



Citizens of Elma and Rural Elma. In April, Grays Harbor Fire District 5 and the City of Elma Fire Department will be holding a special election for the vital annexation of the two services coming together as one public safety department.

You will see Proposition 1 on your Ballot for the Annexation of Elma Fire and EMS Service into and becoming part of Grays Harbor Fire District 5, doing business as East Grays Harbor Fire Rescue. This Proposition requires 50% + 1 from both the City and District residents.

### **What does this mean?**

Elma Fire Department and Grays Harbor Fire District 5 will merge their services together, forming one public safety department. The merging of the departments will enhance the safety of your emergency responders, and greatly improve the efficiency of our emergency response to the needs of the community. The annexation will halt the duplication of resources needed to care for our community because with the merge, we will be sharing supplies, personnel, and joining our public education services. This will result in a decrease in our long-term costs for apparatus and maintenance, as well as provide for long term planning for community growth.

### **What will you get?**

The annexation of the two departments together will provide the much-needed ability to reduce the Fire protection rating in our community. Washington State Rating Bureau evaluates the fire protection capabilities of your local Fire Departments and provides a rating 1 through 10. The lower the number, the better it is for the homeowner. Combining Elma Fire and Fire District 5 improves the protection capability, thus lowering the protection rate. This reduction in protection class rating is passed onto the property owner, which means, lower annual insurance premiums.

Also, upon approval of the annexation, the City residents like District residents who use the Ambulance service will not have to pay the balance owed after the districts bills your Insurance, because the resident are paying for the EMS levy.

**What will it cost City residents?**

If the Annexation of services are approved by the voters, beginning on January 1, 2022 the residents in the City of Elma would begin to pay \$1.29 per 1000 of assessed value for fire protection services, and .42 cents per 1000 of assessed value for Emergency Medical Services.

To determine the projected annual cost of a Fire/EMS levy, simply multiply the combined levies at .00171 by the assessed value of your home.			
Assessed Value (AV)	Annual Fire Levy \$1.29/\$1000 AV	Annual EMS Levy .42/\$1,000 AV	Total Annual Cost
\$150,000	\$193.00	\$63.00	\$256.00
\$200,000.	\$258.00	\$84.00	\$342.00
\$300,000	\$387.00	\$126.00	\$513.00
\$400,000	\$516.00	\$168.00	\$684.00

In addition, if Proposition 1 passes by the voters, the City Council has agreed to reduce its tax capacity by \$150,000 annually, decreasing taxes paid to the city for fire protection. The City Council also agreed to rescind resolution 608, eliminating its \$24.00 EMS utility charge on the water bill. This will save the city property owner approximately \$144.00 per year.

These two reductions in city taxes and utility fees, plus the future saving on your insurance premiums, should put the majority of the city residents as close to a tax neutral transition as possible.

**What is the cost for District residents?**

The district residents already pay the \$1.29 per 1000 of assessed value for fire protection and the .42 cents per 1000 of assessed valuation for Emergency Medical Services. By merging the two departments together, the district residents should also see some improvement with their annual insurance premiums.

It has always been the mission of both Grays Harbor Fire district 5 and The City of Elma Fire Department to provide our community with the best Fire and EMS services possible. In order for our agencies to progress and provide long term planning and stability to meet the increasing demands of our community’s growth and needs for emergency services, we need to annex these agencies together.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated. Stay safe and thank you for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Elma, Rural Elma, Satsop, Porter, Malone and Bush Creek.