



Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District  
P.O. Box 346  
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www.lzrfpd.org

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# LAKE ZURICH RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Issue 1

March 2005

News from the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District - Serving Hawthorn Woods, Kildeer, Deer Park, North Barrington, Forest Lake, Echo Lake and Lake County since 1039

## CONTACT US

**Emergencies: 9 - 1 - 1**

**Station 1 - Headquarters  
Lake Zurich Municipal**  
321 South Buesching Road  
Lake Zurich, IL 60047  
Phone # 847 540-5070

**Station 2 - LZRFPD Sub Station**  
350 West Highway 22  
North Barrington, IL 60010

**Station 3 - LZRFPD Sub Station**  
1075 Old McHenry Road  
Lake Zurich, IL 60047

**Station 4 - LZRFPD Sub Station**  
21970 Field Parkway  
Deer Park, IL 60010

**District Trustee Meeting**  
6:30 p.m. on 2nd Monday  
of each month Station 2

## Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District Announces Changes

The area where you live is protected by the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District. It differs from a municipal fire department in that it is a self-supporting entity: it levies a tax that is paid as part of your annual county real estate tax bill to pay for Ambulance, Fire and related Emergency Services. This is the Fire District's principal revenue source. The law does not provide for us to receive sales tax revenue from retailers.

Respecting the decision of the residents in the District to not support the District's November 2, 2004 referendum questions and raise taxes at that time to provide full emergency services response levels on a 24/7 basis, the District has begun adjusting coverage's in preparation for the long term implementation of necessary reductions. As an interim measure, and in the best interest of "life safety", all District stations are now staffed for ambulance service. Fire engines have been eliminated at two of the District's fire stations so that personnel could be redistributed enabling ambulance service at all stations. Fire response will come from one District Station and the downtown

Lake Zurich station, yielding lengthened response times. This will continue until May 1, 2005 at which time the District will no longer have the funds to continue this interim format and will have to return to complete closure of one of the District's stations on a rotational basis.

It is our hope that during the April 2005 vote the District's residents will recognize that the minimal tax increase being requested would provide an extraordinary high value return in ensuring the overall security and quality of life we have enjoyed in our community up until recently. Those who have experienced some reduction in response time during the recent cutbacks can relate their feelings about the impact to their sense of security. The rest of us should think of ourselves in similar scenarios to assess the level of concern we have prior to the next referendum in April. Your vote is very important to the total Fire Protection District, please consider your priorities and vote.

On the April 5 election ballot, residents in the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District will see a two part ballot question. The District is seeking 1) an increase of 5 cents per \$100 equalized assessed valuation for ambulance service and 2) a 10 cent increase per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation in the corporate tax to pay for the service contract with the Lake Zurich Fire Department. This newsletter offers background on the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District as well as the impetus for the referendum. If you have questions or would like to discuss this issue we urge you to contact one of the District Trustees.

### TRUSTEES:

**Jeff Sedlack**.....438-9037

**Bruce Harris**..... 540-7290

**Matt Menges**.....540-5608

**John Willems**.....550-1986

**Ed Coudre**.....381-4416

Sample ballots, as well as information about voter registration and poll locations, will be available from the Lake County Clerk's Office at 847-377-2400 or at [www.co.lake.il.us/cntyck](http://www.co.lake.il.us/cntyck)

Visit our website:  
[WWW.LZRFPD.ORG](http://WWW.LZRFPD.ORG)

## What is the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District?

The Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District is a 25 square mile geographic area surrounding the Village of Lake Zurich. This includes portions of the Village of Hawthorn Woods, North Barrington, Kildeer, Deer Park, Forest Lake, Echo Lake and area of unincorporated Lake County. District residents are represented by a five person Fire District Board that is responsible for coordinating emergency services and allocating tax dollars for fire and medical protection. Since 1939 these fire and medical services have been provided by the Village of Lake Zurich Fire/Rescue Department by way of a contractual agreement with the Rural Fire District. The Village of Lake Zurich operates a full service (fire, medical, special rescue) department made up of 55 full time employees. The Village is centrally located in the Fire District and therefore provides the quickest avenue to respond with personnel and equipment to all emergencies throughout the rural district.

Over the years, growth, traffic, and increased number of emergency calls has caused the Fire District to look for supplemental alternatives to providing a quicker response to the outer areas of the District. The concept of sub-stations was adopted by your district board to provide a quicker response of critical emergency services. Acceptable response times, according to the Insurance Services Offices is 4-6 minutes. Four to six minutes is the medical standard time frame where a non-breathing patient can be without oxygen support and have a viable chance of survival. For fire emergencies, each minute a fire burns it double size, 4-6 minutes after ignition, a fire may be controlled by the first arriving engine. After that, multiple companies and large scale operations are needed to extinguish the fire. To ensure fast response times the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District has built and operates three satellite fire/rescue stations. Until recently, all District residents have been within this medical standard.

