



GVFPD Frequently Asked Questions

1. Has GVFPD looked into other funding options other than more taxes?

Yes. The District actively pursues grants, carefully manages its budget, and has reduced or delayed expenses wherever possible. However, grants are competitive, restricted in how they can be used, and cannot be relied on for day-to-day emergency response staffing. A local levy is the only stable, predictable funding source that ensures firefighters and EMTs are available when emergencies happen.

2. Why is GVFPD asking for additional funding after purchasing a brand new Quick Response vehicle?

That vehicle was purchased through a grant using restricted funds and long-term planning, not levy operating money. Vehicles do not staff themselves. The levy request is about people, not equipment ensuring trained responders are available to answer calls 24/7.

3. What are the statistics for calls involving community members vs visitors?

A significant portion of calls involve visitors, recreationists, and highway travelers, but the majority of calls directly serve Garden Valley residents. Regardless of who calls, GVFPD is legally and ethically obligated to respond. That response capacity must be funded locally.

4. Who do I contact to ask for information about the levy?

You may contact the Garden Valley Fire Protection District office, attend a public commissioner meeting, join a community meeting or reach out to any Fire District member. All levy information is public and transparent.

Questions can also be sent to levyquestions@gvfdidaho.com.

5. How will the increased levy money be spent?

Funds will be used for supporting On-call staffing, which includes shift scheduling to ensure that firefighters & EMTs are available for emergency response.

6. What costs do the Ride Tickets cover, how much does it cost to purchase one and When does it renew?

Ride Tickets help offset ambulance transport costs not covered by insurance. They are optional, affordable, and can be renewed annually. Exact pricing and coverage details are available through the District office.

7. When was the last levy passed?

The District has not passed a new levy increase since the formation of the district, despite becoming an EMS transport agency, rising call volume, inflation, and increased training and compliance requirements.

8. Why is the on-call shift system important?

Garden Valley is a rural district that responds to all emergencies. The On-Call Program ensures guaranteed staffing, faster response times, and safer operations especially during nights, weekends, and high-call periods.

9. When would GVFPD start to receive the new levy money?

If passed in May, funds would become available in the next fiscal year, following county tax collection timelines.

10. How much will the levy cost me?

For the average homeowner, the cost is modest, typically the equivalent of a few dollars per month, depending on property value. Based on 2025 net taxable value within the district the increase would be about \$15.51 per \$100,000 of assessable value.

If you have a \$550,000 home, your estimated increase would be \$7.11 per month or about \$85.32 per year

11. Is GVFPD accepting volunteers?

The district is always open to volunteers wanting to fill out an application. However, we only do on-boarding once or twice a year for training purposes. These trainings include an initial Boot Camp (CPR, Hazmat Awareness, Bloodborne and Airborne Pathogens, Emergency Vehicle operations, traffic control, and more) It also involves scheduling other classes such as wildland training, firefighter essentials, and EMT class and more.

12. Why does the department not have open signups for volunteers year-round?

Training, equipment assignment, and supervision are resource-intensive. Recruitment occurs in structured periods to ensure volunteers are properly trained, supported, and successful by attending an initial training that we call "Boot Camp".

If you'd like to volunteer please visit the District office to learn more about the process and requirements.

13. What will happen if the levy does not pass?

Without additional funding, the District will likely face: reduced on-call coverage, longer response times, increased responder burnout, and greater reliance on mutual aid. Emergency services will likely become less predictable without guaranteed staffing.

14. Why does the Chief not run every call?

The Chief has administrative, training, compliance, and leadership responsibilities. Operational command is delegated to trained officers so the entire system continues to function effectively.

15. Why was the original levy increase request \$39.55 and this levy increase is only \$15.51 per \$100,000 of assessable value?

After listening to voters, the District significantly reduced the levy request to focus only on supporting the on-call system, removing long term strategic goals from the request.

16. Does the District accept donations?

Yes, the district does accept donations, although they may not be tax deductible. There are also two organizations that are affiliated with the district that are 501C3 non-profits that benefit the District. Those are the Garden Valley Firefighter's Association and the Garden Valley Fire Auxiliary. Donations to those organizations are tax deductible.

