COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
1850 RAILROAD AVE
RIFLE CO 81650-3204

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS**

**NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES ON A REFERRED MEASURE**

**COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**
**GARFIELD COUNTY, COLORADO**

**Election Date:** **Tuesday, May 5, 2020**

**Election Hours:** **7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

**Local Election Office Address and Telephone Number:** COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
1850 RAILROAD AVENUE, RIFLE, CO 81650
(970) 625-1243

**Ballot Title and Text:**

**COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BALLOT ISSUE A:**

SHALL COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED $4,717,703.12 (FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR DOLLAR INCREASE) ANNUALLY, BEGINNING IN LEVY YEAR 2020 (FOR COLLECTION IN CALENDAR YEAR 2021) BY INCREASING THE DISTRICT'S EXISTING PROPERTY TAX BY 6.099 MILLS, TO ENABLE THE DISTRICT TO CONTINUE PROVIDING CRITICAL FIRE, RESCUE AND OTHER EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ITS COMMUNITY, WITH ALL SPENDING BEING PUBLICLY DISCLOSED AND SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT AUDIT, AND SHALL ALL REVENUE AND ANY EARNINGS ON THIS TAX CONSTITUTE A PERMANENT VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE WITHIN THE MEANING OF ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND AN EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITATIONS SET FORTH IN SECTION 29-1-301 OF THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES, AND ANY OTHER LAW?

**Total Colorado River Fire Protection District Fiscal Year Spending:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2020 - (proposed) | $ 8,223,733 |
| 2019 - (estimated) | $ 8,112,269 |
| 2018 - (actual) | $ 9,107,123 |
| 2017 - (actual) | $ 7,422,711 |
| 2016 - (actual) | $ 10,476,433 |
| Overall Percentage Change From 2016 to 2020: | -21.5 % |
| Overall Dollar Change From 2016 to 2020: | $ -2,252,700 |

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*continued from front*

**Colorado River Fire Protection District's Estimated Maximum Dollar Amount of Tax Increase for First Full Fiscal Year of Proposed Tax Increase and Estimated First Full Fiscal Year Spending Without Proposed Tax Increase:**

Estimated Maximum Dollar Amount of Tax Increase for First Full Fiscal Year of Proposed Tax Increase: $ 4,717,703

Estimated First Full Fiscal Year Spending without Proposed Tax Increase: $ 8,223,733

**Summary of Written Comments FOR Colorado River Fire Protection District Ballot Issue A:**

Now, more than ever, we need to protect our local emergency response capabilities.

Passage of Issue A will allow Colorado River Fire Rescue (CRFR) to protect emergency response times and maintain emergency services.

CRFR's service population is growing and aging, which is why call volume has increased by 70% the past five years alone. And with 62% of the District's calls tied to medical emergencies, every second counts.

Imagine trying to protect 25,275 residents, 15,339 homes, 850 multi-family dwelling and 1,665 commercial buildings over 851 square miles when short-staffed. That's what our local fire district faces.

While demand for emergency services is increasing, CRFR has been unable to fill six positions. This is due to a national paramedic shortage, competition from West Slope fire districts and a lack of funding. Being short first responders, especially firefighter/paramedics, puts our residents and first responders at greater risk.

Funds are not available to fill vacant positions because CRFR's revenues have dramatically decreased in recent years. From 2015 to 2018, the Fire District's overall assessed valuation dropped from $1.1 billion to $674 million, reducing annual revenues by $2.6 million.

Your YES vote on Issue A will allow CRFR to attract, train and retain firefighter/paramedics and firefighter/EMTs, including filling six vacant positions.

Passage of Issue A will also allow CRFR to shift a portion of its EMS reimbursements, as well as monies it receives for fighting wildland fires on federal lands, toward replacing outdated self-contained breathing apparatus, bunker gear, compressors and other essential emergency equipment and apparatus.

Issue A is not just about protecting residents, homes and businesses, it's also about protecting CRFR's firefighters and paramedics. They deserve to have an adequate number of fellow first responders to safely address complex emergencies they encounter.

It has been 16 years since voters in New Castle and Silt voted on a tax measure for emergency services. And for voters in Rifle, it's been 25 years. CRFR continues to draw down limited reserves to balance its budget, but this is unsustainable. These funds are quickly running out.

Issue A is an investment of $3.64 per month per $100,000 of a home's actual value. For seniors and disabled veterans who qualify and apply for the Colorado Senior Property Tax Exemption, the tax impact is even lower. All spending from the mill levy will be publicly disclosed.

Issue A is a no-nonsense, fiscally responsible request focused on saving lives and property. Issue A deserves our support.

**Summary of Written Comments AGAINST Colorado River Fire Protection District Ballot Issue A:**

No comments were filed by the constitutional deadline.