire](https://www.facebook.com/northwhidbeyfire)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 2, 2020

Contact: Chief John Clark O (360) 675-1131 C (517) 813-0123 chiefclark@nwfr.org

Board of Fire Commissioners to Meet on Fire Levy Lid Lift

OAK HARBOR, WASH. — The Board of Fire Commissioners for North Whidbey Fire and Rescue will meet to discuss a resolution asking voters to consider a 15-cent Fire Levy lid lift during the November General Election. Funding would be used to replace two fire engines, emergency radios, and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for firefighters.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14 at 6:30 p.m. at Fire Station #25, 2720 Heller Road, Oak Harbor, Wash. (98277). Please note that the meeting could be changed to a virtual format depending on current COVID-19 guidelines. Visit the North Whidbey Fire and Rescue website at www.nwfr.org for an update on July 11, 2020.

Those unable to participate in the meeting are encouraged to contact Chief John Clark with their questions or comments at (360) 675-1131 or chiefclark@nwfr.org. Written correspondence also can be mailed to Chief Clark at the above address. All communication is welcome and become part of the public record.

NWFR has the lowest Fire Levy rate in Island County at 62 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The Fire Levy funds daily operations for NWFR, which serves 18,000 people over 55 square miles. Its service area includes the unincorporated area west of the City of Oak Harbor from Deception Pass Bridge (to the north) and Libbey Road in Coupeville (to the south). The agency is debt free, operates under a balanced budget, and has passed all its independent audits by the state.

Part-time paid and volunteer firefighters respond to an average of 2,400 calls per year. Call volumes have increased 45 percent in 10 years for the agency. More calls mean added wear and tear on emergency apparatus and equipment.

Two fire engines are at the end of their usable lives, and at risk of being unreliable to respond to calls. Likewise, the Fire District needs to replace emergency radios and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for the safety of the community and its firefighters. The Fire District plans to pay cash for these capital items instead of financing the purchases, which would cost taxpayers more due to interest payments.

The proposed 15-cent/\$1,000 lid lift would cost the owner of a \$370,000 home (an average for the area) approximately \$4.63 per month (\$55.50 per year). Replacing these items also will maintain the community's insurance rating, which is linked to the amount some home and business owners pay in premiums.

###

North Whidbey Fire and Rescue provides an emergency response to fires, medical calls, water and high angle rescue, and auto accidents. The agency serves 18,000 people over 55 square miles, which includes the unincorporated area west of the City of Oak Harbor from Deception Pass Bridge (to the north) and Libbey Road in Coupeville (to the south). Highly-trained part-time paid and volunteer firefighters respond to an average of 2,400 calls per year.