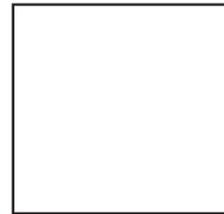
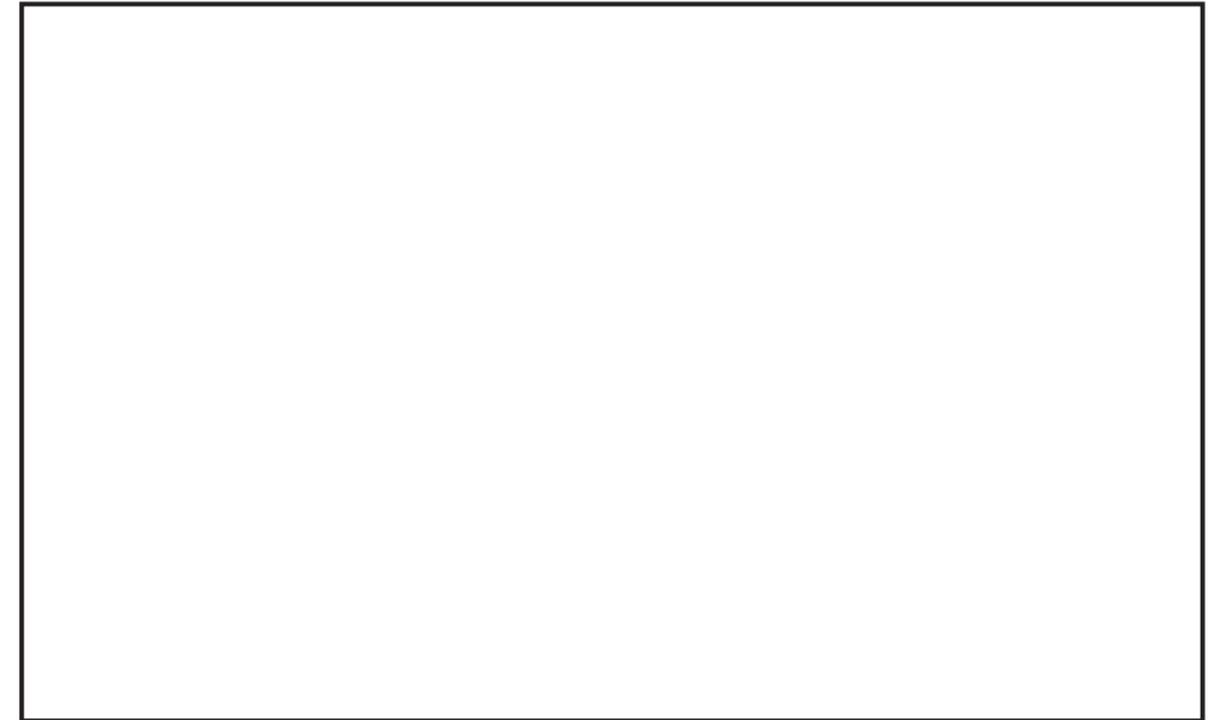




**Nederland Fire
Protection District**
PO Box 155,
Nederland CO 80466



Community Update



Please Open: **COMMUNITY SURVEY INSIDE** and important information about Nederalnd Fire Protection District

Your input will help shape how NFPD will move forward

The Nederland Fire Protection District Board of Directors is considering placing a mill-levy and bond question on the November 2022 ballot. The board will use the information gathered as part of this community opinion survey—as well as other public input—to decide whether to place the tax question on the ballot.

Quick survey about NFPD

Please take a few minutes to fill out the included survey and comment on the proposal. Consider this a town hall meeting around your kitchen table. The survey should take only a few minutes to complete and can be found online at the address below.

Questions and Comments

If you have questions about Nederalnd Fire Protection District and the district's budget, please contact:

Iain Irwin-Powell, Board Chair and President
303-258-9161
boardpres@nfpd.org

NFPD Board of Directors

The Nederland Fire Protection District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who oversees the budget and policy decisions made within the district.

