



Proposed Ballot Measure

Frequently Asked Questions



Why is it important to pass the measure?

When Fire District tax rate was approved 25 years ago the tax rate was locked in. Since the districts were created our combined call volume has gone from approximately 50 per year to over 500 per year. This has resulted in a vast increase in operational expenses as well as a monumental time commitment from the volunteers. The two districts have entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to share resources and save on some expenses. However this is not a sustainable model. 80% of our calls are medical that could be handled by hiring new 24/7 duty crews, providing relief for our volunteers and more timely service for district residents.

What happens if the proposed Measure passes?

If passed the Measure would fund staffing 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and provide newer fire and rescue equipment. This proposed Measure would combine the two existing districts creating a new, single, fire protection district. If the proposed district (Central Coos Fire & Rescue) is created, the two existing districts (Millington Rural Fire Protection District and Sumner Rural Fire Protection District) would be dissolved.

If the Measure passes, how would property taxes be affected?

The new district rate would replace the rates for tax payers in each of the existing districts. The amount of increase for any individual taxpayer would depend on where they currently reside and the assessed value of their property (APV). The current rate in Millington is \$1.36 per \$1,000 of APV, and in Sumner is \$1.56 per \$1,000 of APV. The most recent estimates based on median assessed values show an increase of \$39.50 per month for the owner of a home assessed at \$300,000 in Millington and an increase of \$36 per month for the owner of a home assessed at \$300,000 in Sumner. If passed, the proposed Central Coos Rural Fire Protection District would cost homeowners \$2.75 per \$1,000 of APV. The owner of a home assessed at \$300,000 would pay about \$68.75 per month or \$825 per year for the new District.

What happens if the Measure does not pass?

If the Measure does not pass, the proposed district would not be formed, the existing districts would not be dissolved and property taxes would remain the same. Costs would have to be cut. CCF&R would be forced to decide which emergency warrant a response. Most medicals would be left with no fire response.

How is a permanent tax rate different than a levy or bond Measure?

If passed, the proposed Measure would authorize a permanent tax to fund fire and rescue services. A permanent rate sets the limit of the tax rate per thousand dollars of assessed value established for a local district and can't be changed by the district or its voters. This is the maximum that could be charged, based on a vote each year by the elected Board. In contrast, a bond only funds buildings and equipment purchases and cannot be used for staffing. A levy can be used for staffing and operations and needs to be renewed at intervals, often every five years.



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If the Measure passes, would volunteers still be part of the fire and rescue response?

If the Measure passes, the new district would continue a combination of career and volunteer staff members. Estimates of the ratio of paid career staff to volunteers would be 1 career member to every 4-5 volunteer members. The proposed new district would remain a primarily volunteer driven organization.

Would the proposed District pursue grants? If passed and a grant is received would it impact the tax rate?

Grants are typically only available for specific projects, and can be highly competitive. When they become available and if the district qualifies, the district would typically pursue them. Those grant dollars would only be directed to the specific approved purpose. Any savings generated by the grants would be invested in the priorities of improving fire and emergency services as determined by the elected District Board. If there are significant ongoing cost savings in the future, the Board could opt to collect less fire taxes than the full authorized amount. To date the Districts have received approximately 2 million dollars in grants, some of which has been allocated to neighboring districts to help purchase new personal protective equipment.

If passed, what would happen to existing staff and volunteers?

Both Districts have entered into an Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA) and have transferred all personnel and assets to Central Coos Fire & Rescue Fire Authority created by the IGA. The Districts have been working together for over 2 years.

If passed, would there be any period of time where the two current districts might have no fire and emergency protection?

No. If the Measure passes, the new Fire District and newly elected Board of Directors would be created at the same time as the existing districts are being dissolved. The staff, equipment, and resources would transfer from the existing Fire Authority to the new District.

If the Measure passes, how would the Board of Directors be selected for the new District?

The ballot will provide an opportunity to vote for 5 district residents to be elected to serve as the initial Directors for the new District. Their election would be contingent on passage of the Measure to create the district. If the Measure passes, these newly-elected Directors would take office when the new district is officially formed and would be assigned dates for initial terms of office. Future Directors would be elected as terms expire.

What is an Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire rating?

The Insurance Services Office provides a scoring system that rates how a fire department performs in their community. Scores range from 1 to 10, with 10 being low and indicating no fire protection. A fire department score is based on things such as response times, staffing, available equipment, and service to the community. In 2018 when the Districts first started working together, both fire districts improved to an ISO of 5. Some insurance companies use the ISO rating as a factor when setting homeowner insurance rates. It has been reported that some homeowners realized a savings of over \$600 per year on insurance, far offsetting the tax increase ask.



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