

EMS Levy FAQ

Why an EMS Levy?

- The revenue generated by an EMS Levy is needed to maintain and improve the level of emergency medical services currently provided on a continual basis by the Bainbridge Island Fire Department including basic, intermediate and advanced life support services by certified emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

EMS Levy History:

- The current EMS Levy was approved by Bainbridge Island voters in 2009. This levy was approved for 10 years and will expire on 12/31/2019. The levy rate was capped at \$0.40 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The EMS Levy rate for 2019 will be \$0.32 per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

Why a Permanent EMS Levy?

- Proposition #1 will make the EMS Levy permanent, unlike the current, 10-year temporary EMS levy. The permanent EMS Levy will be limited to annual increases of no more than 1 percent absent future voter approval.
- A permanent levy means the voters approve of continuing funding for emergency medical services (EMS) on a permanent basis, like the general fire levy. The revenue generated by an EMS levy represents approximately 26% of BIFD's annual operating revenue. This revenue is an essential source of funds to continue the current level of emergency medical services on the island. A temporary level would require the approval of voters every 10 years.

Financial Facts:

- EMS Levy revenue is 26% of BIFD's current annual revenue.
- Total revenue generated by the current EMS Levy is \$2.7 million in 2019. Total projected revenue generated by the proposed EMS levy is \$3.5 million in 2020.

- The statutory limit for EMS levies is \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The current EMS Levy rate assessed to Bainbridge Island residents is the lowest in Kitsap County and will continue to be the lowest if this proposal passes.
- BIFD has a AA+ bond rating from Standard & Poors.
- BIFD has a record of sound financial management and responsible public funds stewardship as evidenced by receiving no findings from the Washington State Auditor’s office for the past several decades.

How much will the EMS Levy cost?

- This EMS Levy proposal will reset the levy rate to \$0.40 per \$1,000 of assessed property value beginning in 2020. The following table provides a comparison of 2019 EMS Levy rates and proposed 2020 EMS Levy rates, dependent on assessed property value.

EMS Levy Cost:				
<i>Property Value</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>Cost Per Month</i>	
			<i>2020</i>	
\$ 500,000	\$ 160.00	\$ 200.00	\$	16.67
\$ 600,000	\$ 192.00	\$ 240.00	\$	20.00
\$ 700,000	\$ 224.00	\$ 280.00	\$	23.33
\$ 800,000	\$ 256.00	\$ 320.00	\$	26.67
\$ 900,000	\$ 288.00	\$ 360.00	\$	30.00
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 320.00	\$ 400.00	\$	33.33

BIFD’s Service Level Facts:

- EMS services on the island cannot be provided by BIFD at the level the community has come to expect without the renewal of the EMS levy revenue stream.

- 70% of all calls are for emergency medical services (EMS) & rescue.
- Revenue from this levy will be used by the District exclusively for emergency medical services.
- EMS Levy proceeds are used to provide personnel, responding out of three stations, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- All BIFD responding staff are trained to provide emergency medical services including Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).
- Paramedics are trained to provide advanced life support services, responding to calls such as heart attacks, stroke and CPR.
- EMTs are trained to provide basic life support services and are the first line of response for all emergency medical calls.
- BIFD is the only service operating on Bainbridge Island that provides advanced life support services, 24 hours a day. Walk-in clinics are intended for non-life-threatening conditions only.
- BIFD is a combination department, including both career and volunteer Firefighter/EMTs. BIFD intends to continue as a combination department into the future.

Questions & Answers from the Public:

- Why doesn't the increase in island property assessments and the addition of new residential units generate enough revenue to cover the increase in fire department calls?
 - An increase in property assessment doesn't actually mean BIFD collects more money. The way these levies work is, as your home value increases, the rate charged for the levy decreases so the actual dollar amount you are charged remains the same. Conversely, in times of deflation, such as 2010-2013, as your home value decreased,

the rate charged for the level increased but the actual dollar amount remained the same. New construction is eventually added to the Bainbridge tax rolls. Prior to asking the public to vote on a levy, BIFD projects 10 years in the future, including many revenue and expense variables, including new construction estimates from the County Assessor. The rate of new construction and the revenue generated by it is not sufficient to replace the current EMS levy, which is approximately 26% of BIFD's revenue. As an example, revenue assigned to new construction in 2019 is \$83,278 on our general fire levy whereas the revenue from the current EMS levy is projected to be about \$2.7 million.

- Are new developments required to pay impact fees to offset their resultant additional burdens on the fire department?
 - New developments are not required to pay impact fees. BIFD does not receive any funds from impact fees.