

# BENTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Bond for Fire Truck and Station Renovation on November Ballot**

KENNEWICK, WASH. — The Board of Fire Commissioners for Benton County Fire District #1 have placed a capital improvement bond on the November 5 ballot. This bond would last for 20 years and be an estimated 10-cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value (AV). This is one cent less than the two bonds that were recently paid off.

If approved, funding from the bond would provide significant renovations to accommodate staff at Station 150 (Badger Canyon), and replace a fire ladder truck at Station 120 (Finley). Replacing the ladder truck will help maintain our current insurance rating for fire district apparatus. Renovations to accommodate 24 hour staffing will improve response times district-wide, and lower the fire district's insurance rating. The estimated cost to a homeowner would be \$2.92 per month (\$35 a year) for property valued at \$350,000.

"This means lower premiums for home and business owners," said Fire Chief Lonnie Click. "If our insurance rating goes up, the risk, and related premiums, increases for property owners."

Benton #1 funds daily operations through a fire levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, which voters renew every six years. Capital projects – such as stations and apparatus replacement – are funded through voter-approved bonds. In the last two years, the fire district paid off two such bonds averaging 11 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

The fire district asked voters to renew funding for the fire district levy and bond on the August ballot. Voters renewed their fire levy, and a majority of voters (54.38%) supported the bond on the ballot, but it was not enough to pass with the super-majority (60%) requirement.

"The need for investment in our fire district is still there." said Chief Click. "With a majority of folks approving of it, we felt we just needed to work harder at communicating what that funding will protect and provide for citizens."

More information about the bond, including an estimated cost based on AV, can be found on Benton #1's website [www.bentonone.org](http://www.bentonone.org). Also, Chief Click is available to answer questions at 509-737-0911 ext. 5 or [lonnie@bentonone.org](mailto:lonnie@bentonone.org).

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*Benton County Fire District #1 is a combination fire department with approximately 90 volunteer, part-time and full-time firefighters serving 18,600 people over 320 square miles. In 2018 it responded to 1,519 calls for structural and wildland fire suppression, emergency medical service, technical rescue, and hazardous materials response. The fire district operates under a balanced budget, and has passed all financial and accountability audits with the state. More information about the fire district can be found at [www.bentonone.org](http://www.bentonone.org).*