

Lake Ozark Fire Protection District FAQ



A Sales Tax Initiative To Maintain Quality Services

On April 2, 2024, residents of Lake Ozark Fire Protection District (LOFPD) will vote on a District created Sales Tax Initiative proposal to maintain quality Fire and EMS services. This document provides answers to some commonly asked questions about the proposal and how it would impact local residents.

Q. What is the purpose of the proposal?

A. This Sales Tax Initiative will allow LOFPD to continue to provide the highest quality Fire and EMS service to our citizens, update outdated equipment and facilities. If approved, the proposal will provide funding to:

- Re-establish general operating funds to maintain the expected level of service by our residents and visitors.
- Restore a regular apparatus and equipment replacement cycle.
- Replace some existing aging fleet of fire trucks.
- Replace firefighting equipment and gear as needed to keep the community and firefighters safe.
- Perform necessary technology updates, safety repairs and maintenance to current fire stations.

Q. Why are there 2 measures for Lake Ozark Fire Protection District on the ballot?

A. Since the Fire District was formed first and the ambulance district added at a later date, both are separate taxation entities and appear as such on your property tax statements. Funds from each of these are dedicated to the Fire Protection portion and the Ambulance Service portion, respectively. RSMo, 321.552 allows the district to seek voter approval for sales tax funding for each entity.

Q. Why is this Sale Tax Initiative better than traditional property tax funding?

A. Under the current model, the property-owning residents within our district boundaries carry the entire fiscal load of the LOFPD through real estate and property taxes. The sales tax model allows for property tax relief on the district residents and allows for funding from the influx of tourists during peak season. In other words, currently, when our population swells and our tourists are requiring Fire/EMS/Rescue services, the personnel, equipment, and costs are being absorbed by property owners, not those visiting our beautiful area.

Q. What are the financial details of the proposal?

A. Each measure is seeking approval for a ½ cent sales tax. If approved, a property owner within our district would receive 50% property tax relief, issued by the state, based on the previous year's sales tax income.

- Basic Rundown
 - If both measures were to pass, and \$1,000,000.00 was received in sales tax, \$500K would go to the fire district and ambulance service, \$500K would be issued in property tax relief to LOFPD district residents. This would take place after the first year, and every year after for perpetuity.

B. Why do the district's fire trucks need to be replaced?

A. The District's capital outlay expenses (gear, hose, radios, apparatus refurb) have increased 143% since 2019. Most of the district's apparatus were purchased around 2007, nearly 17 years ago. The district currently has 13 vehicles beyond 10 years old and 9 vehicles beyond 15 years old. Many of the trucks were due for replacement back in 2017. Over the years, both the age of the trucks along with the continuous rise in call volume, has put the district in need of truck replacement.

Q. What facility challenges is the district facing?

A. Much like homes, fire stations need regular maintenance. Because of the current financial situation there has not been funding available for some regular maintenance such as safety and technology enhancements at many of the stations. For example, we have had a 13% increase in utilities cost and 71% increase in dispatch expenses since 2019.

Q. How is LOFPD funded?

A. Nearly all of LOFPD's funding comes from Real Estate and Personal Property taxes (85%), Ambulance Billing (10%), Grants and Donations (3%), Permit Fees (1%), and Interest Income (1%).

Q. What are LOFPD's expenditures?

A. The majority of LOFPD expenditures go toward salaries and benefits (74%), 20% is for operations, 3% goes to administration and 3% goes toward capital projects.

Q. When is the election?

A. Election Day is Tuesday, April 2. In an election, EVERY SINGLE VOTE IS IMPORTANT. The proposal requires simple majority approval to pass. It is crucial that you remember to vote on that day and remind all of your friends and family to do the same. The polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Q. Who is eligible to vote in the April 2 election?

A. All registered voters in the Lake Ozark Fire Protection District are eligible to vote in this election. A person may vote in any election who:

- Is a citizen of the United States and is 18 years of age or older,
- Has been a resident of the state and of the election district, in which the person seeks to vote for at least 28 days prior to the election,
- Has registered before the election registration deadline,
- And is not registered to vote in another jurisdiction.

B. How do I register to vote?

A. You can register to vote by the 4th Wednesday prior to the election, any time before March 6, 2024. Residents within Miller County visit <https://www.millercountymissouri.org/> Residents within Camden County visit <https://www.camdenmo.org/>

Q. How can I vote an absentee ballot?

A. You will need to request a ballot in writing. For more information about absentee voting, Residents within Miller County visit <https://www.millercountymissouri.org/> Residents within Camden County visit <https://www.camdenmo.org/>

Q. Where Do I Vote?

A. Your precinct number and polling location are shown on your voter notification card. Additional information is available <https://voteroutreach.sos.mo.gov/portal/>

Q. How will the Sales Tax Initiative appear on the ballot?

A. The proposal will appear on the April 2 ballot as follows. The format and language of the proposal are written as required by election law.

Ambulance Service

Shall Lake Ozark Fire Protection District-Ambulance impose a sales tax of amount up to one-half of one percent for the purpose of providing revenues for the operation of the Lake Ozark Fire Protection District Ambulance Service and the total property tax levy on properties in the Lake Ozark Fire Protection District-Ambulance shall be reduced annually by an amount which reduces property tax revenues by an amount equal to fifty percent of the previous year's revenue collected from this sales tax?

Yes ___

No ___

Fire Service

Shall Lake Ozark Fire Protection District impose a sales tax of amount up to one-half of one percent for the purpose of providing revenues for the operation of the Lake Ozark Fire Protection District and the total property tax levy on properties in the Lake Ozark Fire Protection District shall be reduced annually by an amount which reduces property tax revenues by an amount equal to fifty percent of the previous year's revenue collected from this sales tax?

Yes ___

No ___