



# McLane Black Lake Fire Department

*Our Mission: To protect the lives and property of the people we serve*

**Vote on August 1st**

## Prop. 1 - Maintenance and Operations Levy

On August 1st, residents of District 9 will be asked to vote to replace an expiring Maintenance and Operations measure.

### Education: Facts and Information

#### *What is the Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Levy?*

The Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Levy is a levy used to supplement regular property tax revenues to sustain current emergency response services to the community.

#### *Why is the maintenance and operations levy needed?*

The Fire District's regular levy is insufficient to support the essential staffing for emergency response reliability, Capital Facility repair and replacement needs, and major equipment and apparatus purchases.

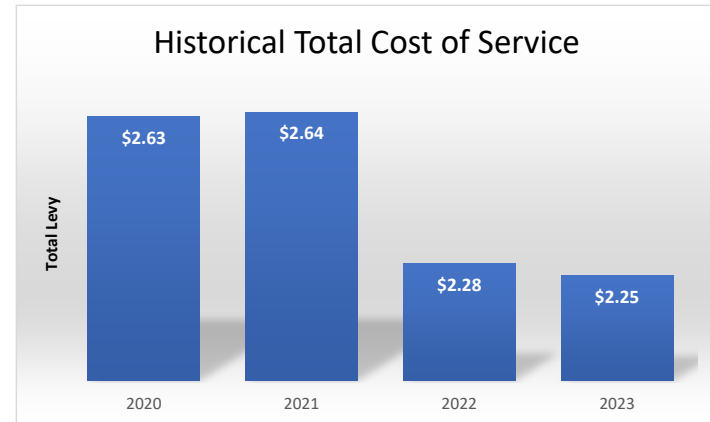
Our ability to provide service has also changed. McLane Fire Department was founded on the premise of neighbors helping neighbors. When the department was formed in 1953, it was exclusively a volunteer fire department. Training requirements were much less stringent than what is required of firefighters today. Volunteer recruitment and retention has also drastically declined over the last decade. With the need to maintain reliability to call response, the District has hired career firefighters to help fill the gap left by the decline in volunteers and assure response reliability. The regular levy cannot support this need.

#### *How long will the M&O Levy last and what will it cost?*

- The M&O Levy will last four years, beginning in 2024 and ending December 31, 2027.
- The annual cost is approximately \$0.80 / \$1,000 of assessed value. For each \$100,000 of property value, it will cost approximately \$80.00.
- This is an excess levy and will be collected in addition to the regular levy estimated to be \$1.44 / \$1,000 of assessed value in 2024.

#### *What is does this mean to taxpayers?*

The addition of the M&O levy of approximately \$0.80 / \$1,000 of assessed value (AV) to the regular levy of approximately \$1.44 / \$1,000 of AV brings the total levy amount to \$2.24 / \$1,000 AV. This is the lowest total levy amount since 2017 and will allow us to offer the best service possible.



#### *What is response reliability?*

Response reliability means our ability to consistently and efficiently provide the resource needed to best help you. It affects how quickly we can answer your call for help and what resources we can deploy. We serve a large (84 sq. miles) Fire District, with diverse responses including: ambulance transport, water rescue, wilderness rescue programs, response to HWY 8 motor vehicle accidents, wildland fire protection, and providing lead as Thurston County Special Operations Rescue Team. The M&O allows for the critical staffing with diverse responses including: ambulance

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transport, water rescue, wilderness rescue programs, response to HWY 8 motor vehicle accidents, wildland fire protection, and providing lead as Thurston County Special Operations Rescue Team. The M&O allows for the critical staffing to be provided to better serve the community.