Iain Irwin-Powell, President/Chair
boardpres@nfpd.org

Guy Falsetti, Vice President
boardvp@nfpd.org

Todd Wieseler, Treasurer
boardtreasurer@nfpd.org

Jess McElvain, Director
jess.mcelvain@nfpd.org

Russ Panneton, Director
russ.panneton@nfpd.org

Nederland Fire Protection District considering tax question to fund equipment and maintenance needs

The Nederland Fire Protection District (NFPD) is responsible for providing fire and emergency services for an area of about 56 square miles, which includes the town of Nederland, the town site of Eldora, the Eldora Ski Area and a vast area of public lands. This service area includes nearly 2,000 residents and the many outdoor enthusiasts and tourists who visit this area year round.

NFPD responds to more than 400 emergency calls each year. The majority, about 70 percent, are for emergency medical services, including medical calls, motor vehicle accidents, backcountry rescues and carbon monoxide poisonings. The remaining calls are primarily structure and wildland fires, non-injury car accidents, abandoned campfires and hazardous concerns.

Personnel and volunteer training and equipment

The department has eight paid staff, including Fire Chief Michael Scott and three captains. The department relies on volunteer officers and firefighters for much of its emergency staffing needs. Doing

this keeps operational budgets lower, but requires a significant amount of training and equipment.

NFPR needs 20 fully trained and equipped volunteers to be ready to respond to emergency calls. Like any organization with volunteers, there's a lot of turnover—and that impacts the department's budget. NFPD invests about \$10,000 to turn a volunteer into a prepared firefighter EMT. That includes \$3,500 for structure fire personal protective equipment (PPE) and another \$4,500 in training.

Equipment and facility maintenance

State and federal safety standards require continual updates to PPE and other safety equipment for first responders to ensure the safest working environment for our staff.

In addition to firefighter equipment, NFPD's fleet of emergency vehicles is aging, making each vehicle very expensive to maintain. The department's newest engine (the primary firefighting vehicle) was purchased in 2005. These vehicles are not used everyday, but when called upon in an emergency, they must do their

Visit [WEB ADDRESS](#) to complete this Community Opinion Survey

Proposal includes ambulance and wildland equipment

jobs. Varying road conditions put immense strain on these vehicles, and the weather puts significant stress on pumps and water systems.

Several of the department's vehicles are custom built. Parts can be hard to find, and repairs often take months to complete. During that time, a vehicle is out of service, putting stress on the remaining vehicles in the fleet.

Over the past four years, NFPD spent more than \$40,000 on repairs to the primary response fire engine. In 2021, that engine spent three months out of service for a rear axle repair that involved removing the axle, sending it out of state to be machined, and then reinstalling the axle.

The district's ambulance last year suffered a catastrophic electrical failure, causing a significant accident. The ambulance was repaired and put back into service; however, the district does not have a backup ambulance at this time.

The age of these vehicles also means that they do not have safety features found on newer vehicles, such as crush-proof cabs, supplemental airbag systems and anti-lock braking systems. This places our firefighters—both career and volunteer—in danger before we even reach the emergency call destination. According to the National Fire Protection Association, vehicle-related accidents are one of the largest causes of death for firefighters and first responders, including volunteers.

NFPD's stations also require ongoing repairs. Most of that comes from the current operating budget, but over the past two years the main fire station has required repairs that outstripped the district's facility maintenance budget.

Reducing risk for the community

Properly maintained firefighting equipment, and a well-trained staff, allows NFPD to protect lives and property in our community. If the department's equipment fails at a critical moment, those same lives and properties can be put into even more danger.

If NFPD does not have either the equipment or staffing available to respond to an emergency call, our neighboring districts will respond—but help can be a long way away. A fire response by another department can take up to 30 minutes and a medical call can be 45 to 60 minutes away.

And with the threat of wildfires, it is becoming harder to insure property in this area. A well-equipped and trained fire department is part of setting insurance rates and reducing risk. Its NFPD's responsibility to help manage the safety and risk needs of this community so that our residents and local businesses

can thrive here.

