



Maintaining Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services in Gonzales

The Gonzales Fire Department (GFD) serves the City of Gonzales and the surrounding area within the Gonzales Rural Fire Protection District – approximately 11,000 people. GFD is the first responder for 911 emergency response, including emergency medical calls and fires. GFD answers over 800 calls for service annually – averaging 2-3 calls every day.

In the event of a medical emergency like a heart attack, stroke or car accident, minutes and seconds really matter. We are fortunate to have professional firefighter/EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians) protecting our community and responding to local 911 calls – especially considering our closest hospital emergency room is 20 minutes away, in Salinas. Having trained first responders on site can make the difference between life and death.



Maintaining Emergency Services and Replacing Outdated Equipment

Our local fire department faces growing challenges that threaten GFD's ability to reliably serve our community. Ensuring safe, modern equipment is critical for effective 911 response. GFD has worn and outdated medical gear, breathing apparatus, protective clothing and tools used by firefighter/EMTs.

Preserving Fast Emergency Response Times

Unfortunately, right now our local fire station and fire engines rely on bare minimum staffing. GFD can only afford a single engine staffed with 2 firefighter/EMTs on call around the clock.

This creates real concerns if two significant emergencies happen at the same time in our small community. These concerns are made even worse by the growing threats of wildfires, floods and other disasters in our region that could further pull resources away from local 911 calls.



Local Emergency Response

In order to continue providing emergency response, our community needs to establish a reliable source of local funding to maintain the availability of rapid 911 response when an emergency strikes and seconds really matter.

Our neighbors in the City of Greenfield confronted these issues by approving a local funding measure to support firefighter/EMT staffing and maintain rapid response in their community.

GFD could be forced to drastically reduce service or shut down entirely – putting public safety at risk and potentially increasing homeowner insurance costs.



Maintaining Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services in Gonzales

Potential Local Funding Measure to Ensure Fire/Medical Emergency Response

The Gonzales community is studying the Greenfield local funding measure to decide whether a similar model could be a solution to protect emergency response and keep homeowners' rates low here in Gonzales.

The potential measure would impose a parcel tax similar to what Greenfield voters approved: levying \$349 annually for single-family residential parcels; \$262 per apartment unit; and additional rates for commercial, industrial and agricultural parcels, adjusted for inflation.

All funds raised by the City fire tax measure could only be used for Gonzales firefighter/EMT staffing, vehicles and equipment, including:



Help ensure round-the-clock staffing for rapid emergency medical and fire 911 response



Replace old or outdated medical equipment, breathing apparatuses, protective clothing and other equipment used by firefighter/EMTs



Maintain response times to medical emergencies, car accidents, wildfires, floods and other natural disasters



Ensure our local fire engine has important medical incident response equipment and supplies



Ensure our local fire department has up-to-date working equipment and resources to assist in emergency medical situations and fight wildfires

Fiscal Accountability and Local Control

- ✓ All funds would be spent on our local fire department to provide fire protection and emergency medical response
- ✓ Independent audits and oversight would ensure funds are spent as noted
- ✓ No funds can be taken by the State or used for any other purpose



What Do You Think?

Your opinion matters, please visit GonzalesCA.gov/localfunding to learn more and take our survey. You can also email jmuscio@ci.gonzales.ca.us with specific comments or questions.