

PROPOSED 2018 REFERENDUM

November 6, 2018



Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for the New Lenox Fire Protection District, Will County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.023% above the limiting rate for the purpose of fire protection and ambulance service for levy year 2016 and be equal to 0.59% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy years 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021?

New Lenox Fire Protection District



2018 REFERENDUM

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An Open Letter from the New Lenox Fire Protection District Board of Trustee Treasurer

This November, the New Lenox Fire Protection District is sponsoring a referendum to increase our limiting tax rate by .2023%. This will raise our current limiting tax rate from .3877% to .59%. With the last increase being approved in 1989, it is sorely needed.

Our current taxing rate barely covers our labor cost, without considering equipment cost and other expenses necessary to run the district. The only reason we have been able to maintain the level of service our residents deserve and are accustomed to has been through other minor revenue streams. Unfortunately, those revenue streams and our reserves have been maxed out, leaving a tax increase as our only avenue to maintain and/or improve our services. NLFPD's current equipment is aging and in order keep our residents and personnel safe it needs to be replaced or upgraded; neither of which we can afford without additional funding.

Even with this increase, New Lenox Township's fire district rate would be significantly lower than our five neighboring districts. This difference in tax revenues ensures that our first responders are paid much less than our neighbors. The imbalance in tax rate has made retaining experienced personnel and replacement of aging equipment extremely difficult, and now has made it impossible.

Over the last 29 years, our area has grown and so have our revenues; but not as fast as our personnel, facilities, and equipment costs. Improvements have made significant progress in our response time to our residents. It is the first key element in maximizing lifesaving and minimizing damage. By making some of these upgrades with what we have, such as our new CAMP (Cardiac Arrest Management Program), we have been able to improve our life saving rate from 3% to 25% over the last two and a half years!

Without a much-needed tax increase, the fire district will be forced to make major cuts in personnel, facilities, and equipment, which will adversely affect response time and therefore, our "save rate." The district tried to get ahead of today's situation, however the referendums placed in 2006, February and November 2008, and 2014 were met with failure. If at this point the referendum does not pass, the district will have to make reductions in service and manpower.

Most of our residents have car and homeowner's insurance to protect against major losses, as they cannot afford such a loss. They pay insurance premiums hoping to never use them. Ensuring that the NLFPD has all the tools needed to respond to an emergency, just in case, is as important as insuring your home and car. In fact, the NLFPD rate is annually lower than many of your other insurance rates.

Tom Sauter, NLFPD Trustee Treasurer

Referendum 2018

On November 6, 2018, the New Lenox Fire Protection District is sponsoring a referendum to increase our limiting tax rate by .203%. This would raise the current limiting tax rate from .3877% to .59%

The New Lenox Fire Protection District is a separate taxing body from the Village of New Lenox. The NLFPD has its own governing body of Trustees and Commissioners which oversees the fire district. This board is completely separate from the Village of New Lenox, its Trustees and the Mayor.



Why is there a need for the increase?

The New Lenox Fire Protection District has not seen a limiting tax increase since 1989 (**29 years ago**). Since then, the population has more than doubled from 16,574 to 42,172 per the US Census Bureau, and the amount of commercial and industrial buildings have grown exponentially, causing an increased demand.

In 1990, NLFPD had 890 calls for service, in 2017, the call volume grew to 4,252; a 378% increase in workload.

Not only has the number of emergency calls increased, but so has the number of multiple calls at one time. This year, we have run more than 1,099 calls simultaneously. Of these requests for service, 986 were two calls at a time, 83 times there were three calls at a time. There were 34 instances where we received four to eleven calls at a time, and we needed to rely on mutual aid from other area fire districts to help with coverage. The increasing number and multiple requests for service at a time also increases our response time, as our vehicles have to drive from other areas of the district in order to get to the other emergency.

Over the last 29 years, the NLFPD has needed to expand the number of fire stations covering the district, manpower, and apparatus to keep up with the increased demands of calls for service. Throughout the entire time, the tax rate has stayed the same.





What are the current tax rates for fire districts in neighboring communities compared to New Lenox?

