

# WEST SIDE FIRE DISTRICT: PROVIDING FIRE & MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO RURAL HOOD RIVER COUNTY



Chris Nickelsen, Fire Chief

Doug Kelly, Chief Administrative Officer

# SERVICES PROVIDED TO OUR COMMUNITY

- Emergency Medical First Response
- Fire Suppression: Structural & Wildland
- Fire Investigation
- Fire Prevention Services & Public Education
- Hazardous Materials Response
- Rescue: Motor vehicle collisions & trail rescues
- Disaster preparedness



# *VISION*

We will provide excellent fire & emergency medical services, be responsive to the changing needs of our community, & exceed the expectations of the people we serve, both internally & externally

# *MISSION*

To protect lives, property, & the environment through public education, prevention activities, & emergency response services. This shall be accomplished by the dedicated service of our volunteer & career staff

# *VALUES*

Integrity, Teamwork, Service, Trust, Respect,  
Dedication, Safety



# MOTTO

*Neighbor helping Neighbor*



# MOVING FORWARD, WE WANT TO . . .

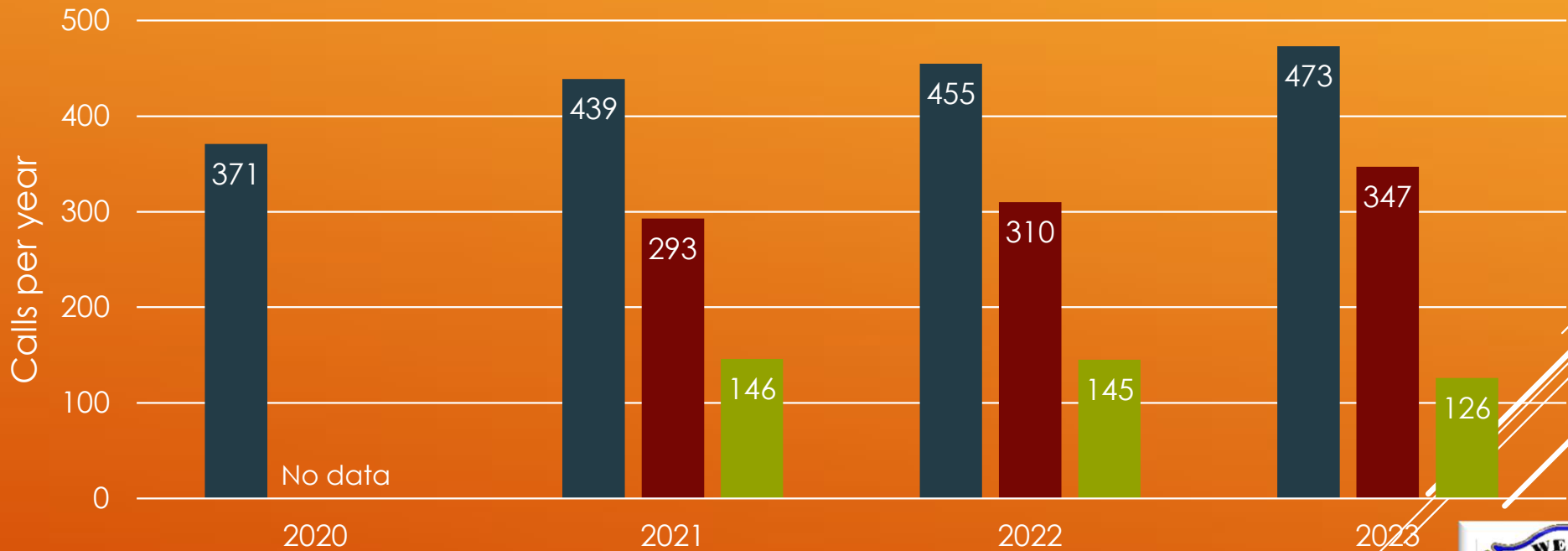
- Ensure we have the right response capabilities to meet the needs of our community
- Improve our ability to implement our mission of protecting lives, property, & the environment



