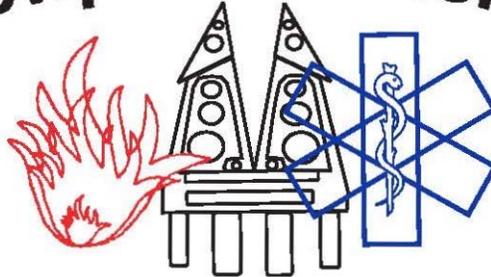


# Newport Township



## Fire Protection District

### April 2, 2019 Referendum Fact Sheet

Posted: February 18, 2019

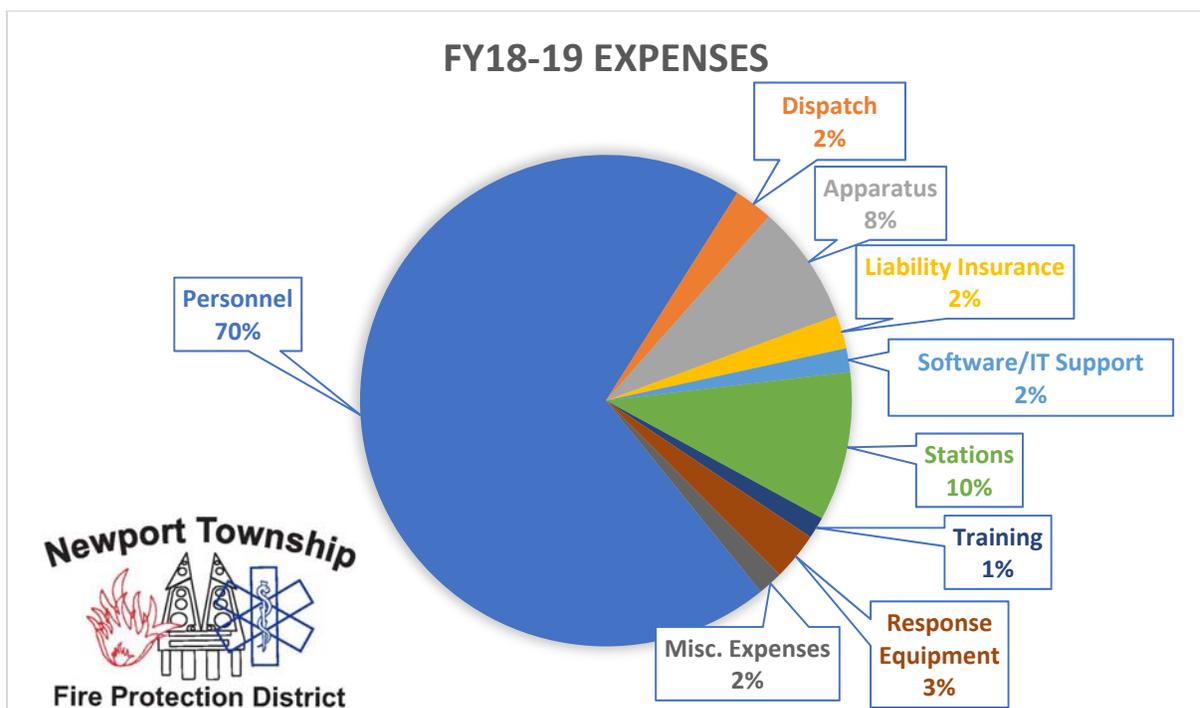
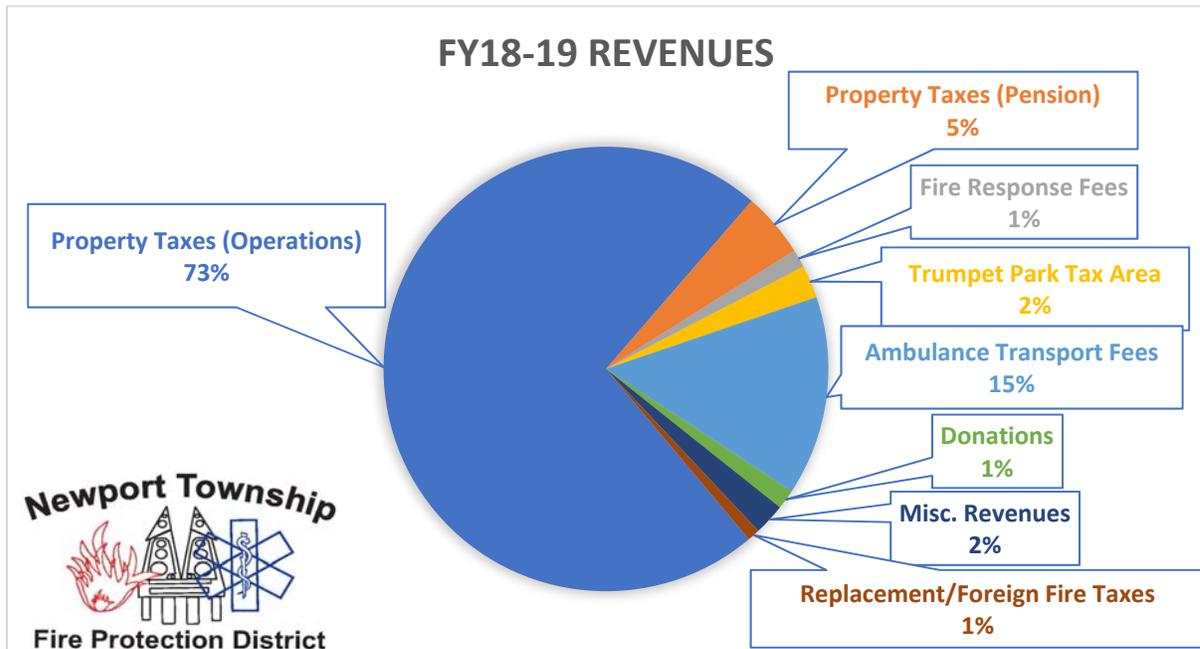
- Newport Township Fire Protection District (Newport FPD) protects an area of approximately 31.8 square miles of Newport Township including the communities of Old Mill Creek, Wadsworth and a portion of Beach Park.
  - 57% of the Fire District is considered agricultural, open space, wildland or undeveloped property. The Lake County Forest Preserve District accounts for over 22% of the Fire District.
  - 3% is classified as commercial or industrial.
  - The remaining 40% is classified as residential, with a population of approximately 6,750 residents.
  - Less than 3% of the Fire District is protected with fire hydrants, requiring firefighters to haul water to fire scenes using tanker trucks.
  - Newport FPD protects 6 miles of Interstate 94, 5 miles of US Highway 41, and nearly 34 miles of other state and county highways.
  - Two major freight railroads bisect the Fire District. These railroads transport hundreds of cars of hazardous materials through the Fire District every day. Amtrak also operates 17 passenger trains through the area each day.
- 51 residents of Newport Township organized the volunteer fire department in 1945. That number swelled to over 75 within a year. Nationwide, volunteer fire departments are struggling to find members. Newport is no exception, which has necessitated the hiring of paid personnel to staff the stations 24/7. Today, only 4 members of the fire department reside in Newport Township.
- Newport FPD answered 1,297 emergency calls in 2018 utilizing a professional staff of 9 full-time and 35 part-time firefighters, most of which are also paramedics, manning two stations 24/7.
  - 430 of the incidents were emergency medical (paramedic ambulance) calls.
  - 148 of the incidents were vehicle crashes.
  - 112 of the incidents were false alarms.
  - 85 of the incidents were actual fires.