Currently the NLFPD tax rate is .3877 and the recommended increase is .59.

Neighboring communities: Frankfort - .80, Homer - 1.07, Manhattan - .98, Mokena - 1.001.

Below is a comparison chart:

Fire District	Tax Rate	Tax Levy	Stations	Calls (2017)
New Lenox	.3877 (proposed .59)	\$4,750,149	4	4252
Frankfort	.80	\$10,622,703	5	4377
Homer	1.07	\$6,202,778	3	1956
Manhattan	.98	\$3,008,813	2	1124
Mokena	1.001	\$6,136,252	3	2607

What would this increase mean for me?

This would be the equivalent of approximately an extra:

- \$5.62/mo for \$100k home
- \$8.43/mo for \$150k home
- \$11.24/mo for \$200k home
- \$14.05/mo for \$250k home
- \$16.86/mo for \$300k home



Where does the NLFPD get their funding?

The NLFPD only receives funding through property taxes twice a year. It does not receive any funding from the village or sales taxes.

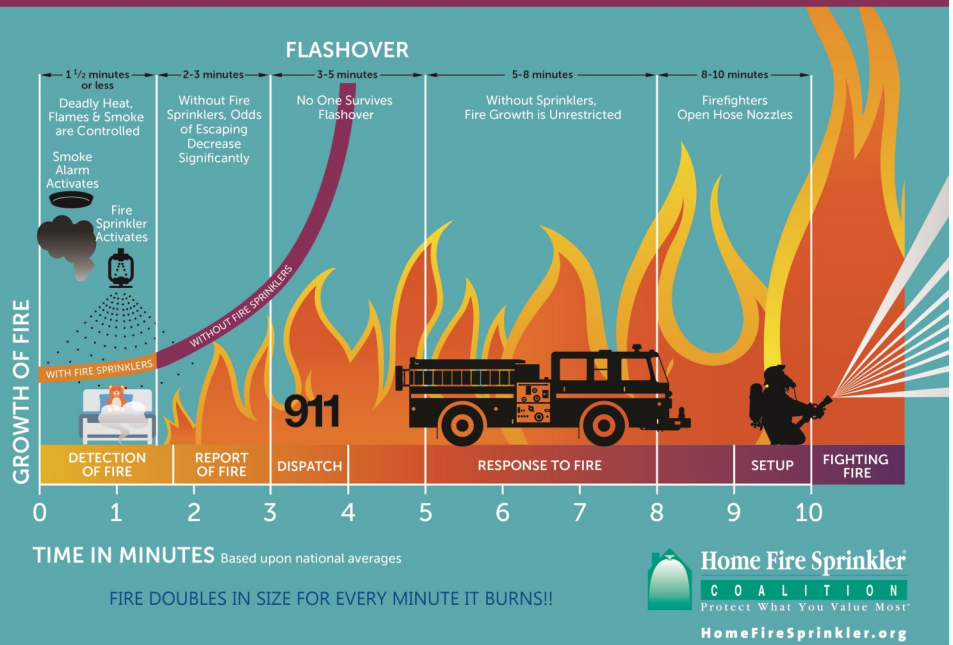
Any alternate funding the NLFPD receives is through:

- Grants (Federal, State, Local, & Private)
- Ambulance Billing to Non-Residents.
 - The insurance providers (private, Medicare, Medicaid) of district residents are billed for ambulance services, but any remaining fees are not currently billed back to the residents. Instead, these remaining fees are waived.
- Accident and Clean Up fees for Non-Residents
- Donations from the New Lenox Fire Foundation
- Donations from Organizations, Private Families, and Companies
- False Alarm Fines
- New Construction Plan Reviews
- Fire Protection Systems Acceptance Tests

The New Lenox Fire Protection District is a separate taxing body from the Village of New Lenox and does not receive any funding from village or sales taxes.



HOME FIRE TIMELINE



Why is Response Time Important to me?

