

**Why is Oswego Fire Protection District considering placing a funding proposal on the June 2022 ballot?**

Oswego Fire Protection District (OFPD) seeks to improve response times, maintain emergency services and further protect first responders by addressing its highest priority staffing, equipment and apparatus needs.

**When was the last time voters approved additional funding for the Fire District?**

It has been 19 years since voters approved additional funding for OFPD.

**Do the villages of Oswego, Montgomery and Plainfield provide any funding to OFPD?**

No. The Fire District does not receive funding from the three villages.

**How large is the proposed request and what is the estimated tax impact?**

The Fire District is considering placing a one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) Rescue Tax on the June 2022 ballot. The estimated tax impact is about \$2.77 per month, or about \$33 per year, per \$100,000 of a home's market value. For a \$300,000 home, the tax impact would be about \$99.

**Why is OFPD considering returning to the ballot after the last referendum failed by a few hundred votes?**

The Fire District's needs are not going away, they are increasing. Both the District's service population and call volume continue to increase, negatively impacting response times and emergency services. There's simply too much at stake when it comes to protecting lives and property.

**How would proceeds of the funding proposal be used?**

OFPD seeks to add firefighter/paramedic staff to bring a fourth full-time ambulance into service 24 hours a day, 365 days year; attract, train and retain qualified first responders; replace outdated emergency equipment; and replace aging apparatus that has reached the end of its service life.

**What is OFPD's current average response time?**

The Fire District's average response time is approximately 6 minutes and 30 seconds.

**Are OFPD's response times projected to increase if additional first responders are not hired?**

Yes. With a continued increase in the Fire District's service population and call volume, response times are projected to increase if additional first responders are not hired. This is a serious problem since fire can double in size every 60 seconds and cardiac arrest survivability rates decrease by 15% every minute without medical care.

**How many additional firefighter/paramedics are needed to add a fourth full-time ambulance?**

Six more first responders are needed to cover all three shifts per day, which equates to two additional firefighter/paramedics per shift.

**To what extent has the Fire District's service population increased?**

The Fire District's service population has more than doubled since 2003. The District now serves more than 70,000 residents in a service area that spans about 53 square miles.

**What communities are served by OFPD?**

The Fire District serves all of Oswego and portions of Montgomery, Plainfield and unincorporated areas of both Kendall and Will counties.

**How many homes, multifamily dwellings and commercial properties does the Fire District protect?**

OFPD protects about 20,000+ homes (including multifamily dwellings), 1,100+ commercial properties and all of the retail centers located along Rt. 34, Rt. 30/Douglas and Orchard Road. The Fire District is also responsible for protecting schools, independent preschools, daycare facilities and special needs facilities, encompassing more than 25 buildings and 20,000+ students and faculty.

**How many long-term care facilities and 55-and-older communities is OFPD responsible for protecting?**

The Fire District's service area currently includes three long-term care facilities and six 55-and-older communities, with additional long-term care facilities planned within the District.

### **How much is the Fire District's emergency call volume increasing?**

The Fire District's call volume has almost tripled since 2002. For 2021, OFPD's service calls are projected to reach 6,195. This call volume is significantly higher than other fire districts in the area. About 65% of the District's calls are in Oswego, 28% are in Montgomery and 7% are in other parts of the District.

### **Do emergency medical calls dominate the Fire District's call volume?**

Yes. About 65% of OFPD's calls, or about 13 calls per day, involve medical emergencies.

### **What other types of emergency calls does OFPD address?**

In addition to EMT calls, the Fire District also responds to structure fires, vehicle accident rescues, special incidents and other types of emergencies. The District also provides fire prevention and safety programs, new construction plan reviews, fire cause and origin investigation, public education programs, CPR classes, child safety seat installation and other services.

### **How does the Fire District's current tax rate compare to its peer districts?**

OFPD has a lower tax rate than Plainfield FPD, Minooka FPD, Troy FPD and Bristol-Kendall FPD.

### **Has OFPD sought funding from other sources before considering asking district voters for additional funding?**

Yes. The Fire District continues to apply for private, state and federal grants as well as seek government surplus equipment. The District has also reduced costs by implementing its own vehicle service program, rather than paying for outside services. While OFPD has been more successful in obtaining grants than many other fire districts, the additional funding does not come close to addressing the District's growing operating expenses.

### **How would putting a fourth ambulance into service positively impact all district residents?**

There are already many instances in which all three ambulances are in service simultaneously. This will continue to happen more often as the District's service population keeps growing. Adding a fourth ambulance would help ensure uninterrupted services and improve response times, resulting in improved safety for all district residents.

### **If approved by voters in June 2022, when is the next time the District would likely seek additional local funding?**

The District is confident it would not need to seek voter approval of additional tax referenda for at least another 10 years. It's been 19 years since voters approved additional local funding for OFPD.

### **Why are growth and increased property values not addressing the Fire District's unmet equipment and staffing needs?**

The District's operating costs are outpacing revenues. In fact, the cost of emergency equipment and apparatus are two to three times what they were 15 years ago. For example, the cost of a cot has increased from \$4,000 to \$40,000. Healthcare costs, fuel and other operating expenses also continue to rise.

### **Are there unfunded mandates that OFPD is responsible for addressing?**

Yes. State lawmakers continue to pass additional mandates on to fire districts and other public entities that are not funded at the state level. These unfunded mandates are further compounding the Fire District's funding challenges.

### **Does the Fire District seek to improve insurance premiums for homeowners?**

Yes. The Fire District hopes that by addressing unmet personnel, equipment and apparatus needs, and improving response times, it can move from an Insurance Services Rating (ISO) rating of 2 to a rating of 1, resulting in possible savings on insurance premiums for homeowners.

### **How can district residents learn more about OFPD's funding proposal?**

The Fire District will be hosting in-person public information meetings. The dates, times and locations of these meetings will be posted on the District's website: [www.oswegofire.com](http://www.oswegofire.com)

**Additional questions?**

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