

DID YOU KNOW?

SKFR is putting another levy on the ballot this August

**WILL YOU BE TOO SCARED
TO VOTE NO?**

SKFR AUGUST 2023 LEVY



South Kitsap Fire and Rescue

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



First, all of us at South Kitsap Fire and Rescue want to thank you for your support! Working in a community like South Kitsap is a privilege we do not take for granted. In 2023, we are committed to being more visible in our community in non-emergency times, talking with you, asking questions, and answering yours. We are committed to doing the work our community needs with a purpose!

Our number one challenge in the fire district is that we are critically understaffed. We have been working hard to find creative ways to meet the growing needs of our community. We have evaluated our current station assignments and how they are staffed. We are currently analyzing what apparatus we have in our stations. Through these processes we continue to come to the same conclusion: South Kitsap Fire and Rescue's ability to provide services in a timely

manner can only be accomplished by hiring additional firefighters and paramedics.

We believe our responsibility to the community is to always evaluate and always improve our service. The need for firefighters has not decreased. In fact, the urgency is near critical for our community. Hiring additional firefighters for our community will accomplish three things for South Kitsap. First, it will reduce response times by having more fire and EMS units available to respond. Next, it will make our community safer by having more fighters available to respond to simultaneous calls. Finally, it will increase firefighter safety and health by reducing illness and injury caused by fatigue.

We will continue to do the work our community needs, as a team of professionals, always evaluating and always improving. We do this because we care. We care about our community. We care about your safety. We look forward to working for you in everything we do and face these challenges together. As a community, we can solve these challenges.

Thank you,
Chief Faucett

OVER
12,000
CALLS PER YEAR

80,000
POPULATION



DISTRICT STAFFING MINIMUM STAFFING 19 FIREFIGHTERS PER DAY

Station 8- Fircrest (4)
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/Paramedic
2 Firefighter/EMT

Station 9- Yukon Harbor (2)
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/EMT

Station 11- Bethel (4)
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/Paramedic
2 Firefighter/EMT

Station 16- Gorst (2)
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/Paramedic

Station 17- Glenwood (2)
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/EMT

Station 31- Tremont (5)
1 Battalion Chief
1 Company Officer
1 Firefighter/Paramedic
2 Firefighter/EMT



VOLUNTEER STATIONS

Station 10- Banner
Station 12- Olalla Valley RD
Station 13- SE Nelson RD
Station 14- Bethel Burley
Station 15- Glenwood

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

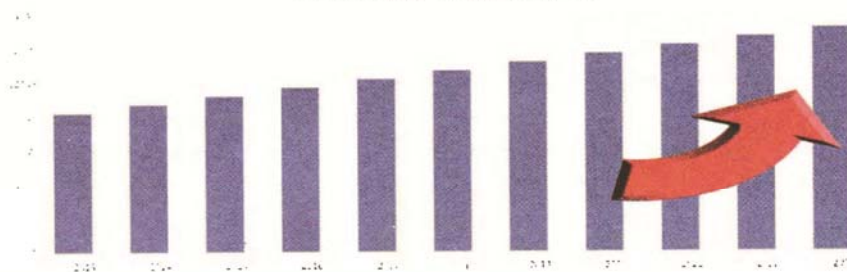
Regardless of their role within our organization, all the professionals and volunteers at SKFR are proud to serve our community and committed to providing the best service possible. This is particularly true of the 19 firefighters staffing our six career stations 24 hours a day to respond in your time of need, with the goal of improving the outcome of whatever situation is presented. As our community and calls for service grow, it has become more and more challenging to provide our residents with the level of service you all deserve.

SKFR is the largest and busiest of all the fire districts in Kitsap County. In 2022, we responded to 12,708 calls for service, a 6% increase over 2021, continuing a trend we have seen over the last decade. In 2013, SKFR implemented daily minimum staffing of 19. In that year, our call volume was 8,222, representing annual averages of 144 calls for every on-duty firefighter and response times of 6 minutes and 57 seconds. By comparison, in 2022, the annual average increased to 233 calls per on-duty firefighter and response times of 8 minutes and 18 seconds. For the

other four fire districts in Kitsap County, the average annual calls per firefighter was 135 for 2022. This workload on our firefighters resulted in a dramatic increase in on-the-job injuries or other illness, which prevents us from increasing our daily minimum staffing. We expect this injury and response time trend to continue increasing as call volume climbs, should our daily staffing remain at 19.

