



# Spokane County Fire District 8

## Proposition 1- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

### Levy Information

#### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

***The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 8 adopted Resolution 24-05, authorizing a proposition to restore the funding used to maintain emergency medical services (EMS) within the District. The funding will allow us to maintain constant staffing of fire stations with Firefighter-Paramedics and Firefighter- EMT's. The voters of Fire District 8 will be asked to consider this proposition on April 22,2025 for collection in 2026.***

#### **What is on your April 2025 Ballot?**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 8 adopted Resolution 24-05, authorizing a proposition to restore the funding used to maintain emergency medical services (EMS) within the District. The funding will allow us to maintain constant staffing of fire stations with Firefighter-Paramedics and Firefighter- EMT's. The voters of Fire District 8 will be asked to consider this proposition on April 22, 2025 for collection in 2026.

Fire District 8 is asking our voters to consider restoring the current Emergency Medical Services levy to \$.50 per \$1,000 assessed value from the current \$.29 per \$1,000 assessed value. The EMS levy has not been restored since 2000, almost 25 years ago. The EMS levy must receive a majority approval to pass.

#### **Why is Fire District 8 asking for an increase to the current EMS Levy?**

The increase in the EMS levy will enable the Fire District to continue recruiting, training, and staffing stations with Firefighter Paramedics and Firefighter EMT's. Over 80% of the district's emergency calls are for medical response, and firefighter/paramedics receive advanced life support training beyond the EMT certification that all district firefighters hold.

Levy funds will also support critical equipment upgrades, including Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs), cardiac monitors, life-saving medications, extrication tools (Jaws of Life), and alternative response vehicles.

To improve efficiency, we are exploring the use of smaller, cost-effective response vehicles for medical emergencies. These vehicles will help reduce wear on larger fire apparatus and prepare us for future challenges, such as longer hospital wait times, rising service costs, and changes in medical insurance.

During multiple simultaneous EMS calls, the EMS levy will help ensure adequate in-district resources and automatic aid are available, supporting timely emergency response and protecting fire insurance ratings.

#### **What will this cost? How long will it last?**

The \$0.21 levy lid lift will cost the owner of a \$750,000 home approximately \$13.00 per month. In 2026, the levy rate would return to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value, allowing Fire District 8 to collect either 1% more per year or the amount permitted by the Consumer Price Index, whichever is greater, for the next five years—capped at \$0.50 per \$1,000. After six years, the levy rate will begin to decrease.

To determine your specific cost based on your property valuation, visit the Spokane County Assessor Website <https://www.spokanecounty.org/5491/Assessor> and click on the Tax Transparency tab.

For more info, [www.SCFD8.org](http://www.SCFD8.org) or call Lonnie Rash 509-370-9801



# Spokane County Fire District 8

## Proposition 1- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy Information

### How will this revenue be used? We Have a Plan

Fire District 8 hopes to hire up to two (2) additional firefighter/paramedics. We will use EMS levy funds to recruit, train, and staff stations with firefighter/paramedics and firefighter/EMTs. Currently, we staff four fire stations with up to two or three firefighter paramedics or EMTs per shift. Our goal is to increase staffing so that every station has a minimum of three firefighter paramedics/EMTs on duty each day.

Medical emergencies account for over 80% of the Fire District's calls. Firefighter/paramedics receive advanced life support training that goes beyond the EMT certification all Fire District firefighters hold.

Enhancing our staffing ensures faster, more effective medical response for our community.

With EMS levy funds, we will:

- **Maintain and when budget allows expand staffing** to ensure at least three firefighter paramedics/EMTs are on duty at each station.
- **Hire up to two (2) firefighter/paramedics** to increase staffing levels.
- **Replace aging medical equipment**, including automatic defibrillators (AEDs), cardiac monitors, CPR compression devices, and vehicle extraction tools (Jaws of Life). We will also sustain funding for increasingly costly life-saving medications and EMS supplies.
- **Explore new staffing models to increase firefighter/EMT coverage** at our busiest station, improving response to multiple simultaneous medical emergencies.
- **Invest in alternative response vehicles for medical calls.** These smaller, cost-effective units will reduce mileage and wear on larger fire apparatus.

These initiatives will enhance emergency medical response, improve public safety, and ensure the long-term readiness of Fire District 8.

### Does the Fire District receive more taxes because of the increased assessed values?

RCW 84.55 limits Fire District 8 to a **1% annual increase** in total revenue from the EMS Levy, regardless of changes in property assessments. This means that even if a home's assessed value rises significantly, the district's total tax revenue can increase by only 1% from the Fire and EMS Levy.

For 2025, the total assessed property value in Fire District 8 increased by 0.60% from 2024. Because this is lower than the 1% revenue cap, the levy rate will adjust to ensure the district collects only the allowed increase. As a result, even if individual property assessments fluctuate, the fire district's total revenue growth remains strictly limited.

### What is the District doing to make tax dollars stretch farther?

Fire District 8 has aggressively pursued federal and state grants, securing over \$500,000 in funding over the past four years. These efforts have helped offset the need for an EMS levy increase—until now. The District maintains strong financial management and accountability, consistently passing all State of Washington financial audits.

### Does the Fire District receive money from the state or county?

No. Fire District 8 is a separate from Spokane County or State of Washington governance and receives no money from them or any sales tax. The EMS levy, Fire Levy and Maintenance and Operations Levy are the primary funding source for fire and emergency services provided within your fire district.