- Newport has an Insurance Services Office community fire protection rating of Class 4 on a scale with 1 being the best and 10 not having a fire station within 5 road miles. This is considered a good rating considering the lack of fire hydrants throughout the majority of the Fire District.
- Fire Station 1 is located in downtown Wadsworth across from the post office and was built by the volunteer fire department in 1946. To provide safe quarters for firefighters to staff the station 24/7, the facility was extensively updated and remodeled in 2012. Funding for this remodeling was secured through a bank loan. A portion of the proposed bond issue will be used to pay-off the mortgage principal of approximately \$700,000. Refinancing this mortgage will provide an additional \$64,000 each year for operational expenses. Station 1 is staffed by three firefighters 24/7 and the Fire Prevention Inspector during weekdays.
- Fire Station 2 was opened in 2013 in a leased building located on Old Route 41 north of Russell Road. This station is currently staffed with two firefighters 24/7 that respond with either an ambulance or fire engine to emergency calls. Station 2 was opened to address several identified issues:
  - Areas of the Fire District north and west were more than 5 road miles from Station 1.
  - Train congestion on the CP Tracks in downtown Wadsworth frequently blocks emergency vehicles, requiring long detours.
  - A significant number of incidents occur on Interstate 94 and Highway 41. This station has rapid access to both highways.
  - Many options were considered and the current leased facility was deemed to be the most affordable option available to the Fire District.