Our goal is to provide the high-quality service our residents deserve, while understanding the economic realities we all live in. Personnel are essential to accomplish this goal and for us to align with regional performance, we would need to add 21 firefighters. Based on this, we project reductions in the averages of annual calls per firefighter and response times to 173 and by 60 seconds respectively, with a 50% reduction in time loss due to on-the-job injury or other illness. However, static or a reduction in staffing would have the opposite effect on each of these areas, degrading our ability to achieve the best outcome, regardless of the situation we face.

Annual 9-1-1 Call Volume



55%
INCREASE IN
CALLS OVER
TEN YEARS



**SOUTH
KITSAP**
Fire and Rescue

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South Kitsap County
Community Connect
South Kitsap Fire and Rescue

**CREATE YOUR HOUSEHOLD
LIFE SAFETY PROFILE TODAY**

Together, Building a Safer Community Through
Prevention, Preparedness & Response



<https://www.communityconnect.la/info/wa-southkitsap>

SKFR Categorized Responses 2022

67% EMS Calls
688 Motor Vehicle Accidents
4,509 Patients Transported
58 Building Fires

DID YOU KNOW? In 2022

67%



67% of all SKFR
calls are EMS

688



Total number of
motor vehicle
accidents in 2022

4,509



Total patients
transported

58



Building fires

The above slides require a few 'point-by-point' refutations of prior claims made by SKFR during their last levy run in November. The 'scare them into passing our levy' is certainly wearing thin.

SKFR has cited the following

- 86% of SKFR budget is payroll (2023)
- 68% of service calls are for EMT services (now citing 67%)
- Transported 4,509 patients (2022)
- Responded to 688 motor vehicle accidents (2022)
- Responded to a total of 58 building fires (2022)

Clearly SKFR's "Bread & Butter" is service calls, i.e. giving free ambulance rides using our tax funded EMT's, NOT fighting fires! SKFR continues to claim that they are "Critically Understaffed", that there are growing needs for our community. Professional Demographer's studies suggest fewer children are coming to SK thus it is logical that fewer families are actually coming to SK, yet SKFR continues with this claim.

SKFR concludes their Fire & Rescue abilities to provide timely responses can only be accomplished by hiring additional Firefighters and Paramedics. Yes, we need more paramedics as proven by data presented by SKFR. But we don't need more fire fighters. SKFR wants to rebuild some stations and construct six or so new fire stations. Now they tell us they are only able to staff Fire Station 10 with volunteers. Not enough fire fighters, well by golly let's just go ahead and build more fire stations!

<https://www.kitsapdailynews.com/news/skfr-station-10-to-only-have-volunteers/>

Why is the happening?

It looks again like an effort to try to leverage us to vote for their next (2nd try) levy in August. SKFR is creating budget shortfalls and shortages, yet they want to build more fire stations? This feels like what SKSD tried to do in the past to leverage their last bond, but they did it by sending all of the 9th graders from Marcus Whitman to South Kitsap High School (SKHS) to try to over crowd the high school, thus persuading the voters to pass that bond.. to build a 2nd high school. All of the 9th graders fit into SKHS just fine. And since COVID and other 'factors', there has been a steady decline in student enrollment District wide. There is still no need for that 2nd high school. Now SKFR is doing something sort of similar. They claim they need more people but at the same time they are buying more land before having the money to build more fire stations. Don't forget, a bond will be coming right after the August 2023 levy.

When you only have volunteers to take up some of the slack, it is not the time to propose building more fire stations, or hiring more fire fighters. Obviously the numbers don't like. There is a greater need for more EMT people and EMT vehicles. Let's not use a fire ax to open up the boat to keep it from sinking.

And so on, and on they go with their claims that without more fire fighters (and EMT's) we are in even more danger (of burning in our beds) or otherwise endangered due to slower response times.

We know that we all must learn to live within our means. Why should the fire district get a pass on that? Clearly they are not using our tax dollars as wisely as they should. These continuing exaggerated 'wants' vs. actual 'needs' is just a side-show to work at building a larger Fiefdom. How many properties are they now sitting on waiting for a bond to build on them? I reviewed and found it is currently six. Further down I will list those properties and the prices.

Some time back SKFR told they were doing us all a favor by buying all of these properties with cash. They said they could save us from bigger levies and bonds by paying cash. This was obviously money siphoned off from passed approved bond and/or levies. This is one example of how they are managing our tax dollar and what their concept of open and transparent government is. They didn't even bother to provide the public any prior notice of their intent to buy these properties. We only read about 'some' of these purchases after the fact in the papers. It took official requests for public information to find out exactly what was going on, what had gone on under our noses. I don't believe this style of community outreach, agency transparency, building trust in the community or gaining their confidence is done using these methods. It's certainly not hallmarks of open

and transparent relationships with the voters. It feels like the same as last time - find ways to leverage the voters to vote for their levies and bonds.

