

NEWS

## South Kitsap Fire and Rescue places levy lid lift on August 1 ballot



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South Kitsap Fire and Rescue firefighter/paramedic Stephen Gutschow checks the equipment and supplies in the back of Medic 8 while in the apparatus bay of Station 8 in Port Orchard on Monday, October 19, 2020. MEEGAN M. REID / KITSAP SUN

**SOUTH KITSAP — Kitsap Voters will see a levy renewal request again from South Kitsap Fire and Rescue, this time on their ballots in August's primary.**

**South Kitsap Fire and Rescue Board of Commissioners approved asking voters for a fire levy renewal, the agency announced in a statement last week. The board passed the resolution unanimously.**

The levy is a renewal of the current fire levy approved in 2017, the agency said. If approved, the levy would reset to the statutory maximum of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, or around \$600 annually on a home valued at \$400,000. The current levy rate is \$1.09, according to SKFR.

The agency said the \$0.41 levy increase, estimated to add about \$14 per month for the owner of a \$400,000 home, would raise revenue to add firefighter EMTs and firefighter paramedics to the current daily staffing of 19. SKFR will also use the tax income to return 24-hour staffing at its Banner Road station.

SKFR Fire Chief Jeff Faucett highlighted the need for the levy renewal and the agency's staff shortage in the statement.

"SKFR responds to the most calls in Kitsap County, with the least amount of daily personnel," Faucett said. "We established our daily staffing of 19 in 2013, when we were running less than 9,000 calls per year. Our call volume has grown by 55%, while our daily staffing has remained the same, and now response time are almost two minutes slower on average."

Faucett said the agency needs more staff on duty to keep pace with the growth of the South Kitsap community.

If the levy is denied, SKFR will have to consider further staffing moves and possible cuts in service, Faucett said.

To engage with and listen to the public, SKFR conducted 10 town hall meetings in March and shared the insight gained from the public meetings with a citizens advisory group over two additional meetings. SKFR said the advisory group supports the levy restoration.

Last year, Kitsap voters didn't approve SKFR's request for a levy lid lift, with 51.5% of the voters voting "No" and 48.5% saying "Yes" to SKFR's Proposition 1 in [November's election](#).

# Kitsap County Local Election Results

Updated 7:34 pm EST Nov 18, 2022



2022 election results for Kitsap County

## South Kitsap Fire and Rescue Proposition 1

Choices	Total Votes	% Votes
No	17,320	51.5%
Yes	16,288	48.5%