

**OFFICIAL NOTICE AND BALLOT  
INFORMATION GUIDE  
FOR THE PROPOSED  
FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE SERVICES ASSESSMENT**



**FOR THE  
SOUTH PLACER  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

## Why Did You Receive This Ballot?

You are a property owner served by the South Placer Fire Protection District (“South Placer Fire” or the “Fire District”). You are being asked to vote on a proposed funding measure to ensure continued and improved fire protection and emergency response services, specifically in your Division 2 (Granite Bay) area. Your ballot is your opportunity to participate in deciding whether local funding should be approved for continued and improved fire protection, fire suppression, and emergency response services. Your vote on this matter is crucial because only returned ballots will be counted

## South Placer Fire Protection District

South Placer Fire serves the communities of Granite Bay, Loomis, and the southern areas of Penryn and Newcastle. South Placer Fire covers approximately 55 square miles and serves a population nearing 42,000.

South Placer Fire responds to over 3,500 service calls per year, including structure, wildland, vehicle, and all types of fires that occur in the District. Advanced life support (ALS) medical care, vehicle accidents, rescue emergencies, public service calls, and hazardous material response (at the first responder level) are also part of the services provided. The District’s ALS capabilities are provided by all engines and truck companies and two ALS transport ambulances. In addition, South Placer Fire provides fire prevention, community education, emergency preparedness, and other services relating to protecting lives and property. South Placer Fire is governed by an elected, independent, seven-member Board of Directors.



## **Why Is A Funding Measure Needed?**

The Fire District is not funded by the County or the State. South Placer Fire Protection District, Division 2, is funded through a small portion of local property taxes, miscellaneous fees, and a static \$70 special tax that has remained unchanged since 1981. This tax does not include an inflation index. The lack of a cost-of-living adjustment and the Fire District's current revenue combined are not adequate to continue providing services at a safe level for the community.

To enter a burning structure, State safety standards require four (4) firefighters at the scene, with two (2) firefighters entering the structure and two (2) remaining outside for support - known as the "2 in, 2 out rule" (the law has an exception to this rule in the event there is a known rescue). Additional funding means South Placer Fire would have the ability to retain and hire more firefighters to meet the required standards to put out a fire quickly. With a typical residential fire doubling in size every minute, adequate staffing would provide our local firefighters with a strengthened layer of protection for our community, your family, and your property.

To meet the "2 in, 2 out" standard, the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) recommendation is four (4) personnel per apparatus in a community of this size and risk. The District cannot meet the NFPA recommendation due to budget constraints. The next best option to align with industry standards and respond adequately to the increasing call volume is to staff all apparatus with three (3) personnel. The District pursued and received a Federal Grant that funded six (6) additional positions to increase staffing at Stations 19 and 20 from two to three. The three-year term of the grant expired at the end of the fiscal year 2020/21, eliminating the external funding for these positions.

As a result of this funding loss, a reduction in staff would negatively impact the Fire District's ability to provide an adequate number of firefighters on the scene of an emergency incident, so the District has temporarily maintained these positions until another funding source can be secured. Lacking a change in funding, at the end of the current fiscal year (2021/22), at minimum, staffing on half of the apparatus in the District (Station 19 and 20) will likely be reduced to two personnel, resulting in delayed response and inadequate resources to mitigate incidents quickly.

## **Why Is A Funding Measure Needed? (Continued)**

The cost of providing fire protection and emergency response services continues to rise each year due to increasing emergency calls, enhanced firefighter training requirements, the growing wildfire risk to the community, and substantial increases in operational costs, including fuel, utilities, equipment, insurance, and personnel over the last 40 years. The initial special tax, implemented in 1981, covered 100% of employee wages. Today that same special tax covers just 18% of wages.

Competitive wages in neighboring agencies have made it increasingly difficult for the Fire District to retain and attract firefighters, specifically paramedic firefighters. A new funding source will help address the wage disparity and, in turn, increase the retention of our locally trained firefighters. Adequate staffing also allows the Fire District to assemble the recommended number of personnel on the scene of an incident quicker, which is a factor for your Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating, affecting insurance rates. A negative change in ISO rating could result in higher costs with possibly lower coverage limits or the complete loss of homeowners insurance coverage.

## **How Was The Assessment Determined?**

The total annual costs of the proposed additional firefighter staffing, apparatus and equipment replacements as needed, repairs to aging facilities (i.e., structural, plumbing, and electrical repairs), and other services to be funded by the assessment would be allocated to each property based on the estimated special benefit received. The method of benefit allocation is based on the relative special benefit to a property in relation to a single-family home, the type of property, and its size. The total proposed assessment amount for your property is shown on the enclosed ballot. If you own multiple properties, your ballot will show the total proposed assessment amount for each one.

The types of special benefits would primarily include increased safety and protection of real properties. An Engineer's Report describing the proposed improvements, method, and basis upon which the amount of the proposed assessment was calculated. Special benefits, budgets, and proposed assessments for each parcel are available for review at <https://www.southplacerfire.org>. You may also request a copy in person at the South Placer Fire Protection District public counter at Station 17- 6900 Eureka Rd. Granite Bay, CA.

## **What Would This Measure Provide?**

The increased funding to South Placer Fire would be used to:

### **Retain and Attract Regions Best Firefighters**

Funding from this measure would allow South Placer Fire to provide wages more in line with regional agencies allowing the District to increase retention and reduce employee turnover. These factors will help ensure that our locally trained firefighters stay in our community.