Find below the property locations and the prices paid. The last property purchased off of Old Clifton road is very near McCormick woods and the SKSD property reserved for unknown uses in the future. Also SKFR bought the last 2.5-acre piece within a few block of where that strip mall is to be built near McCormick woods. "Who" could have seen that coming? <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2023/04/11/port-orchard-washington-mccormick-village-park-homes-businesses-parking-restaurants/70053964007/>

The last purchase and sale agreement for the Old Clifton Road property was conditioned upon (by the Fire District) the requirement that the tenants "must be evicted" by a certain date or there would be NO SALE. How is that for demonstrating concerns for the citizens of South Kitsap? Now six properties are off the tax rolls, and six families have been denied the opportunity to buy six used and more affordable homes.

Six SKFR Properties Sitting Dormant

Bethel Road	\$243,531.00
Woods Road	\$236,149.00
Woods Road	\$446,195.00
Woods Road	\$265,000.00
Mile Hill Dr.	\$298,185.00
<u>Old Clifton Rd.</u>	<u>\$525,000.00</u>
Dormant land totaling: \$2,140,000.00	

What ever happened to all those years of fiddling around and teasing us with the notion of consolidation with other fire districts? Instead, they continue to try to scare us into voting for their levies and bonds. They tell us that hiring additional fire fighters will reduce response times. That we will be in less danger if we just give them more money to build, build, build! The problem they have now has been self-imposed. They have done this by greed and an overarching desire to create the largest Fiefdoms in the land. They just told us in this last mailer that they are the biggest fire district in the land. Fiefdom Building vs. not consolidating services with other Fire districts continues to be their underlying problem. Go it alone and by all means, don't give up all those benefits or ditch any of the top-heavy administrators. Here is the other page where budget and pay can be viewed. First blush shows how top heavy the upper echelons of SKFR are. <http://southkitsapcitizensdemandingresponsibletaxation.one/skfr-budgets-2021.html>

Note This information will soon be sorted and summarized for your ease of reading.

And now they have "the nerve" to tell us that their needs have not decreased but instead increased! That their needs are both URGENT and CRITICAL to hire more fire fighters, and yes, more EMT's in order to reduce response times to keep us all safe. Do you really believe with more they can then respond to simultaneous calls faster, reduce fire fighter danger, illness, and fatigue? Think... service and roads throughout SK control how fast response times are. Small, and some still dirt roads!

Obviously this was not fully thought out. It feels like it is being done this way in order to put a little more fear into us old folk's hearts. I read some of the same, and now a few news twists to the past "Fear Factor Tactics" they are again employing in efforts to try to leverage us again in hopes of scaring us into voting for their levy coming in August.

Me? I am going to buy another fire extinguisher to be set beside my bed by the other one for when my bed catches fire!

And the Chief closes with: "We look forward to working for you in everything we do and face these challenges together, that we can solve these (I would add - self-imposed) challenges".

