



# 2022 WESTERN LAKES FIRE DISTRICT REFERENDUM

1400 Oconomowoc Parkway  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

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## VOTE TUESDAY, AUGUST 9 2022

Western Lakes Fire District (WLFD) serves a population of more than 54,500 from 11 municipalities in Waukesha, Jefferson and Dodge Counties. WLFD provides both Fire and EMS services to the City of Oconomowoc, Town of Oconomowoc, Town of Merton, Town of Ottawa, Village of Dousman, Village of Lac La Belle and Village of Summit.

WLFD has a critical need to increase staffing levels and recruit and retain staff by increasing wages to bring fire and EMS capabilities in line with national standards. Voters will be asked whether or not to support an increase in the property tax levy to fund these critical fire district needs.

## WHY DO WE NEED A REFERENDUM NOW?



With calls for service up 74% and local paid-on-call staffing down 69%, WLFD is challenged with increased response times that put residents, and their property, at risk.



Every year, WLFD loses an average of 40 part-time staff members as they obtain full-time employment or take higher-paying jobs, including with other fire departments. The majority of WLFD's part-time staff are paid just \$14 an hour.



Because of state-imposed levy limits, municipalities within the District must receive approval from voters through a referendum to authorize an increase to the tax levy to fund the services.

## LEARN MORE AND MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION

### IF A MAJORITY **VOTE "YES"**

If community referendums are approved by a majority of voters, WLFD will bolster staff and increase wages to bring fire and EMS capabilities in line with industry standards and best practices, resulting in:

#### **Additional staff, including:**

- 33 additional in-station firefighter / paramedics (11 per shift across the WLFD footprint), eliminating the need to wait for paid-on-call staff to arrive before staff respond to a call;
- 3 additional Battalion Chiefs (one per shift);
- 15 paid internship positions (positions are not new, but new Department of Labor regulations require that intern positions be paid positions);
- 1 full-time administrative assistant; and
- 1 additional fire inspector.

**An approved referendum would also enable increased wages to maintain current staff and avoid staff departures to other departments, be competitive in the market and enhance staff recruitment.**

### Attend an Information Session!

Visit [westernlakesfd.org/referendum](http://westernlakesfd.org/referendum) for a calendar of upcoming sessions.

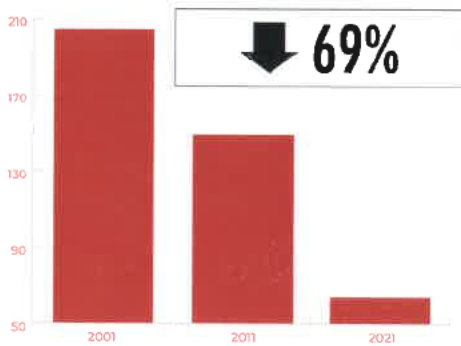
## VOTE 8/9

Visit [myvote.wi.gov/](http://myvote.wi.gov/) to find your polling place and / or request an absentee ballot.

# THE CRITICAL NEED FOR INCREASED STAFFING

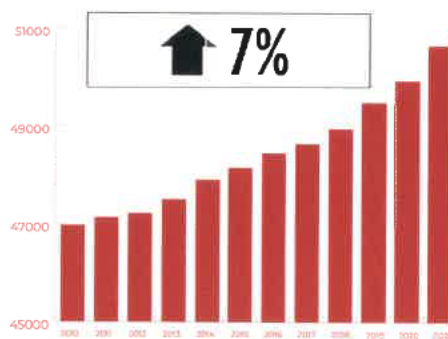
## DECLINING COMMUNITY PAID-ON-CALL STAFF

Since 2001, WLFD has seen a 69 percent decline in local paid-on-call-staff. As a result, in-station staff wait an average of 5 - 7 minutes for paid-on-call staff to arrive to the station BEFORE they can depart to answer a fire call.



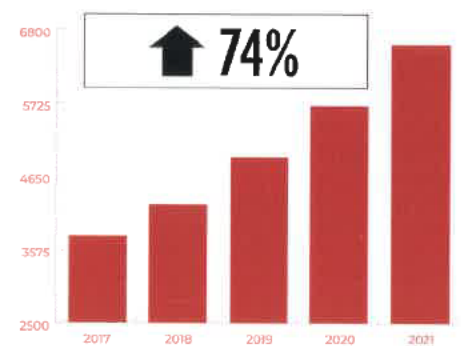
## INCREASING POPULATION

During the past decade, the population in the District increased by more than 3,600 residents. In addition, there are also more commercial corridors, recreational facilities, and specialty care facilities that require services.



## MORE CALLS FOR SERVICE

In 2017, WLFD responded to just over 3,775 calls for fire and/or EMS service. In 2021, WLFD responded to more than 6,500 total calls for service, an increase of 74% in just four years.



OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, FIRE RESPONSE TIMES HAVE INCREASED, CHALLENGING OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE LIFESAVING CARE TO RESIDENTS. CURRENTLY, **WLFD FIRE RESPONSE TIMES DO NOT MEET NATIONAL STANDARDS.**

## THE ASK OF VOTERS

Voters will be asked if they **approve increased property taxes to fund WLFD.**

**Increasing staffing levels will require an additional \$6.3 million each year** shared across WLFD communities that receive fire services, based on a funding formula that accounts for a community's calls for service, population, the value of their facilities, and land value.

Municipality	2023 Funding Formula Allocation	Total Community Share of Increase	Annual Property Tax Increase per \$100K	Monthly Impact per \$100K
City of Oconomowoc	35.48%	\$2,238,470	\$80.10	\$6.68
Town of Merton	18.87%	\$1,196,837	\$66.24	\$5.52
Town of Oconomowoc	17.30%	\$1,091,475	\$62.65	\$5.22
Town of Ottawa	6.90%	\$435,328	\$77.23	\$6.44
Village of Dousman	5.90%	\$372,237	\$160.14	\$13.35
Village of Lac La Belle	1.60%	\$100,946	\$74.30	\$6.19
Village of Summit	13.85%	\$873,811	\$82.47	\$6.87

\*Property tax impacts are estimated based on 2021 assessed property values.