Replacement of emergency vehicles

Replacing older vehicles with new equipment is one solution; however, a new engine costs about \$1 million and a new ambulance is about \$300,000. The district's current funding does not provide enough resources to fund this level of equipment replacement, and the ongoing maintenance costs prevent the district from saving money to make future purchases.

NFPD needs to begin a vehicle-replacement program. The top priorities are replacement of the primary fire engine, which takes about two years from ordering to delivery, making the current engine over 26 years old when replaced. The other need is a new ambulance.

A secondary need is replacing the wildland brush trucks, a critical piece of equipment as wildfires become more prevalent in this region. The oldest brush truck was acquired in 1992 and is virtually undrivable.

A properly funded vehicle-replacement program will allow the district to plan for replacement all of its vehicles over the next 20 years, and then schedule ongoing replacements—instead of spending extra dollars patching together obsolete equipment. This will then free up money in the operational budget to address training, firefighter PPE and safety equipment, and building maintenance needs.

2022 mill-levy proposal

The NFPD Board of Directors is considering asking district voters to approve a property-tax increase for a Fire Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance Fund. The proposal would be a new, 3-mill property tax that would provide about \$X.Y million annually.

This measure will allow the district to better protect our residents, homes and businesses. It will better protect our firefighters and first responders who deserve equipment and vehicles they can rely on. It will also allow NFPD to more successfully pursue state and federal grants by having matching funds available for the purchase of new equipment.

If approved by voters, the Fire Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance Fund is estimated to cost the median priced home—about \$750,000 for the Nederland area—approximately \$XYZ per year. The fund would be in addition to the district's current mill levy of 14.925 mills. It would not be used for staffing or administration and would be subject to annual audit and review for the public.

Community Opinion Survey

Please take a few minutes to read the questions below, review with other household members, and complete the survey. All surveys are anonymous and your response will in no way be associated with your name. To take this survey, please do one of the following by July 22, 2022:

- Take this survey online at <http://WEBADDRESS>
- Drop off at the main fire station at 650 West 4th Street, Nederland 80466
- Email the survey to EMAILADDRESS

Q1. In general, how would you rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being highest, the job that Nederland Fire Protection District does protecting the community and providing emergency medical and firefighting services? (Please check one)

1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

Q2. Please share any thoughts about Question 1.

Q3. In your opinion, should NFPD's efforts to purchase new, state-of-the-art firefighting equipment be a high, medium or low priority, or not a priority at all? (Please check one)

High priority Medium priority
 Low priority Not a priority
 Don't know/No opinion

Q4. Should NFPD's efforts to maintain its existing and future firefighting equipment be a high, medium or low priority, or not a priority at all? (Please check one)

High priority Medium priority
 Low priority Not a priority
 Don't know/No opinion

Q5. Please select a statement below that most closely represents your opinion of NFPD's proposed mill-levy request: (Please check one)

- NFPD needs to address the challenges presented by its aging vehicle fleet, equipment needs and training requirements.
- NFPD should tighten its belt and find ways to maintain its equipment and provide services within the current budget.
- Other, please explain:

Q6. If an election were held today, would you vote "yes" in favor, or "no" to oppose, the following potential question:

Shall Nederland Fire Protection District taxes be increased by \$X, Y00,000 in 2023, and by such amounts as may be collected annually thereafter from a levy of 3.0 mills to fund a Fire Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance Fund, which will solely fund capital improvements including:

- Replacing the district's primary fire engine and ambulance,
- Scheduling replacement of outdated equipment to better protect the public and first responders, and
- Maintaining district vehicles and emergency equipment.

Yes No Don't Know

Q7. If NFPD puts a funding question on the ballot, please rank on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being highest, which elements are most important to your possible support?

Fire engine replacement
1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

New ambulance
1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

Firefighter safety gear and emergency equipment
1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

Wildland fire brush trucks
1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

Maintenance of current and new equipment
1 2 3 4 5 Unsure

Q8. What are your concerns, if any, regarding a proposed tax increase for fire equipment and maintenance?

Q9. I have been a resident of the district for ____ years.

Visit [WEB ADDRESS](http://WEBADDRESS) to complete this Community Opinion Survey