These are the type and dates for Bonds and Levies SKFR is planning

2nd Levy attempt - August 2023

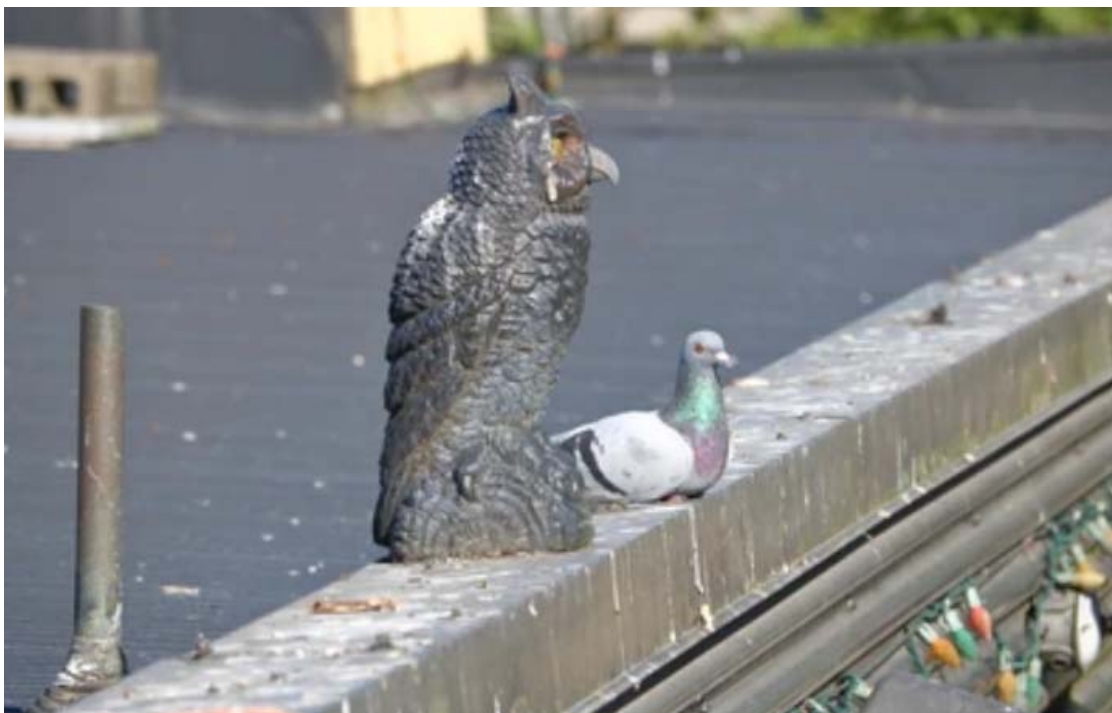
Operations/Maintenance Bond - April 2024

Equipment Levy - August or November 2024

\$\$\$ When the amounts of these levies and the bond are obtain they will be posted \$\$\$

Remember - These Scare Tactics Are Universal!

Scare tactics efforts to leverage voters into voting yes for levies and bonds have always been tactics of fire and rescue districts, as well as school districts and other taxing authorities throughout the US. It is always comes down to more wants vs actual needs. More of everything that will help them to keep expanding their Fiefdoms. Keep that in mind when reading the following stories from North Carolina. The videos from these stories are also included.



Don't Let the Owl Scare You!

From North Carolina

2 Raleigh fire engines out of service due to staffing shortage

Saturday, July 23, 2022

<https://abc11.com/raleigh-fire-department-staffing-shortage-firefighters-captain-jennifer-patterson/12069827/>

RALEIGH, N.C. (WTVD) -- A viral post about engines in Raleigh brought attention to the level of service that is demanded from firefighters, and the concerns that come with it.

The Facebook post stated that Raleigh's engine 4 and 13 were out of service with no staffing.



City of Raleigh voting RESIDENTS, we are sad to inform you that two fire suppression engine companies are unavailable to serve you today. Engine 13 which services the west side of downtown proper is out of service with no staffing. Engine 4 which services the six forks road corridor is out of service with no staffing. Every other engine and ladder company in the city is riding 3 personnel.

The specialized heavy rescue company is also riding 3 personnel. You may ask what the implications of 3 on a ladder company are. Typically, ladder companies ride 4 personnel, and split into teams of 2 on scenes of fires to accomplish searching for victims and removing toxic superheated gases to give victims the best chance at survival. We are unable to provide both services today from one ladder company. And if a ladder company must use its fire pump and personnel to put out fire, no search team for victims will be available from that company.

This is a sad day for Raleigh. Until leaders admit massive issues and come to the table to work on real solutions to retain current employees and ones they continue to hire, this will be the new norm. We've been warning of this for months. We've provided countless solutions to combat this for months but have been continually discredited by City Staff. It appears we are NOT fully staffed as was reported the entire budget talks by the City Manager's Office. City Councilors of Raleigh-the time is NOW to ask why the reported information and reality aren't matching up. Raleigh's fire station houses engine 13 as well as a ladder company.

The difference between the two is that an engine is the primary extinguishment unit, their first function at a fire is to put the fire out. The ladder company's job includes search and rescue. If there were a fire, they would be on the scene searching for victims, or ventilating gas. The issue at hand is that there is not enough staff, and firefighters do more than just put out fires.

"I think most people look at us from a fire suppression standpoint and forget about the medical functions that we provide as well. Something as simple as delivering epinephrine, and chest compressions, albuterol, they are just as important and when those units aren't available to do it, you're asking citizens to wait extended amount of time just to receive care," Raleigh Fire Department captain Jennifer Patterson said.

Patterson told ABC11 that yesterday there were 138 people at work and 27 who worked overtime. Ideally there would be 136 on a daily basis, however on Saturday there were 119 people at work. Engine 4 was in service with people working overtime, according to the Raleigh Professional Fire Fighters Association as of Saturday evening.