17. Will this affect my homeowner's insurance?

Yes, having scheduled personnel to respond to emergencies increases GVFPD's insurance rating (ISO) which positively affects your ability to get and maintain homeowner's insurance as well as the cost of insurance. Many locals are receiving large cost increases and even cancellations to their home owners insurance. On-Call staff is one area that can help prevent further cost increases.

18. Why has the 'Paid On-Call Program' been renamed to the "On-Call Program"?

The "paid" part of the name isn't an accurate reflection of the program because our volunteers only receive a small stipend not actual "pay". The updated name more accurately reflects the purpose of the program.

19. Why is the district requesting that six people be on call 24/7?

NFPA 1720 standard outlines minimum personnel requirements for volunteer fire departments based on demographic-driven risk zones, focusing on safely managing emergency scenes. Staffing goals range from 6 to 15 personnel depending on population density. Any calls not a standard medical 6 people are needed to staff the apparatus needed safely.

- Motor Vehicle Accident : Fire Engine staffed with three, Medical Unit staffed with two, and one Duty Officer (Incident Command)
- Structure Fire / Wildland Fire: Fire Engine staffed with three, Medical Unit staffed with two, and one Duty Officer (Incident Command) requesting all additional volunteers to staff additional units (i.e. Second Engine, Tenders)
- Medical: Medical unit staffed with two, plus one Duty Officer. If patient transport is required, additional staff are still available to respond to a second call

20. Why does GVFPD recruit people from Boise?

Over the last two completed boot camps, only two local applicants applied to join. As a result, many of our recent recruits have come from outside the immediate area. Every current member (“local” or not) has completed all required training and certifications to serve the community safely and effectively.

Every current member, regardless of residence, has completed all required training and certifications and is fully qualified to serve the community safely and effectively.

21. Why are training requirements so high?

Rope rescue, swiftwater rescue, EMS, wildland fire, structure fire, extrication from entrapment, hazardous material situations, downed powerlines, and more are all extremely hazardous to life safety. We take these dangers very seriously and do extensive training to limit on-the-job injuries.

22. How are we funding staff while waiting for the levy?

We are funding at reduced staffing levels and reduced stipend pay. We will continue to provide the best service we can with lower staffing and volunteers while we protect the remaining reserve funds. We can maintain funding these levels for the short-term under our current budget. We can't guarantee staffing will remain adequate with this funding.

23. What is the difference between EMTs and paramedics?

All are EMTs. Paramedics are EMT-P which provide ALS (Advanced Life Support), our members are licensed at the EMT-B level (B for Basic Life Support). Paramedics are EMTs that can give drugs and do advanced skills like EKG interpretation and intubation.

24. How many Paramedics and EMTs does GVFPD have?

We have zero active paramedics. We have 20 EMTs on the roster at this time.

25. Why do we not have paramedics here?

Paramedics are ALS but must operate under a department licensed as ALS to practice at that level. Even if we had paramedics volunteer, they would be restricted in their response as they would be practicing under our BLS license. A department can only be licensed as ALS if they can provide 24/7 coverage at that level.

GVFPD can obtain an ALS license to operate however this is an extremely expensive level of service to maintain.

26. What has the department done or changed since the last levy request?

We have reduced the number of responders on shift and reduced the stipend that the volunteers receive by more than 50%. Volunteers are currently receiving a \$20 stipend per each 12 hour shift they sign up for.

27. Are there other options that do not include raising taxes?

Not long-term solutions, we have spent a lot of time trying to discover alternative ways to fund the On-Call program. We have found some grants and donations that will contribute to the program in the short term but they are not sustainable.

28. Why can't the fire department use another taxing district's money?

Fire district taxes can only be used for fire and emergency services, just like other districts' taxes must be used for their specific purpose. One district cannot use another district's money.

29. Is this a permanent tax?

Yes, this is a permanent tax. It sets the yearly maximum the district can collect, but the commissioners decide the exact amount each year within that limit.

30. What is the difference between this levy and the last levy?

The previous levy would've sustained growth for the district in the future and provided a higher level of service. This levy has been reduced to only sustain the current level of service that is being provided.