A quick response time is important, no matter what the emergency. How long it takes for first responders to get to the scene of an emergency can have a dramatic effect on the outcome of the situation. The graph above shows a timeline based on national averages for a home fire. Due to the types of materials homes and furniture are built with, fire burns faster and hotter than in years past; in fact, fire doubles in size for every minute it burns.

Having the personnel and equipment needed is a key component to getting the best outcome possible in emergencies. If the fire district is currently on another call in progress or has to reduce the number of shift personnel, we will be required to rely more heavily on our neighboring fire districts, which will take longer to get to the emergency. This can equate to thousands of dollars in damage or the loss of life.

Response time isn't just important for fire calls. Every day we have calls for service that could have a negative impact on both residential and commercial properties and lives. Emergencies such as ice rescues, pool drownings, broken pipes, carbon monoxide poisonings, and many other types of calls will be effected.

EMS Response Time

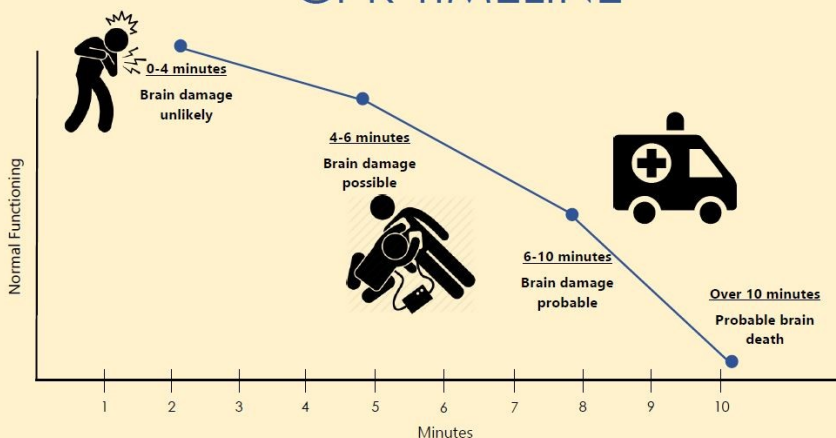
The response time for EMS calls is critical. According to the American Heart Association, cardiac arrest can be reversible if treated within a few minutes with an electronic shock and advanced life support (ALS) intervention to restore a normal heartbeat. Verifying this standard are studies showing that a victim's chances of survival are reduced by 7%-10% with every minutes that passes without defibrillation and ALS intervention.

Response time for patients with signs of a stroke is also crucial. The drug to reverse strokes can only be used within three hours of having a stroke. Early recognition of a stroke and early emergency care can make a huge difference in the outcome of the patient.

In addition, other EMS calls such as drownings, ice rescues, traumatic injuries, among many others, can have significantly different outcomes depending on the time it takes our firefighter/paramedics to arrive at the location of the call.



CPR TIMELINE



- Events requiring CPR include cardiac arrest, allergic reaction, choking, and asthma
- NLFPD response time objective is 4-6 minutes
- The CAMP method of CPR has increased our save rate from 3% to 25%
- Effective CAMP requires 8 to 9 paramedics

Source: National HealthCare Provider Solutions

CAMP PROGRAM

New Lenox Fire Protection District implemented a new CPR protocol known as C.A.M.P (Cardiac Arrest Management Program) in 2015 and it is still going strong with many successful saves. This program requires a great deal of manpower, but we know the benefits are tremendous and we will continue to provide this to the community. Every time we receive a call for a cardiac arrest event, such as a patient not breathing, we commit eight to nine firefighter/paramedics (FF/PM) to the scene for a minimum of 20 minutes, if the heart rhythm changes, the clock starts over. The C.A.M.P. program has specific duties for each person on the scene, and rotates those who are doing chest compressions so that we can maintain higher quality CPR. Studies have shown that two minutes is the maximum amount a time a person can perform adequate compressions, anything longer than this, the effectiveness of the compressions decreases. By changing out our FF/PM doing this job every two minutes, we have a more consistent level of compressions being done.

Through the utilization of the C.A.M.P. methods, over the last few years we have seen our percentage of saves increase dramatically from 3% before 2015 to 25% in 2017!