Again - From Raleigh

'They're using scare tactics': Raleigh Fire Chief fires back to social media post

By Elaina Athans Wednesday, August 3, 2022



RALEIGH, N.C. (WTVD) -- The Raleigh Fire Department is working to fill dozens of positions, and Fire Chief Herbert Griffin is assuring residents that public safety is not at risk while the search continues. "They're using scare tactics out there (and) fear mongering," said Griffin. He is firing back at a post that's making its rounds on social media.

The Raleigh Professional Fire Fighters Association said in a Facebook post a few weekends ago that a [staffing shortage](https://abc11.com/raleigh-fire-department-staffing-shortage-firefighters-captain-jennifer-patterson/12069827/) <https://abc11.com/raleigh-fire-department-staffing-shortage-firefighters-captain-jennifer-patterson/12069827/> lead to two companies to suspend service. Griffin says it was fire trucks, not workers, that were out-of-service and that there are always enough first responders working at any given time. "When the community calls, you will have a response. (Know) a truck that is coming with the most professional fire fighters this city has to offer," said Griffin.

Raleigh Professional Fire Fighters Association President Andy Davis, however, warns there could be other disruptions in the future and argues not enough is being done to retain those already on staff. "We've been hemorrhaging employees at the same rate as we were all spring," said Davis. "They're bringing these employees in at a higher pay rate than 143 current Raleigh firefighters." There are 68 firefighter openings right now. The City says it is taking proactive steps to lure in new workers. A new program was started for those who are already certified by the state and looking to make a transfer. The starting salary is a little more than \$49,000 and there's a signing bonus of \$4,000.

"We have to find the most qualified candidates to fill these positions. Unfortunately, we can't just go out and get a firefighter in one day. That takes 6 months to do. So we created two avenues now to get them trained, and out there in the fields to serve the community at a much faster rate," said Griffin.

Here are just a few articles specific to Fire Districts

Raise Garbage Collection Fees to Fund Fire Fighter Pay Raises

<https://www.firerescue1.com/legislation-funding/articles/houston-official-proposes-garbage-fee-to-finance-firefighter-pay-raise-ftWf5qUYIBupKSI0/>

Fire Districts waste money on bond costs because the are told to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwbBbiPPknM>

Citizens sue fire district accused of wasting tax dollars

<https://fox2now.com/news/you-paid-for-it/citizens-sue-fire-district-accused-of-wasting-tax-dollars-in-st-louis-county/>

Why is the fire department wasting taxpayer money

https://www.bakersfield.com/archives/ask-tbc-why-is-the-fire-department-wasting-taxpayer-money/article_b8f9aa4c-89b2-585a-a87a-9b619d41c226.html

Lawsuit poses simple question to fire department where is the money going

https://www.stltoday.com/news/subscriber/messenger-lawsuit-poses-simple-question-to-fire-district-where-s-the-money-going/article_2dd7400d-5bb6-5be7-afda-cd7003df4b73.html

Some taxpayers in rural fire district concerned over how much money is spent

<https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/investigations/7-investigates/7-investigates-some-taxpayers-in-rural-fire-district-concerned-over-how-money-is-spent/277-488646845>

Monroe taxpayers are often unaware of bills incurred by their fire districts

https://nysvara.org/news/2007/may/07_05_01.pdf

Fire district gets big slice of property taxes

<https://almanacnews.com/news/2017/01/31/fire-district-gets-big-slice-of-property-taxes>

Letter: Government Neglect/Waste (Tacoma Fire Department)

January 22, 2023 · ·

Submitted by KM Hills.

I have written before about governmental agencies being poor stewards of our tax dollars. Here is continued example on this very topic.

Over 7 years ago, when I still lived in Tacoma, I wrote a Letter to the Editor of the Tribune, about a historic building owned by Tacoma Fire Dept. Along with the letter, I also called to voice my concerns to TFD about the neglect to the build pictured, which is downtown on Tacoma Ave.

Yesterday, when out for a lunchtime walk, I just shook my head, as I walked passed the building, which has a plaque noting its historical status. I observed the continued neglect, which was never addressed.

The reason I bring this up is not that it has been over 7 years and TFD has done no maintenance on the building but that I recently saw a news story about TFD seeking to pass a new levy seeking more money. Why would Tacoma residents give additional funds when, it appears, TFD can't meet their obligations using past funds, to maintain the property it owns?

I fear, like so many government buildings (Lakewood Library for example) that this building will be let go until it is beyond repair and it "has" to be torn down, and replaced with a very expensive new building which will include yet another levy or bond ask.