Currently, as an interim measure, and in the best interest of "Life Safety", all District stations are now staffed for ambulance service only. Fire engines have been eliminated from two of the stations. Fire response will come from one District station and the downtown Lake Zurich station, yielding lengthened response times. This will continue until May 1, 2005 at which time the District will no longer have the funds to continue this interim format and will have to resort to a complete closure of one of the District's stations on a rotational basis.

## What services does the LZRFPD get from the Village of Lake Zurich

Due to budgetary constraints with the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District, The Department is down 5 full-time positions and implements staffing reductions as needed, this results in equipment being out of service and at times the closing of District stations.

At the present time we are scheduled in the following manner:

There are 16 full-time firefighters assigned to a shift. A shift lasts 24 hours and rotates every three days. the firefighter/paramedics are on for 24 hours and off for 48 hours. Due to vacation time and federal labor standards there are usually 3 people off per shift a majority of the time. The staff never falls below 13.

The District sub-stations are jump companies. What is a Jump Company? This means that the station has an ambulance and a fire engine assigned to it. Depending on the type of call that is received, that crew "jumps" to either vehicle. As an example: a medical call is received so they take their ambulance. This allows us the most flexibility to serve the area residents, however a minimum of 3 fireman are needed on an engine for it to leave the station. **Minimum Staffing noted below is what was in place prior to staff reductions.**

Station 1 Minimum Staffing	6	3 Engine/Aerial
1 Shift Commander		2 Ambulance

Station 2 Minimum Staffing	3 Jump Company
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Station 3 Minimum Staffing	3 Jump Company
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Station 4 Minimum Staffing	3 Jump Company
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Total: 15

Because of staffing reductions we currently have 13 people per shift scheduled and have reduced two District stations to ambulance only. Any absences due to sickness, injury or training are covered by overtime funding. On May 1, 2005 we will no longer have overtime funds available to cover unscheduled absences and the daily staffing may drop to 12 people or less. This will result in closing one station on a rotational basis and the other two stations will be 3 man jump companies.

### FIRE SUPPRESSION

Each Member the Department is initially trained to the State of Illinois' Fire-fighter II level. This is the entry level certification established by the State Fire Marshall's Office. The Fire Marshall has established advanced training programs for all levels and branches of the fire services for which Lake Zurich has institutionalized as annual goals. This includes Instructor certifications, Fire Officer certifications and Inspection certifications to name a few. More specialized areas such as arson investigation, vehicle extrication and hazardous materials are also provided. This entry level certification covers approximately 350 hours of class room and practical experience.

Each members' training continues from the Fire-fighter (FF) II level. Every month a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education and experience is required. These requirements are met by conducting training each day for approximately 2-3 hours. As new classes are taken and new certifications are

attained the continuing education demands increase.

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECH-PARAMEDIC

All firefighters are cross-trained as paramedics. This license allows the fire-fighter to perform advanced life support treatment. Cardiac defibrillation, drugs, and airway maintenance are parts of that treatment. The program is well over 400 hours of classroom and practical experience. This is followed by an intensive field internship under a supervising paramedic. The entire process of licensing a paramedic can take in excess of 1 year. Northwest Community hospital provides monthly continuing education in our station. A paramedic takes a recertification test every 6 months and must document 40 hours of classroom and 40 hours of clinical experience every two years. A typical shift day incorporates some of this training, as well as, many responses to emergency medical calls. There are also more specialized classes such as Pediatric Life Support, Basic and Advanced Trauma Care, and Advanced Cardiac Care that many fire-fighters pursue. Flight For Life Medical service is another allied partner in providing comprehensive medical services to our citizens. Critical and specialized care is close at hand with a helicopter transport.

### What Other Services Does The Department Provide?

Fire Prevention Bureau

Public Education

Specialized Rescue:

