



SUSTAINABLE

FIRE SERVICES

FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



WHY A REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY (RFA)?

Fire and emergency medical services are some of the most important services we provide our residents. The City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District 3 (KCFD3) are forwarding a proposal to voters to create a new Regional Fire Authority (RFA), joining their emergency services together into one organization. This regional approach was recommended by a citizen task force and the RFA Planning Committee, and will provide the long-term resources needed to meet future community needs.

- **Voters will be asked to approve the RFA Plan and create the West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority, effective September 30, 2024, to provide fire protection and emergency medical services funded by an initial property tax of \$.76 per thousand of assessed value to be levied in 2024 and collected beginning in 2025.**



THE GOALS OF THE RFA INCLUDE:

- Maintaining quality fire and emergency medical services
- Providing stable and sustainable funding
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness of operations
- Providing necessary volunteer training/facilities, as well as recruitment.
- Equal governance by both City and KCFD3 officials.



WHAT IS AN RFA?

A Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is a special purpose district and independent taxing authority that provides funding for fire and emergency medical services. An RFA can be made up of cities, fire districts, or a combination of the two. There are currently 14 RFAs in Washington state. Creation of an RFA is authorized by state law. White Salmon and KCFD3 residents have to approve the creation and funding of an RFA.

For more information visit <https://bit.ly/WKRFA> or call:
Chief Bill Hunsaker, WSFD: 509-493-1133 x401
Chief Wes Long, KFD3: 509-493-2996





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HOW WOULD AN RFA BE FUNDED?

The City of White Salmon pays for fire response through the city's general fund, while a voter-approved levy pays for fire response in KCFD3. An RFA would instead create a single, dedicated funding source, with money collected going directly to the RFA versus passing through other jurisdictions.

- **If approved, the initial RFA levy will be \$0.76 per \$1,000 per assessed value.**
- The owner of a \$500,000 home will pay about **\$380.00 a year**, or about \$31.67 per month.
- For homeowners within city limits, this will be a new property tax in addition to current taxes.
- For homeowners in the current KCFD3 boundaries, this will be a monthly increase of \$6.15 from the current KCFD3 levy that this would replace. The levy would go into effect in 2025.
- The proposed plan would allow for future levy increases up to a cap of \$1.00 without an additional vote.

HOW WOULD FUNDING AN RFA IMPROVE SERVICES?

- Consistent, dedicated funding for services and equipment
- Improved coordination for wildfire mitigation efforts
- Formal volunteer and recruiting program
- Increased sustainability of operations long-term
- Training to fit volunteer's lives to help increase participation



Review the Budget

HOW DID WE GET HERE AND WHAT'S NEXT?

The City of White Salmon and KCFD3 have spent the past 18 months considering the best approach to providing fire response services for the larger community:

Joint WS City Council (WSSC) & KCFD3 meeting to consider how best to explore a more formal joint arrangement for emergency services.

Citizen Task Force report to WSSC and KCFD3; RFA Planning Committee formed.

Ballot measure filed for November 7, 2023 election.

April '22

June '22

July '22-Feb. '23

April '23

May '23-July '23

August '23

Meeting between city and KCFD3 leadership to discuss fire response.

Joint Citizen Task Force formed, workshops held November 2022-February 2023.

RFA Planning Committee develops draft RFA Plan and sets levy rate; WSSC approves 4-1 sending RFA Plan to voters; KCFD3 does the same.

If this ballot measure passes, there will be a year to develop a detailed implementation plan for the new Regional Fire Authority, which would go into effect in January 2025. If this ballot measure doesn't pass, a proposal for an RFA can go before the voters up to three times.

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