

De Beque Fire 2020 MILL LEVY PROPOSAL | FAQ SHEET

Why is De Beque Fire Protection District considering placing a mill levy measure on the May 5th, 2020 ballot?

De Beque Fire Protection District needs additional funding to improve emergency services by addressing its highest priority staffing, equipment and apparatus needs.

How would the proceeds of the proposed mill levy be used?

If approved by the voters, the mill levy proceeds would primarily be used to address the following needs:

- Hire a third, full-time person for each shift, up to a total of 4 personnel per shift.
- Hire one operational supervisor to assist with crew training, professional development and implementation of services.
- Improve recruitment and retention of firefighters and paramedics.
- Replace emergency equipment and apparatus to maintain reliability and protect first responders.
- Hire a part-time secretary. The Fire District has not had any secretarial support since 2017.
- Improve firefighter training equipment.

How many full-time personnel does De Beque Fire Protection District currently have in place for each shift?

The Fire District currently has two full-time personnel on duty 24/7. During weekdays, three personnel are on duty, including the Fire Chief. One additional part-time person is scheduled for the weekend. This is below the National Fire Protection Association standard, which requires four personnel for a residential fire response on a fire engine. (NFPA 1710, subsection 5.2.3)

Why does the Fire District need more personnel?

With the Fire District's increase in call volume, having only two personnel on duty becomes a challenge and a safety issue. It is difficult for the Fire District to effectively do vehicle extrication, safely fight a fire or work a critical patient with only two people. Additionally, increasing the number of on-duty personnel would provide for personnel to still be available to respond to calls when the ambulance is out on a transport. The average time for an EMS transport is three hours from start to finish. Additional personnel increases safety and also reduces response times on second calls.

How many calls does the Fire District respond to?

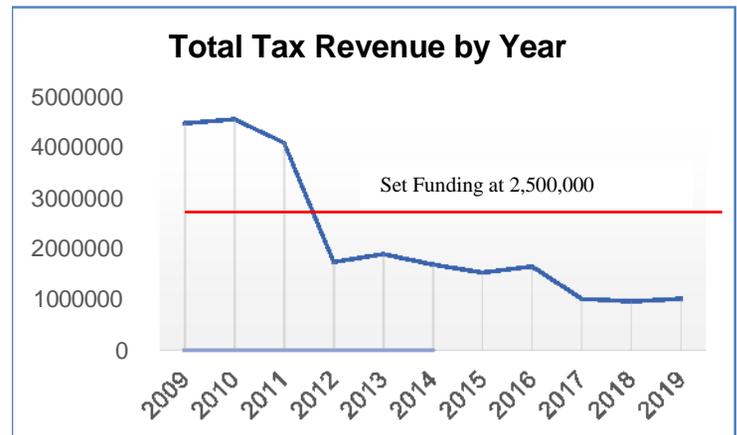
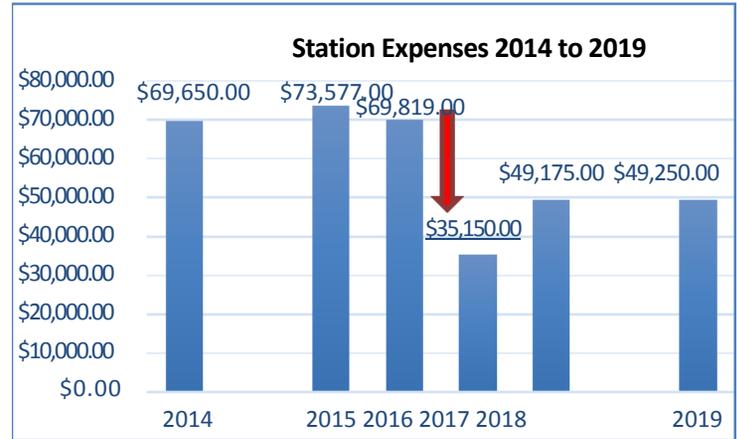
The Fire District's call volume is on the rise. The chart to the upper right demonstrates the increase in call volume. Increase in call volume means more expense and more personnel are needed to provide the same level of service.

Would the construction of the new fire station create a financial burden?

The middle chart above shows fire station operating expenses from 2014 to 2019. The red arrow indicates when the Fire District moved into the new station in the fall of 2016. At that time, expenses actually dropped, because before moving into the new station, the lease being paid by the Fire District to the Town of De Beque was \$59,000 per year in 2016. This amount was not sustainable for the Fire District over the long term and building the new fire station lowered the Fire District's operating costs. The new fire station did not create any debt for the Fire District and was paid for by grants, donations and taxpayer funds.

