

Proposed Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment

How was the assessment determined?

The total annual costs of providing improved Fire Station operations and maintenance, additional firefighter staffing, improved apparatus and equipment replacement, and other services to be funded by the assessment would be allocated to each property based on the estimated special benefit received.

The method of benefit allocation is based on the relative special benefit to a property in relation to a single family home, the type of property, and its size. The total proposed amount of assessment for your property is shown on the enclosed ballot.

The types of special benefit would primarily include increased safety and protection of real properties. An Engineer's Report describing the proposed improvements, method and basis upon which the amount of the proposed assessment was calculated, budgets and proposed assessment for each parcel is available for review at the Rio Dell Fire Department, 50 West Center Street, Rio Dell, CA 95562.

How much is the proposed assessment?

The proposed assessment for your property is printed on the Official Ballot in this notice. The current assessment proposal assigns a "unit value" to each of the properties within the District based on the current Land Use Code of the property, following a number of corrections to property classifications. The unit assignment varies from 1 unit for a vacant parcel to 20 units for a Heavy/Industrial parcel.

For example, a typical single-family residence is assigned 4 Units of Benefit and each Unit of Benefit is assessed at \$25.00 for a total of \$100.00 per year. The Unit of Benefit for other residential property types is based on the number of dwelling units and the relative distance from a water source.

The total estimated amount assessed to the entire area subject to this assessment would be approximately \$142,025. Specifically, all public-owned and non-taxable parcels are exempt from the proposed assessment.

What about the Benefit Assessment approved in 1993?

In 1993, the Fire District established a benefit assessment at a rate of \$8.00 per unit of benefit on a use-of-property basis. The District Board lowered the rate to its current level of \$4.00 per unit of benefit in 1997. Since then, the assessment has not been updated to reflect the increasing demand for fire protection services and the increasing costs to provide these services.

If the proposed assessment is approved, the prior assessment would be repealed and the new assessment would take its place. Therefore, a typical single-family residence that currently pays \$16.00 per year (4 Units of Benefit at \$4.00 per Unit) would be charged a total of \$100.00 per year, or an additional \$84.00.

Will this assessment increase in the future?

The proposed assessment would be levied for fiscal year 2015-16 and continued every year thereafter, so long as the Fire District Board approves an annual resolution for continuation of this assessment. The assessment measure has no inflationary provision and will only grow based on new construction activity. The assessment cannot be raised above the specified \$25.00 per Unit of Benefit.

Official Notice and Ballot

Rio Dell Fire
Protection District
(707) 764-3329

Proposed Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment

September
2014

Why did you receive this ballot?

You are a property owner served by the Rio Dell Fire Protection District and are being asked to vote on a proposed funding measure to ensure continued and improved fire protection and emergency response services in the Rio Dell area.

This ballot is your opportunity to participate in deciding whether local funding should be approved for continued and improved fire protection, fire suppression, and emergency response services. Your vote on this matter is important because only returned ballots will be counted.

The Rio Dell Fire Protection District

The Rio Dell Fire Protection District was originally formed in 1943 as the Wildwood Fire Protection District, and was renamed in 1961. The Fire District currently serves a 4.6 square mile area that includes the City of Rio Dell and surrounding areas of Monument Road and Blue Slide Road.

The Fire District responds to an average of 350 service calls per year, including structure and wildland fires, vehicle collisions, and emergency medical calls. In addition, the District provides fire prevention, community education, emergency preparedness and other services relating to the protection of lives and property.

Why is a funding measure needed?

The Rio Dell Fire Protection District is primarily funded by contributions from local property taxes and limited funding from a previous benefit assessment approved in 1993. These funds provide for basic equipment, tools, workers compensation insurance, and maintenance monies for apparatus and buildings.

The Fire District continues to face increased demand for fire protection services. Calls for service have increased steadily since 1993 while the tax rate remains fixed. Inflation has outpaced current funding for fire protection and emergency response services. The cost of fire apparatus, equipment, technology, infrastructure, training and personnel can no longer be met with current revenue sources.

What would this measure provide?

The increased funding to the Fire District would:

Improve Operations of the Rio Dell Fire Station

Allows the Fire District to improve the operations and maintenance of the Rio Dell Fire Station to provide fire protection services in the most effective and efficient way. The Fire Station was built in 1963/64 and is not large enough to house all apparatus in a temperature-controlled area. There is a need to upgrade the existing station facility to current building code standards and expand the station to include an additional apparatus bay.

