

## 2019 MISSOULA RURAL FIRE DISTRICT MILL LEVY REQUEST FACT SHEET

- ▶ **Board approval.** The Missoula Rural Fire District's (MRFD) Board of Trustees voted unanimously on January 8, 2019 to place a mill levy increase on the May 7, 2019 ballot.
- ▶ **Amount of mill levy increase requested.** If approved, MRFD's mill levy would increase by 29.6 mills.
- ▶ **Amount to be raised.** A 29.6 mill increase would raise approximately \$1.4 million annually.
- ▶ **Impact on property owners.** For residential property valued at \$100,000 for taxing purposes, approval of the increase would result in a \$39.96 annual increase in property tax. On residential property valued at \$200,000 for taxing purposes, the increase would be \$79.92 annually. The levy has no durational limit.
- ▶ **Purpose of funds.** Funds would be used to hire, train, and equip 10 additional career Firefighter/EMTs. These hires would result in improved fire and Advanced Life Support medical response in the District by staffing every station with at least two career Firefighter/EMTs 24 hours a day, every day of the week.
- ▶ **Community benefits:**
  - ✓ Funds from the mill levy would increase the number of responders with Advanced Life Support EMT training who arrive within the initial minutes of an emergency, allowing more complete, immediate action to save lives or fight fires.
  - ✓ EMTs with Advanced Life Support skills have the ability to bring medical interventions to the scene of an emergency that were once only available in hospital emergency rooms. The more advanced medical procedures that responders can provide immediately on scene, the more lives that can be saved.
  - ✓ The mill levy increase would help ensure that a minimum of 2 career Firefighter/EMTs staff each fire station on all days at all hours.
  - ✓ Passage of the mill levy would ensure the District has additional personnel with local knowledge who can respond to wildland fires.
  - ✓ If the mill levy passes, the District would be able to maintain more modern equipment including fire engines, medical units, cardiac monitors, and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus to ensure more consistent availability of up-to-date equipment on every call.
  - ✓ If the mill levy increase is approved by the voters, the 10 additional Firefighter/EMTs would bring the total number of full-time career Firefighter/EMTs at MRFD to 52.

- ▶ **Impact if mill levy increase fails.** If the mill levy increase request does not pass:
  - ✓ Not all response teams would include career Firefighter/EMTs with Advanced Life Support capabilities.
  - ✓ Current staffing would remain the same: Two career Firefighter/EMTs would be available to respond to emergency calls at each station during daytime peak hours only, with fewer Firefighter/EMTs available to respond from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
  - ✓ Compared to what would be possible if the mill levy increase is approved, there would be less consistent availability of up-to-date equipment on calls.
  
- ▶ **MRFD mill levy history.**
  - ✓ MRFD voters last approved a mill rate increase in 2014. Prior to this increase, the last approved mill rate increase was in 1992. Approval of the 2014 mill levy increase enabled the District to ensure two career Firefighter/EMTs go on all calls from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
  - ✓ If the 29.6 mill increase is approved, MRFD does not anticipate needing to ask for another increase for at least 20 years.
  
- ▶ **Facts that were cited in the MRFD Board's resolution to request the mill levy increase:**
  - ✓ The District responds to approximately 2,800 calls for service annually.
  - ✓ The District provides emergency response through career and volunteer Firefighter/EMTs and volunteer Firefighters. Seventy-six percent of the District's fire station coverage is provided by career Firefighter/EMTs and twenty-four percent is provided by volunteer Firefighter/EMTs and volunteer Firefighters.
  - ✓ The availability of volunteer Firefighter/EMTs to respond to 2,800 calls for service is very limited.
  - ✓ Since January 1, 2008, the District has recruited and trained approximately 225 volunteer Firefighters but has retained only approximately 12% of those trainees. The current roster has 26 volunteer members, including Firefighters and Firefighter/EMTs.
  - ✓ The District is unable to ensure that a minimum of two Firefighter/EMTs with Advanced Life Support capabilities respond to an emergency between the hours of 7:00pm and 7:00am.
  - ✓ The addition of ten career Firefighter/EMT positions will not only help ensure an adequate number of Firefighter/EMTs arrive on scene of an incident within the initial minutes of the emergency to allow more complete, immediate action to save lives or fight fire, but will also provide an Advanced Life Support medical response with a minimum of two career Firefighter/EMTs from each fire station 24 hours a day.

***For more information contact  
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