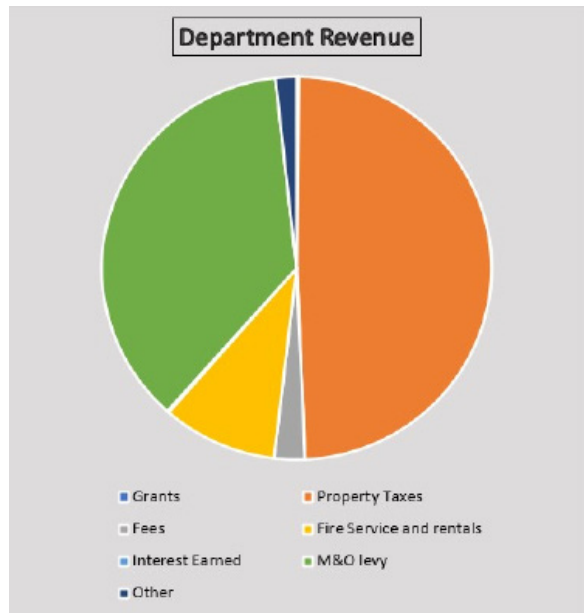
### Fire District Capabilities Can Save You Money

The Washington Survey and Rating Bureau that establishes the risk class for Fire Districts, recently re-rated the District. The rating is based on the service capabilities of the Fire District, including facilities, staffing, apparatus, training, water supply, etc.. The result of the re-rating, for the residents served by the McLane Black Lake Fire Department, is a change in risk class from a Class 5 to a Class 4. What this means for many homeowners is a reduction in insurance rates.

To maintain this rating, we must have and maintain:

- Adequate Staffing
- Well Functioning Apparatus
- Facilities within the standard required by the Survey and Rating Bureau

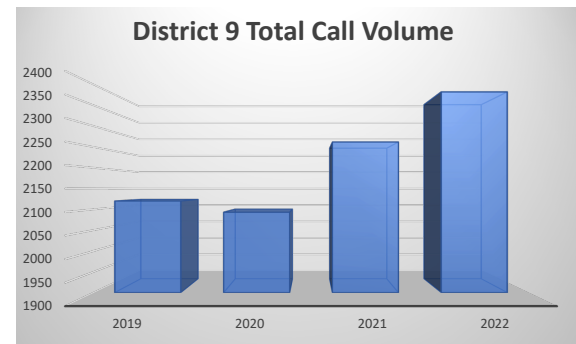
Funding provided by the M&O levy will help secure essential staffing, and help assure the apparatus replacement program is fully funded so funding is available to replace aging apparatus as needed to meet the requirements.



### What measures has the District taken to best utilize tax dollars?

The District continues to utilize grants where possible for staffing and equipment, however, this funding is uncertain and diminishing. The Maintenance and Operations levy will assure the funding is available to support necessary staffing, equipment, apparatus, facility maintenance and Capital Facility needs that will provide for our continued reliable service excellence to the McLane Black Lake Community.

In January of 2023, the District retired all long-term debt and is debt free. The District's strategic plan identifies the need for new, strategically located fire station in the Cooper Point area. A portion of funds from the M&O over the next few cycles will be placed into the Capital projects fund for this purpose, saving the tax payers millions of dollars in interest costs over the life of a commonly used 20-year bond levy.



### Capital Facility Needs

In 2007, when the District built its new headquarters station, a Capital Repair and Replacement plan was established. The plan provides a framework to maintain the District's facilities in good repair. Additionally, the District's strategic plan identifies long-range Capital Facility needs or new infrastructure needed to best serve the McLane Black Lake community. A portion of the M&O is used to fund these needs.

### Renewal of the Levy was predicted

In 2015, when the voters of the McLane Black Lake Fire Department first approved the four-year M&O levy, we advised that renewal of the levy would be necessary to sustain essential career firefighter positions and fund equipment and facility needs in the future. In 2019, the levy was renewed and eight firefighters were added to our response team. Additional staffing was added in 2022 and 2023 to help mitigate the decreasing Volunteer response force and increasing call volume. This levy will replace the current M&O levy that will end December 31, 2023.