



Questions and Answers for all inquiries received as of 9/26/2025.

Question: Are you able to collect any reimbursement for ambulance services to the valley by health insurance companies?

Answer: Yes, we do bill insurance whenever possible. Between Medicare, Medicaid, and Insurance we collect whatever we are allowed to. However, it does not provide adequate funding for our EMS program as a whole. Our average annual EMS billing funds collected range is between \$80K-\$100K.

Question: Is this Levy in addition to the current amount levied?

Answer:

Yes, this is in addition to the current amount levied (\$29.43 based on FY2026.) The new estimated total levy per \$100,000 of assessed value will be \$68.98. The current Levy provides approximately \$360,000 in tax revenue; with the addition of the new Levy the total would be approximately \$835,000 in annual tax revenue.

Question: What does “Competitive wages” mean?

Answer: Competitive wages mean; A Wage that is competitive with that of similar Departments for the equivalent positions for a qualified individual. Examples would be other rural departments such as Cascade and Donnely.

Question: What is the current Paid On call compensation?

Answer: \$85 per 24 Hour Shift

Question: How many unpaid volunteers does the Department have now?

Answer: Firefighter, or Firefighter/EMT, None, all receive some compensation whether Paid on call, an additional responder or a training stipend. Compensations ranges from \$20 up to \$85 for the full shift.

The only true unpaid volunteer positions are the three Commissioners and our Accounting/Payroll/HR person.

Question: How many paid on-call employees do you have now?

Answer: 25 trained Firefighter/EMTS that are eligible to sign up for shifts.

Question: How many paid-on call will you have if the Levy passes?

Question: How will you staff 24/7 with just 2 more full-time and 2 part-time?

Answer: The combination of additional Financial resources for the Paid on-call and the addition of Full and part time staff.

Expanded Answer: If the levy passes, Garden Valley Fire District will be able to staff 24/7 EMS coverage with a minimum of two personnel on duty at all times, ensuring that our community has immediate response capability day and night. This represents a significant improvement from our current model, where we do not have overnight crews, resulting in longer response times and increased strain on our volunteers.

This investment is critical given the broader national and local challenges:

- National Trends: 70% of U.S. fire departments are volunteer based. Since 1985, the volunteer workforce has dropped by 35%, while EMS calls have tripled. This mismatch has created burnout, retention issues, and longer response times across the country.
- Local Realities: Our rural location, while beautiful, makes recruitment and retention even more difficult. Neighboring departments are in worse positions, and many rely on us for mutual aid.
- Countywide Role: Garden Valley Fire District maintains 50% of all EMS ambulances in the county, meaning our stability directly impacts the health and safety of thousands of residents.

With levy support, we will not only provide round-the-clock EMS coverage but also preserve our ability to honor mutual aid agreements with surrounding districts. This ensures that when time-sensitive emergencies such as strokes, cardiac arrests, or traumatic injuries occur, minutes will no longer be lost waiting for an available crew.

Without the Levy we will need to discontinue the current Paid on-call budget allocation (Around \$100K per year total).

Question: What will the Paid on-call be paid if the Levy passes?

Answer: We will offer increased shift pay options; the plan is to be able to double the current paid on call budget to \$150K.

Question: What funding is available from the state via H206?

Sub Question: Would this allow transfer of EMS services to County?

Answer: See “EMS Grant Sustainability Findings” sheet for a thorough review of grant options and notes.

Question: What can be done to improve current business model or provide services to all, then hope to collect payment?

Answer: GVFPD has improved in every area as it pertains to finances over the last 4 years. We have improved our collection rate, the number of services we are allowed to bill for, the accuracy and promptness of submitting claims, and many more. With a call volume of around 400 per year on average, there just isn't enough revenue generated from providing EMS services to pay for the cost to provide it. There is no way to control the call types, refusals of service, inability to pay, Medicare, Medicaid low payments, etc.

Question: How can you reduce the massive write-offs so property owners don't bear the brunt of costs for services most will not use or need, or could obtain via third party, neighbor, Life Flight, etc.?

Answer: 2 Parts, see answer above and; Providing First Responder Fire and EMS services are not something that can be done on a selective basis, we are here for everyone, whether a local taxpaying resident, a visitor or someone just passing through.

Question: Provide a sample of what the new levy rate will be total for 500K and 1M home values?

Answer: The cost per \$100,000 of taxable assessed value based on reasonable estimates prepared in good faith; are as follows: 500,000 of assessed property value would be \$344.90 and for \$1,000,000 of assessed property value that would be \$689.80.