



Dwight Fire Protection District Corporate and Rescue Levy Referendum Questions & Answers

Q: What are the current DFPD Corporate and Rescue Levy rates?

A: The DFPD currently has a Corporate rate of 0.2939% and does not collect a Rescue levy.

Q: *How will this proposed rate change affect the average homeowner?*

A: If the corporate levy is increased to 0.40% and a rescue levy is approved of 0.10%, a homeowner with a property valued at \$131,000 will see an increase in their property taxes of \$90.25 per year or \$0.25 per day.

Q: When did the DFPD last ask for a referendum?

A: The DFPD never asked the taxpayers for a tax levy increase.

Q: What will the additional funds collected be used for?

A: The additional funds would be used to pay for three firefighters/EMT's to staff a fire engine around the clock all year long. Each firefighter would be paid a stipend of \$150 per day.

Q: *What do you pay your firefighters now and why do you need firefighters staffing the fire station 24/365?*

A: Our firefighters are all volunteer personnel who make between \$5 and \$15 per call. Over the last two years, there have been 44 calls where the DFPD could not respond and had to rely on neighboring departments for assistance; there were also 89 calls where a response was delayed by over 10 minutes due to lack of personnel. Staffing the fire station will eliminate this problem.

Q: *Can't you just recruit more volunteer firefighters to handle emergency responses?*

A: Since 2014, the DFPD has attempted to recruit more volunteers from Dwight with very minimal success. Of our 45 members, only 11 are Dwight residents. Many residents don't have time available in their busy schedules to attend training and go on fire calls.

Q: *How many emergency responses do you really go on?*

A: Call volume in the last 6 years has increased by 205%. Last year, DFPD responded on 334 calls. In 2018, our responses are already trending higher than last year and we anticipate responding to over 400 calls in this year.

Q: *Besides fire calls, what services do you provide to the community?*

A: We assist Dwight EMS on medical responses when needed and participate in community events such as Buzz the Gut, DEA events, etc. Over the last 3 years, firefighters volunteered over 8,000 hours to assist with community events and fire prevention activities.

Q: *Aren't there grants available to help cover this problem?*

A: In September 2015, the DFPD received a four-year \$350,000 federal grant to help offset the expenses of recruiting, training, and equipping firefighters as well as paying call payroll stipends. The grant funding ends in September of 2019.

Q: *How long does it take for a fire truck to show up after a 911 call is made?*

A: Prior to receiving a federal recruitment and retention grant in 2015, our average response time was nearly 18 minutes. For 2017, the average time was less than 5 minutes.

Q: *How much do you currently collect in taxes?*

A: Our total tax collections for FY 2016-2017 were \$269,406.

Q: *Will having firefighters staffed around the clock help with my homeowners and/or business insurance premiums?*

A: Depending on what insurance company you use, an improvement in the fire department's insurance services rating can save you money on your premiums.

See the back of this page for More Q&A

Q: What will the firefighters do when they aren't running on fire calls?

A: Firefighters will respond on emergency medical calls as needed, provide fire and life safety education at the schools, handle fire prevention events, conduct building preplans, attend training, and maintain the fire station and equipment.

Q: *When do I vote on these measures?*

A: The referendum questions will be on the March 20, 2018 ballot.

Q: How many questions are on the ballot regarding the referendum?

A: Due to the way Illinois laws regarding fire district taxes are written, there will be **TWO QUESTIONS** on the ballot. One question will ask to vote to raise the DFPD **CORPORATE** levy. The second question will ask to allow the DFPD to begin collecting a **RESCUE** levy.

Q: *What happens if the referendum doesn't pass?*

A: If we are unable to increase our funding, the service levels would decrease. Our department would have to rely more on neighboring fire departments which would lead to longer response times. The potential for larger fire losses and loss of life will go up. Our participation in community events such as school team escorts, school programs, as well as other non-emergency activities would be reduced. Home and business fire insurance rates could go up. The community would become less safe which could lead to Dwight becoming a less desirable place to live and do business.

Q: *How else can I help?*

A: We are always looking for residents interested in volunteering. You can apply to become a member on our website at <http://www.dwightfire.org/content/employment/>

PLEASE SUPPORT THE DWIGHT FIRE DEPARTMENT

✓ Vote YES for Dwight Fire Corporate Levy Increase

✓ Vote YES for Dwight Fire Rescue Levy

For more information, please visit our website at www.dwightfire.org

or

visit us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/dwightfpd/>