Why are emergency calls on the rise?

The increase in emergency calls is the result of traffic on I-70, a growing and aging population and more rural recreational activity.



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What are the types of emergency equipment and apparatus that need to be periodically replaced?

If approved by the voters, the mill levy proceeds would help to create a fund to replace fire and EMS equipment and apparatus. Presently, all of the Fire District's apparatus are 10 years old. Ambulances are normally due for replacement in 10 years and fire engines in 20 years. Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), backup generator, heart monitors, personal protective equipment and station maintenance are also examples of equipment that need periodic replacement. National Fire Protection Association standards require that SCBA and bunker gear be replaced every 10 years.

Where does the funding for the Fire District come from?

The Fire District was started operations in 2008 pursuant to the Special Districts Act. The Fire District is mostly funded by mill levy (property) taxes. Property taxes on oil and gas make up 87.5% of the Fire District's revenues. The bottom chart on the first page demonstrates how the Fire District's tax revenues have dropped sharply since 2012, mostly due to a decline in oil and gas. The Fire District receives a small amount of revenue for its ambulance operations; however, ambulance revenues only offset the expense of the medical equipment and do not pay for personnel or operating expenses. There has not been any mill levy increase since the formation of the Fire District.

How were the recent fire station improvements funded?

The new fire station was constructed with a DOLA Energy Impact Grant, Mesa County Federal Mineral Lease District Grant, taxpayer funds and donations from gas and oil companies. Additionally the Fire District applied for grants from the State EMS, Local EMS Council, and BLM assistance grants.

Does the Fire District receive funding from the sale of marijuana?

No, the Fire District does not receive, and has never received, any funding from the sale of marijuana.

Does the Fire District receive funding from the Town of De Beque?

The De Beque Fire Protection District receives no funding from the Town of De Beque and is separate from the Town of De Beque. The Fire District has its own 5 member elected Board of Directors.



How does the De Beque Fire Protection District's current mill levy compare to its peer districts along the I-70 Corridor?

Among the fire districts in both Garfield and Mesa Counties, the De Beque Fire Protection District has lowest tax rate at 4.0 mills. Please see the table listed below.

What is the estimated tax impact of the funding proposal?

The De Beque Fire Protection District is considering a mill levy proposal that would set the Fire District's revenue at \$2,500,000 annually. This is over \$2,000,000 less than the revenue the Fire District originally received in 2008. The mill levy would "float" up or down as needed, so that revenue would not increase or decrease. Approval of the floating mill levy can only be approved by a vote of the people according to TABOR laws. In 2020, the new mill levy would result in an estimated tax of \$4.71 per month, or about \$56.49 per year, per \$100,000 of a home's actual value as determined by the County Assessor. For example, the tax impact for a \$200,000 home in 2020 would be about \$112.97 per year.

If I have questions or input, how can I provide input on the funding proposal?

The De Beque Fire Protection District Board of Directors has not made any final decisions regarding the proposed mill levy increase. Public input will play an important role in the Board's determination whether to move forward. The Board will be gathering public input at an October 5th public open house at 4:00 PM. The public also is encouraged to attend the monthly Board meetings that are posted on our website at: www.debequefire.org. If you have additional questions or comments regarding De Beque Fire Protection District's mill levy proposal, please contact Chief Harvey at (970) 283-8632, Ext. 1001 or email at firechief@debequefire.org.

Can I find more information on line?

A financial informational slide show is available on our website at

www.debequefire.org

Follow the link on the main page.

Agency	Mill
Glenwood Rural Fire Dist. **	12.3410
Clifton Fire District**	11.5520
Gypsum Fire District**	10.5380
Carbondale Fire Dist. **	10.5100
Central Orchard Mesa Dist. **	10.0000
Gateway Unaweeep Fire Dist.	10.0000
Lands End Fire Protection**	10.0000
Lower Valley Fire District**	8.3090
Colorado River Fire (Rifle)	6.4590
Grand Junction Rural Fire	5.9380
Palisade Rural Fire Protection	6.2420
Grand Valley Fire Dist**	6.2330
Plateau Valley Fire District	5.1690
East Orchard Mesa Dist.	4.2720
De Beque Fire District	4.0000