

CITY OF CHEHALIS

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The Proposed Emergency Medical Services Levy

Renewal of the city's emergency medical services (EMS) levy will be an issue for city voters to decide in November. The supplemental property tax levy approved by the voters in 1999 expires at the end of this year.

The measure on the November 3rd general election ballot proposes to continue the levy for six years at a rate of up to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value, the same rate that was authorized by the voters 10 years ago. (The rate actually levied by the city for the past ten years has been less than that, varying between \$0.35 and \$0.48 per \$1,000.)

The current EMS levy has been used to pay for two firefighter/EMT positions, medical supplies, equipment and a portion of vehicle replacement costs.

Planned uses of the renewed EMS levy, if authorized, are continued funding for the two firefighter positions, purchase EMS supplies and equipment, and to contribute to an equipment replacement fund.

Currently over 80 percent of the Chehalis Fire Department's emergency calls for service are EMS in nature. In 2008 there were 1,228 calls for EMS related services with the number of these calls increasing yearly. By comparison, there were 712 EMS calls in 1998 when the levy was last renewed.

The EMS levy must be approved by at least 60 percent of the Chehalis voters in the November 3rd election in order to pass.

EMS levies are not unusual in Washington. In Lewis County alone, besides Chehalis, eleven other fire departments utilize an EMS levy.

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This information is intended to be factual, objective material about the EMS levy proposition that will be on the November 3rd general election ballot for Chehalis voters' consideration. By law the city cannot spend its own funds or use its own resources to campaign for the passage or defeat of ballot measures. Residents with questions about the EMS levy may contact any Chehalis city council member, City Manager Merlin MacReynold at 345-1042 or Fire Chief Kelvin Johnson at 748-3394.