Maintain Fire Protection and Emergency Services

Allows the Fire District to maintain adequate training and certifications for volunteer personnel. In addition, the Fire District will be able to make funding improvements needed to maintain its current ISO ratings for the benefit of property owners living within the district.

Ensure Rapid Emergency Response Times

Funds a Volunteer Firefighter Pay-Per-Call Program to help reimburse volunteer firefighters' expenses to ensure rapid emergency response. OSHA requires that personnel use self-contained breathing apparatus, that a minimum of two firefighters work as a team inside the structure, and that a minimum of two firefighters be on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or perform rescue. Essentially, the "2 in, 2 out" rule protects our firefighters but also requires sufficient staffing levels.

Keep fire protection under local control

Ensures that the local community maintains oversight over the quality, expenditures, and policies of the Fire District through the elected Board and citizen participation.

Improve apparatus maintenance and replacement

Supports improved maintenance and replacement for aging equipment and apparatus. Currently, the District does not have the available funds to replace apparatus or equipment on a regular basis. This dedicated funding would allow the Fire District to have up-to-date and up-to-standards equipment and apparatus for years to come.

Public Hearing and Official Ballot

Method of Voting

The enclosed official ballot expresses your support or opposition to this proposed assessment. Property owners who own more than one property will receive separate ballots for each property.

To complete the enclosed ballot, mark the square next to either Yes or No, sign the ballot, fold it in half and place it in the provided return envelope and mail to Rio Dell Fire Protection District, 50 West Center Street, Rio Dell, CA 95562. You may also hand deliver the ballot at the public hearing (see below for the time and location). Only official ballots which are signed and marked with the property owner's support or opposition will be counted. Ballots are due Wednesday, October 30, 2014.

If you lose your ballot, require a replacement ballot, or want to change your vote, call the Rio Dell Fire Protection District at (707) 764-3329 for another ballot. See the enclosed ballot for additional instructions. Ballots are weighted by the proposed amount of assessment and will be tabulated accordingly. The assessment will not be imposed if, upon the conclusion of the public hearing, weighted ballots submitted in opposition to the assessment exceed the weighted ballots submitted in favor of the assessment. If a majority of weighted ballots returned are in support, the assessment may be levied for fiscal year 2015-16 and may be continued in future years to fund fire protection and emergency response services as directed by the Board.

Public Hearing

By law, at least 45 days must elapse between mailing of the ballots and the public hearing. A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 30, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. at the Rio Dell Fire Department, 50 West Center Street, Rio Dell, California. You are invited to attend the public hearing. Tabulation of the returned ballots will be conducted by an independent authority for all ballots received at the conclusion of the public hearing.

↓ Detach Here ↓

FIRE ASSESSMENT BALLOT

Mail completed assessment ballot in enclosed return envelope to:
50 WEST CENTER STREET, RIO DELL, CA 95562

Owner of Record: WOLFF STEVEN L & SHARON L HWJT

Parcel Number: 052-231-012-000

Use Code: 1100

Units of Benefit: 4

Annual Cost: \$100.00

Ballot Question:

Shall the Board of Commissioners of the Rio Dell Fire Protection District be empowered and authorized to establish the proposed assessment for fire protection services for an amount not to exceed \$25.00 per unit of benefit?

☐

YES

☐

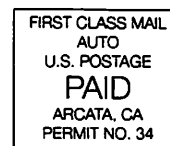
No

I hereby declare, under the penalty of perjury of the laws of California, that I am authorized to submit a ballot on behalf of the parcel identified above.

Signature:		Date:	
Printed Name:			

Please note, this is not a secret ballot. The law requires the District be able to demonstrate how each parcel owner voted.

Rio Dell Fire Protection District
50 West Center Street
Rio Dell, CA 95562



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OFFICIAL BALLOT ENCLOSED

1-317***** SCH 5-DIGIT 95536
WOLFF STEVEN L & SHARON L HWJT
3 PAINTER ST
RIO DELL CA 95562-1319



How can I get more information?

State Law prohibits district employees from campaigning for or against this measure while on duty or in uniform. All District employees, however, have the obligation to provide information when requested, and fairly describe the choice before property owners.

For additional information concerning Rio Dell Fire Protection District services, the proposed assessment, or this ballot, please contact:

Shane Wilson, Fire Chief
(707) 764-3329