



Fire District 3

CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire levy lid lift vital for funding life-saving emergency services

Ballots are due by 8 p.m. on Election Day, August 6

Brush Prairie, Wash. — Clark County Fire District 3 is asking voters to consider a fire levy lid lift during the August 6, 2024, primary election. The lid lift would fund 24-hour staffing at all five stations to reduce response times, additional paramedic-certified firefighters and modern medical equipment to improve survival rates, and replacement of an aging ambulance.

Ballots have been mailed to voters and must be postmarked by August 6, 2024, or placed in a ballot box by 8 p.m. on Election Day to count.

Call volumes for Fire District 3 have increased more than 25 percent in the last six years. Medical emergencies now account for 70% of all calls. The higher demand and cost for emergency services is outpacing revenue from the fire levy, which funds both fire suppression and prevention and the district's emergency medical service (EMS) program.

"This is a growing concern," says Chief Scott Sorenson. "Our fire levy provides critical funding for all our emergency services – from first responders to fire engines, ambulances, equipment, and medical supplies. Simply put, our fire levy saves lives and property."

Just ask Bud and Diana Seager of Venersborg how Fire District 3 makes a difference. Recently, Bud accidentally sparked a barn fire, which quickly spread to the shop. Fire District 3 arrived and contained the fire before it jumped to the main house.

A few weeks later, Bud – a spritely 91-year-old – fell down the stairs and fractured his back. Again, Fire District 3 responded. "We are blessed to have our emergency responders at Fire District 3," said Diana. "You don't think you need them until you do."



Diana and Bud Seager of Venersborg

The Pavelko family in Battle Ground is also grateful for the heroes at District 3. Their daughter, Emily, was six years old when she had her first seizure. “When I woke up from the seizure, the fire guys were by my side taking care of me,” said Emily.

Although seizures have been a regular part of her life, Emily thrives because of reliable emergency response service. She was recently at a Police Activities League camp when another seizure occurred. Firefighter Josh Alexander was part of the response team and quickly contacted Emily’s parents.

“Josh stayed with her the entire time,” said Emily’s mom. “He didn’t leave her side until I arrived, then he carried her to my car. I’m extremely grateful for Fire District 3 – they’re amazing.”



Emily Pavelko with her classmates and heroes

For Brad Ruff, another long-time resident of Battle Ground, August 25, 2023, started like any ordinary day. But that evening, he felt intense pain in his chest and found himself struggling to breathe. Brad was going into cardiac arrest.

His wife called 911. Within minutes, Fire District 3 and police arrived on scene finding Brad unconscious and not breathing. Firefighters took over chest compressions and, after eight minutes of CPR, Brad was breathing and had a pulse. He was transported to a local hospital and has since made a full recovery.

In his career as a police officer, Brad had responded to many cardiac arrest emergencies, but this one hit home. "It's different when it's you who needs the help," he recalls. Upon reuniting with emergency responders, Brad said, "You all saved me, and I cannot thank you enough."



Brad Ruff thanks the first responders who saved him.

The bottom line is patient outcome – providing the level and quality of emergency service the community requires. But with the demand and cost for emergency service outpacing revenue from the fire levy, Fire District 3 has had to make difficult cuts to balance the budget. This impacts service levels and response times.

Fire District 3 is asking voters to consider a \$0.34 lid lift on the August primary election ballot to reset the fire levy from \$1.42 to \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. By maintaining emergency service levels, Fire District 3 also retains their risk rating, so homeowner insurance premiums are not impacted. Residents' tax dollars continue to pay for emergency fire and medical service rather than rising insurance rates.

"The takeaway from these stories is simple: fire and EMS response saves lives and property," says Chief Sorenson. "We hope you never need us, but we want to be here if you do." Learn more at www.fire3.org or contact Chief Sorenson at 360-892-2331 or scott@fire3.org.

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Clark County Fire District 3 provides fire and life safety services to 46,000 people in east Clark County, including the city of Battle Ground. Full-time and volunteer emergency personnel responded to 5,173 calls in 2023, of which 70 percent were for EMS. Fire District 3 operates under a balanced budget and has a long history of passing its financial and accountability audits by the state. More information on Fire District 3 can be found on its website www.fire3.org.