What will happen if the referendum is not passed?

Without a much-needed tax increase, the fire district will be forced to make major cuts in personnel, facilities, and equipment, which will adversely affect response time and therefore, our “save rate.”

If the referendum does not pass, residents will be exposed to a reduction in service.



What would the referendum do for the NLFPD and its residents?

The referendum would:

- Maintain manpower to existing stations and quick response times, continuing high-quality service the residents have come to expect. Increase revenue to keep up with the ever-growing needs of the community.
- Maintain sufficient manpower to continue running Cardiac Arrest Management Program (CAMP) at current level.
- Before instituting CAMP program in 2015, the district's save rate for cardiac events where someone's heart stopped was 3%. In the last 2 years, this save rate has increased to 25%!
- Outdated equipment would be replaced and updated to increase safety for our personnel and our residents. (Costs to replace does not include any equipment, such as extrication tools, Cardiac Monitors, etc.)
 - 2001 Engine with over 120,000 miles, \$500k to replace
 - 2003 Engine with over 120,000 miles, \$500k to replace
 - 2004 Engine with over 115,000 miles, \$500k to replace
 - 1986 Tender, \$400k to replace
 - 2010 Ambulance (x2), \$250k/each to replace
 - Note: According to Fire Apparatus Manufacturers Association, the average life expectancy of a fire engine in a suburban area is 16 years. Industry Standard for a front line ambulance is 7 years.





An Open Letter from the New Lenox Fire Protection District Board of Trustee President

Currently, the district is faced with a problem never encountered in our 77-year history. Over the last 12 years, the New Lenox Fire Protection District has requested a referendum be placed on the ballot four times in anticipation of what we are now confronting. Unfortunately, although close at times, they all became failed attempts. Earlier this year, the district issued a tax anticipation warrant against next year's revenue. Our costs have exceeded the tax funds we received, and the district's savings and grant monies have been depleted throughout the years. This is why we need to pass a referendum in March.

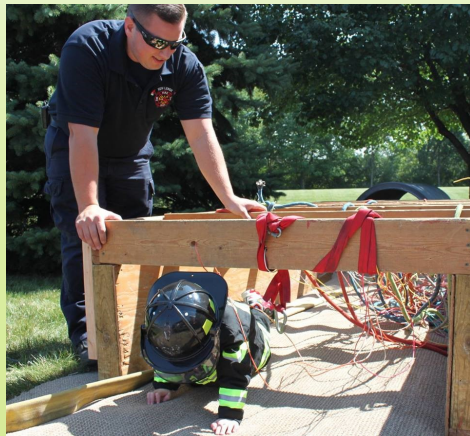
Today, in the fire service across the country, our response time from receiving a call for service to arriving at the emergency is paramount. Our 36-square mile district is unique in that it contains two major railways (CNN and Metra) in which freight trains move slowly, 12 miles of I-80 to cover, the fastest growing community in Will County, and one of the most dangerous intersections at I-355 where it joins I-80. Together, these are all burdensome for us with both time and expense. All of the above impede on our response times within our district. Response times are critical when facing EMS calls such as cardiac events and strokes, and it is crucial that we arrive as quickly as possible to fire calls, as newest research shows fires are now doubling in size every minute it burns. The fire district is entrusted by the citizens within our boundaries to ensure fire and life safety, which is why we take our lack of resources, aging equipment, and our community's ever-growing needs so seriously.

Moving forward, the New Lenox Fire Protection District will continue to provide the quality service that you are accustomed to and have come to expect. However, with a rapidly developing district of nearly 45,000 residents and limited resources, it may be with less manpower and equipment.

In 2017, the NLFPD ran over 4,250 calls, with 25% of those calls happening when two or more calls were in progress at the same time. In the fire district, our slogan is "Save a Life," and that life may be yours!

Please help us pass this referendum to maintain and enhance our continued service.

Roy "Skip" Minger, Trustee President



New Lenox Fire Protection District

261 E. Maple Street
New Lenox, IL 60451

815.463.4500 ph
815.485.3959 fax

www.nlfire.com