Bond issue funding can be used to purchase this building outright, or purchase a different suitable facility. Purchasing the second station will free up an additional \$57,000 annually for personnel and equipment.

- The majority of the Fire District's fire apparatus is more than 20 years old. National standards recommend fire apparatus more than 20 years old be used for reserve service only. Apparatus thirty or more years old should be retired.
  - 1985 Heavy Rescue Squad (34 years)
  - 1989 Pumper/Tender (30 Years) – Out-of-Service – Frame Failure
  - 1998 Pumper (21 Years) Emergency Purchase – Used as Primary Engine
  - 1999 Pumper (20 Years) Reserve Engine – Has serious frame and body issues
  - 1999 Tender (Tanker) (20 Years) – Tank has experienced numerous failures.
  - 2000 Brush Truck (19 Years) – Used for grassland fires, towing and snowplowing
  - 2013 Pumper (6 years) Primary Engine – Purchased as a Demonstrator in 2015 - \$315,000 is still owed towards purchase.
- Ambulances in Newport reliably operate for 10 to 12 years.
  - 2012 Dodge Ambulance (Donated by Round Lake)
  - 2013 Ford Ambulance
  - 2018 Ford Ambulance (Leased at \$31,000/year)

- Fire Protection Districts receive the majority of their operating money from real estate property taxes. Newport's property tax collections in 2018 were \$1,356,542 which accounts for 80% of the estimated fiscal year 2018-19 revenues of \$1,695,000.
- The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20, which begins on May 1, 2019, projects a shortfall of over \$105,000. Projected revenue for the period is \$1,739,697 while expenses are estimated at \$1,844,800.



- In anticipation of the budget shortfall beginning in FY19-20, the Board of Trustees took action in February to reduce staffing levels effective May 1, 2019. These reductions will result in lay-offs and reduced ability to respond to emergencies.
- The proposed general revenue bond issue will provide \$3.5 million in capital money and is intended to address the following major items:
  - Purchase 2 Pumper/Tenders to replace 3 older vehicles.
  - Purchase an updated Water Tender (Tanker)
  - Pay-off the Mortgage for Station 1 (Frees \$64,000 for personnel/operational expenses.)
  - Purchase Station 2 or similar facility (Frees \$57,000 for personnel/operational expenses.)
  - Pay-off 2013 Pumper (Frees \$17,500 for personnel/operational expenses.)
  - Provide funding for paving and safety related facility improvements.
- Bond consulting company Piper Jaffray has provided estimates of the property tax increase if the referendum is passed. The values are based on the fair market value of your home that can be found on your property tax bill, not the equalized assessed value.

**Fair Market Value of Home**

Tax Impact	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 500,000
Annual Property Tax	\$ 54	\$ 74	\$ 94	\$ 115	\$ 135	\$ 156	\$ 176	\$ 196
Monthly	\$ 4.48	\$ 6.17	\$ 7.87	\$ 9.57	\$ 11.26	\$ 12.96	\$ 14.66	\$ 16.35

**For more information about the Newport Township Fire Protection District, or follow the Fire District on Facebook, visit:**

[www.newportfire.org](http://www.newportfire.org)

<https://m.facebook.com/Newport-Township-Fire-Protection-District-362742137654916/>

Contact:

Chief Mark Kirschhoffer -or-  
 Deputy Chief Paul Maplethorpe  
 Newport Township Fire Protection District  
 39010 N. Caroline Avenue  
 Wadsworth, IL 60083  
 847-336-1080  
 chief@newportfire.org