# AS OUR COMMUNITY GROWS & AGES, MEDICAL-RELATED CALLS ARE INCREASING

Yearly Call Volume

■ Total ■ Medical ■ Fire



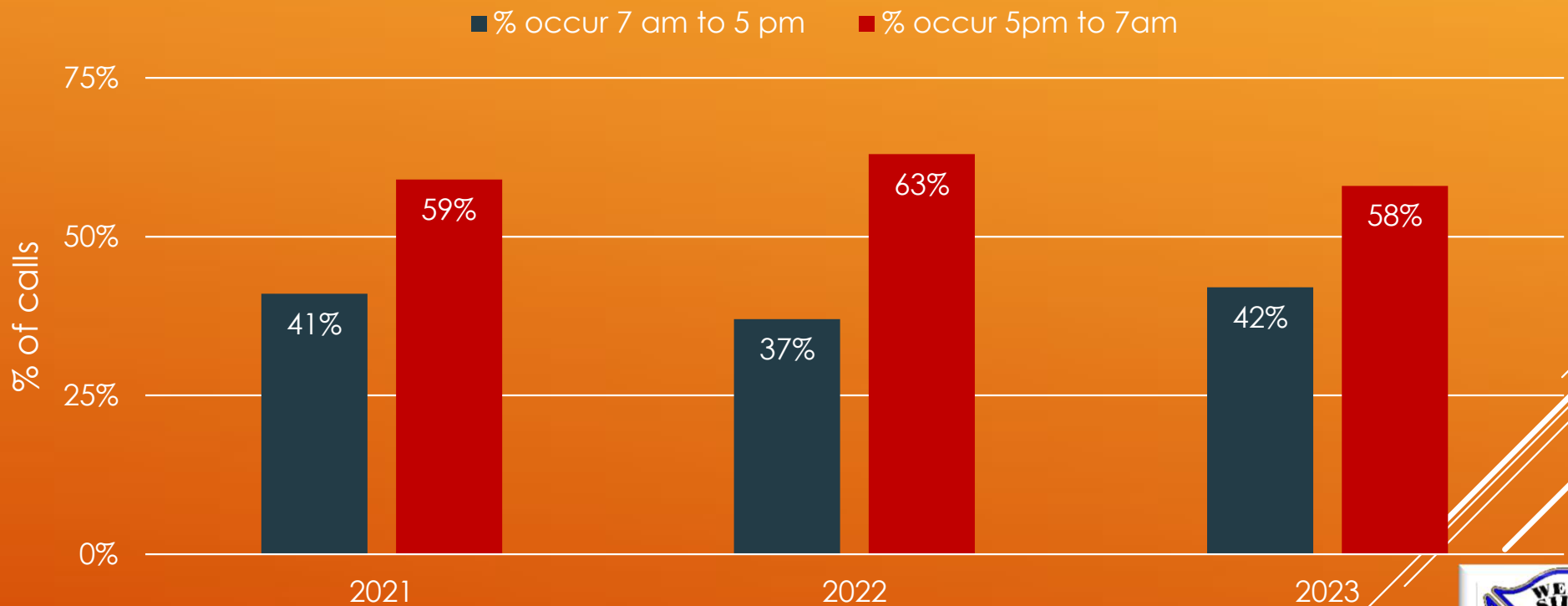
# TO MEET DEMAND FOR SERVICES CURRENT STAFFING INCLUDES . . .

- 3 career firefighter/EMTs
  - ✓ 2 firefighter/EMTs
  - ✓ 1 Fire Chief, who is also a firefighter/paramedic
- 40 volunteers
- Today, this results in a fully-trained & licensed firefighter/EMT on duty daily 7 am to 5 pm. Rely on volunteers evenings & nights



# NO FULLY-TRAINED FIREFIGHTER/EMTS ON DUTY EVENINGS & NIGHTS. OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS, ABOUT 60% OF CALLS DURING THIS TIME PERIOD

Calls by Time of Day





# PROPERTY TAXES PROVIDE THE BULK OF OUR FUNDING

Fire District	Total tax rate permanent + bond + levy
Wy'East Fire	\$1.07
<b>West Side Fire</b>	<b>\$1.28</b>
Parkdale Fire	\$1.55
Mosier Fire	\$2.10
City of The Dalles	\$2.10
City of Cascade Locks	\$2.70
City of Hood River	\$2.81



# TO IMPROVE SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY, A REPLACEMENT FOR THE CURRENT LOCAL OPTION LEVY HAS BEEN REFERRED TO MAY 2024 BALLOT

- Proposed levy rate is 97¢ per \$1,000 of assessed (not market) value, an increase of 47¢ over the current levy
- If approved, the levy would support fire & EMS operations for next 5 years



# LEVY INCREASE WOULD FUND 2 ADDITIONAL FULLY-TRAINED/LICENSED FIREFIGHTER/EMTS

- These 2 additional firefighter/EMTs would ensure at least 1 fully-trained firefighter/EMT is on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - ✓ About 60% of calls for service happen in evening & at night when District currently relies on volunteers to respond
  - ✓ While volunteers provide vital support services, most of these individuals are not trained firefighters or EMTs (currently only 2 are trained firefighters)



- By having 24/7 coverage by fully-trained/licensed firefighter/EMTs, District will be able to:
  - ✓ **Reduce response times.** This would occur because it will not be necessary to wait for volunteers to come from their homes or businesses to respond during evenings or nights
  - ✓ **Improve cardiac survival rates.** Time is critical during these types of medical events. Because response times would improve, cardiac survival rates should improve



# WHAT IS THE PROPOSED LEVY'S IMPACT ON MY PROPERTY TAXES?

- Depends on assessed (not market) value of property
  - ✓ Request is for 97¢ per \$1,000 of assessed value
  - ✓ For home assessed at \$218,000, about average for District, cost would be about \$211 per year or about \$17.58 a month
  - ✓ **This is a \$102 per year or \$8.50 per month increase over current levy**



# WHAT IF LEVY DOES NOT PASS?

- The current levy expires in 2025
- If a new levy is not approved, the District would need to reduce currently staffing from 3 to 1 firefighter/EMT
- Reliance on volunteers & mutual aid from nearby fire districts would increase, increasing time required to respond to a medical or fire emergency



## IN SUMMARY...

- Funds from the replacement levy would be used to provide coverage 24/7 by at least 1 fully-trained/licensed firefighter/EMT
- When a fire or medical emergency occurs, the replacement levy would help ensure a West Side Fire firefighter/EMT can respond without delay



# TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WEST SIDE FIRE . . .

- [www.westsidefire.com](http://www.westsidefire.com)
- 541 386-1550
- Stop by for a station tour at 1185 Tucker Road
- *In an emergency, call 9-1-1*

