



Message from the Chief

By Fire Chief Lonnie Click



First, I'd like to start by saying Thank You! In August, our voters approved a lid lift of our fire levy to keep it at a rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. We're here to save lives and property, and we couldn't do it without your support. Thank you very much.

Fire levies cover daily operations. Bonds are to fund capital expenses and major maintenance that protects the assets of our community. The Board of Fire Commissioners have placed a capital improvement bond on the November 5 ballot.

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 the fire district's insurance rating. This means lower premiums for home and business owners.

If the 1992 fire ladder truck that is at the end of its usable life is not replaced, that could increase the insurance rating district-wide. As the district's insurance rating goes up, the risk, and related premiums, would increase for property owners.

The fire district asked voters to renew funding for a bond on the August ballot. 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.

There's an article in this newsletter with information about the proposed bond, or on our website, (www.bentonone.org). If you have any questions, I welcome them—please call me at 509-737-0911 ext. 5 or email me at lonnie@bentonone.org.

I'd like to sign off by deeply thanking our volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) for all they do. These folks spend hours away from their families and friends training so that they are prepared to respond at a moment's notice. And they do! Thank you for your service to all the residents of Benton County Fire District #1.

What's On My Ballot?

Benton County Fire District #1 has a Fire Truck and Station Renovation Bond (Proposition 2) on the November ballot.

The 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.

The estimated cost to a homeowner would be \$2.92 per month (\$35 a year) for property valued at \$350,000. A chart of

Senior citizens and disabled persons in Washington State may be eligible for property tax exemptions or deferrals. For more information about these programs, contact the Benton County Assessor's office.

estimated costs is available on our website. Ballots must be post-marked on November 5 to be counted, or returned to one of the ballot drop

boxes in Benton County by 8:00 p.m. A list of ballot drop box locations can be found at www.bentonauditor.com/Vote-by-Mail.



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Fire Prevention for Winter Warming

This is the time of year we start thinking about staying inside where it's warm and cozy, perhaps by a crackling fire. Unfortunately, wintertime is when the risk of residential fires and related injuries increase.

Do you have working smoke alarms in your home? Smoke alarms detect and alert people to a fire in the early stages. Smoke alarms can mean the difference between life and death in a fire.

A few things to consider to keep safe this winter:

HEATING EQUIPMENT

- Heating equipment should be installed and maintained by a qualified professional
- Have equipment inspected and chimneys cleaned by a qualified professional at least once a year.

SPACE HEATERS

- Purchase and use only portable space heaters listed by a qualified testing laboratory.

- Keep anything that can burn away from heating equipment—and have a child free zone—with at least a 3 foot perimeter.
- Do not use extension cords with space heaters.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Smoke alarms should be installed in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Test alarms at least once a month.
- Have a plan to escape—2 exits from every room—and an arranged place to meet in case of fire. Practice your family plan regularly.

Benton County Fire District #1 has a free smoke alarm program. If you need smoke alarms for your home, please contact us at (509) 737-0911.