### **Ensure Rapid Response Times to 9-1-1 Emergencies**

Funding from this measure would help South Placer Fire maintain and improve rapid response times. Specifically, State safety standards require that when firefighters use self-contained breathing apparatus, a minimum of 2 firefighters work as a team inside the impacted structure. A minimum of 2 firefighters must be on standby as support outside the structure to provide aid or perform a rescue. Essentially, the “2 in, 2 out rule” protects our firefighters but requires sufficient staffing levels. Funding from this measure would increase the density of staffing within the District, allowing firefighters to arrive and assemble on scene faster, effectively reducing the impact of the emergency.

### **Provide updated firefighting equipment for our Community**

This measure would support improved maintenance, repair, upgrade, and/or replacement of outdated equipment and apparatus to ensure South Placer Fire uses up-to-standards equipment and apparatus for years to come. Funds can assist with replacing old and outdated fire apparatus and equipment where prices have continued to increase beyond the current static \$70 base rate special tax offsets.

### **Be Better Prepared for Large-Scale Wildfires**

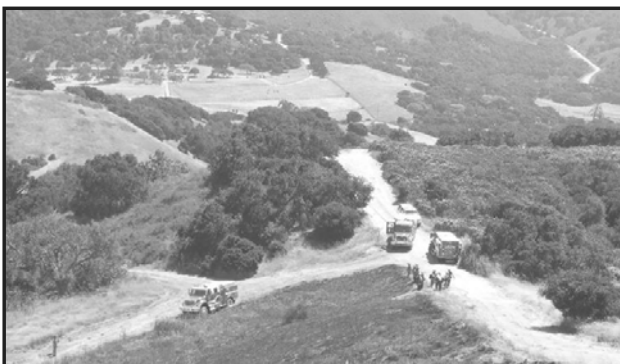
Our community’s greatest threat is wildfire. Funding from this measure would provide South Placer Fire with additional fire protection and lifesaving emergency resources needed to better protect residents if large-scale wildfires or emergencies arise.

## How Much Is the Proposed Assessment?

The proposed assessment for your property or properties for 2022/23 is printed on the Official Ballot, which includes this notice and information guide. The typical base annual assessment for single-family homes is proposed to be \$214.16 (The annual assessment amount a property is proposed to pay would be that property's base rate adjusted by factors like relative fire risk and travel time.) The proposed base assessment for other residential property types is calculated based on these factors and the number of dwelling units and parcel size. Multi-family dwellings have a proposed base assessment of \$125.82 per unit, which is the same amount for a condominium. Commercial, industrial, and other properties are assessed according to their parcel size and type. For example, retail stores would be assessed at \$619.83 per acre of property size. The total estimated amount assessed to the entire area subject to this assessment would be approximately \$2,499,518 for 2022-23.

## Will This Assessment Increase in the Future?

The assessment will be continued in future years as long as the Board of Directors approves an annual resolution to continue this assessment. In future years after 2022-23, the assessment can only be adjusted for inflation by an amount equal to the change in the Northern California (San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward) Consumer Price Index, but not to exceed 3% per year. The annual adjustment, engineers' report, and budget are reviewed and approved annually by a community oversight committee. Their recommendation is then sent to the District Board for approval at a public meeting. These controls and adjustments will protect the public by keeping assessment revenues in line with the cost of providing fire protection and emergency response services and ensuring inflation adjustments align with community expectations.



*Funds from this proposed assessment would be required by law to be used for fire protection and emergency response services within the Division 2 boundaries of the South Placer Fire District*



*The services this measure would fund are critical for protecting property and life.*

### **Method of Voting**

To complete the enclosed official ballot, mark the oval next to either Yes or No, sign the ballot, fold it in half and place it in the provided postage-paid return envelope, and mail it to South Placer Fire Protection District 6900 Eureka Road, Granite Bay, CA 95746. You may also hand deliver it at the public hearing (see below for the times and location). Only official ballots which are signed and marked with the property owner's support or opposition will be counted. Ballots must be received by the end of the Public Hearing scheduled on Wednesday, June 8, 2022. The meeting will begin at 7:00 pm. If you lose your ballot, require a replacement ballot, or want to change your vote before the close of the public hearing, call South Placer Fire at (916) 791-7059 for another ballot. See the enclosed ballot for additional instructions. Ballots are weighted by the proposed assessment amount and will be tabulated accordingly. The assessment will not be imposed if, upon the conclusion of the public hearing, weighted ballots submitted in opposition to the assessment exceed the weighted ballots submitted in favor of the assessment. If a majority of weighted ballots returned are in support, the assessment may be levied for the fiscal year 2022-23 and may be continued in future years to fund fire protection and emergency response services as directed by the Board.

## **Public Hearing**

A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 7:00 pm at the SPFPD Station 17- 6900 Eureka Road. Granite Bay, CA. The public is encouraged to attend. Tabulation of the returned ballots will commence the following morning at Station 17. The public is welcome to attend. The results of the tabulation are expected to be announced at the continuation of the public hearing, scheduled for July 13, 2022, Board Meeting at 7:00 pm at the SPFPD Station 17- 6900 Eureka Road. Granite Bay, CA.

## **Public Accountability Standards**

The funds from this assessment can only be used to provide fire protection and emergency response services within the South Placer Fire Protection District, Division 2 boundaries.

## **South Placer Fire Protection District Governance and Transparency**

Regular meetings of the South Placer Fire Protection District Board of Directors are held on the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm at SPFPD Station 17 – 6900 Eureka Road, Granite Bay, CA. The public is encouraged to attend. Agendas are available on our website at [southplacerfire.org](http://southplacerfire.org). Please contact the District at (916) 791-7059 if you need any additional information.

## **Additional Information**

For additional information concerning South Placer Fire Protection District services, the proposed assessment, or this ballot, please contact Chief Mark Duerr at:

South Placer Fire Protection District  
Public Counter  
6900 Eureka Road  
Granite Bay, CA 95746  
(916) 791-7059