

FIRE INSIDER



SNOHOMISH COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 17

FALL 2023

Chief's Corner

By Chief Jim Haverfield

Hello Neighbor,

I want to bring your attention to the request by Snohomish County Fire District 17, also known as the Granite Falls Fire Department, to ask voters to consider a fire levy lid lift on the November 7, 2023, general election ballot. The purpose of this request is to ensure the safety of our community.

In 2022, we responded to a record high of 2,800 calls – of which 68% were for emergency medical service (EMS). Our call volumes have increased 40% since 2020 – 23% in the last year alone.

In 2020, voters approved a fire levy rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Since then, the levy rate has fallen to \$0.98 per \$1,000. Why did the rate fall? Fire levy rates fall as property values rise to limit a fire district to roughly the same amount of revenue per year plus a 1% increase. So, even if your property value increases by double digits, we cannot receive more than a 1% revenue increase.

We are asking voters to restore the fire levy rate to \$1.28 per \$1,000, which is not the entire \$1.50 approved by voters in 2020, but the additional 30 cents will make a significant difference.

The levy lid lift would fund up to seven additional emergency personnel over three years to improve response times and reduce overtime costs. It would also help replace a fire engine and ambulance and build a new fire station without the need for voter-approved debt, saving taxpayers money.

I was born and raised in Granite Falls and chose to stay here and raise my family. It's a great place to call home. I understand that tax increases are not ideal, but I would not have brought this request to the ballot if it were not crucial for the safety of our community. To learn more about this funding request, please visit www.gffd17.org or contact me at 360-691-5553 or jim.haverfield@gffd17.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank You to Our Community!



On the last Saturday of September, we had the opportunity to say “thank you” to our community members for their ongoing support. Residents were invited to enjoy free hot dogs cooked by their firefighters, a visit from the Lifelight helicopter, and lots of fun activities for the kids including a bouncy house, face painting and the chance to spray a real fire hose at ‘flame’ targets. Tours of the new training facility and site of our future station were offered. We’re grateful for the support of our community and proud to serve!



Snohomish County Fire District #17

Granite Falls Fire

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www.gffd17.org



GraniteFallsFire

Fire Chief

Jim Haverfield

Assistant Fire Chief

Bill Dane

Captains

Ted Bergstrom

Kevin Glover

Jeff Torgerson

Administrative Lieutenant

Cassandra Waite

Board of Fire Commissioners

Rick Hjelle, Chairman

Rick Ainley, Vice-Chair

Ron Stephenson

Jesse James

Gary Chandler

Dick Dinham

Take action to prevent wildland fires

Wildland fires are non-structure fires that occur in vegetation such as trees, grasses, and shrubs and are a threat to homes and businesses in our fire district. Our job is to control wildland fires when they occur, but there are steps you can take to help prevent them from beginning in the first place.

Protect your home or business:

- Keep grass to a minimum of four inches during dry season
- Maintain clearance space between grass and shrubs and the lowest branches of trees
- Remove dead fuels within 100 feet of a structure and clear the roof of pine needles, moss, and dead branches
- Keep 10 feet of clearance around exposed wood piles
- Stay current on burn restrictions by checking the Snohomish County website
- Burn yard waste only and in a burn pile no larger than 4-by-4 feet (no paper, plastic or manufactured wood). No burning on windy days.
- Do not leave burn piles unattended and ensure piles are fully extinguished

Do you know the top causes of accidental wildland fires in our area?

1. Shooting guns in wooded areas
2. Unattended legal burns
3. Improper cigarette disposal
4. Tall grass and refuse in vacant lots, which is fuel for arsonists

Let's all do our part to prevent wildland fires! Learn more about wildland prevention at snohomishcountywa.gov.