Open Water Divers For Water Rescue

Ice Divers For Winter Rescue

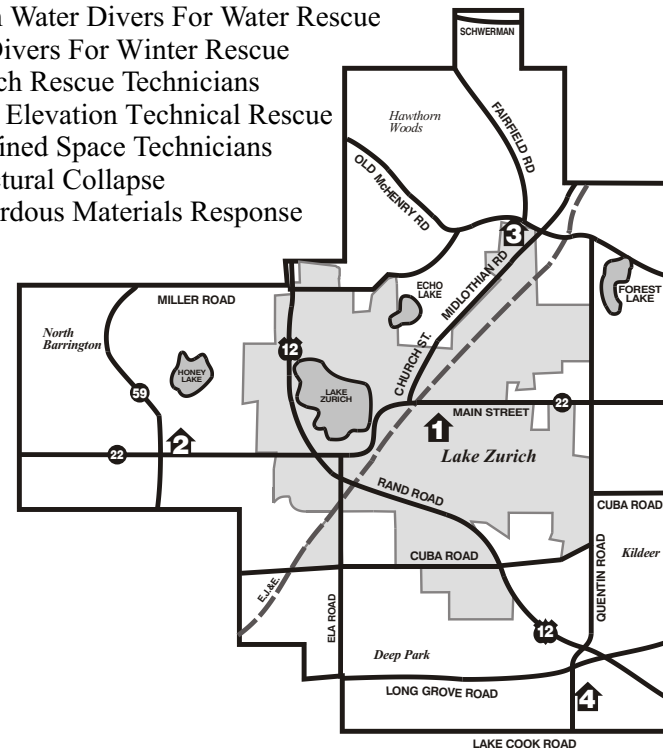
Trench Rescue Technicians

High Elevation Technical Rescue

Confined Space Technicians

Structural Collapse

Hazardous Materials Response



### The department operates the following vehicles:

- 4 Engines w/1000 gallons of water each
- 1 100' Aerial Tower Ladder
- 1 Squad Truck (Rescue Equipment, Air Bank)
- 1 Brush Fire Truck
- 2 Rescue Boats
- 4 Paramedics Level Ambulances
- 1 Command Vehicle
- 3 Bureau Vehicles
- 3 Staff Vehicles

## Do Emergency Services Make a Difference?

### A letter received from one family needing services:

Recently, our son was hurt in a sledding accident. We had to call 911 and were fortunate enough that the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Department on 22 was still open. The paramedics arrived at our house within minutes and transported our son to the hospital. Once we arrived at the hospital, they never left our side. They were with us while he was undergoing a CAT scan and were explaining the steps that were being taken. Our son was airlifted to Lutheran General and the paramedics did not leave the hospital until the helicopter left. They are very dedicated and extremely compassionate men. They took the time to learn what they could about our family and helped us through a very difficult evening. Fortunately, our son was able to walk out of the hospital four days later and return home.

We are very lucky to live only a few blocks from the firehouse. However, it is extremely dangerous that the firehouse will close after the month of January. We have always felt a sense of security knowing that the firehouse was only a few blocks away. We can actually watch them pulling out of the driveway when needs arise.

It was with great sadness that the referendum

did not pass this last fall. As parents, grandparents, or care givers, I believe it is our duty to provide for these services. One never wants to have to use them, but when the need arises you want to have the services there. If the funding does not occur, we are all at extreme risk.

Therefore, from the bottom of my heart and our family, we need to be diligent in helping get the fire rescue referendum passed so that no one is at risk of not getting the necessary help in the timeliest fashion.

We are one of the lucky ones. I pray that no one suffers from this referendum not passing. As you read this, please vote yes next time. This is a valuable part of all of our lives.

Sincerely,

### When will it be someone you know?

January 8, 2005

Chief Mastandrea,



On the evening of December 19th my son John collapsed in our home in Hawthorn

Woods. ....he broke into a cold sweat and started to pass out. That's when we called 911.

Your Engine Company arrived first and immediately began to assess John and the situation. The Paramedics were very professional and reassuring to both my family and my son. They took the situation seriously and were very thorough in their questioning. When the ambulance crew arrived the transition of patient care was also handled very well.....

The experience was especially impressive to me because your crews were unaware (until late in the call) that they were caring for the son of a fellow Firefighter and Paramedic. As an Assistant Chief at the Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District I have spent a great deal of my 24 years in the fire service training, observing, and evaluating paramedics in the field. This allows me to say with all honesty that I have never seen a better example of what it means to provide quality customer service to a patient and family. The crews involved are to be commended for their efforts and for going the extra mile to do the job right.

Thanks for a job well done!

## Revenue & Expenditures at a Glance

Generally, Fire Districts are limited in revenue sources to the property tax levy, service fees, and donations/grants. Sales taxes, utility taxes, and other special use taxes are not available to help fund fire districts.

The Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection District's property tax levy comprises about 3% of a household's total property tax bill, which is a rate similar to park and library districts. Revenue projections for 2004-2005 found that 90% of District revenues are derived from property taxes, 8% from service fees, and 2% from other sources. Lake Zurich Rural's tax levy has been dramatically affected by the decade old Property Tax Extension Limitation Law, known more

commonly as the property tax cap. This legislative change limited tax extensions to a maximum of 5% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever was lower. Over the past decade, the CPI has been as low as 1.3%, limiting property tax increases and the District's ability to keep up with increased demand for services.

While the property tax cap has held the line on taxes, expenses have not had the same limitations. Operating costs have escalated. Insurance costs increase at approximately twenty to thirty percent annually. Increased emergency calls, growth in inspection requests generated by new construction projects, and unfunded mandates from state and federal legislation have added to general operating costs.

These costs have been passed on to the District contractually from the Lake Zurich Municipal Fire Department from whom the District purchases services. To live within the revenue generated by the District, Lake Zurich has had to make across the board cuts. **The Department is down five full-time positions and has implemented staffing reductions as needed. This results in equipment being out of service and at times the closing of District stations.**

Balancing the District's expenses and revenues is a challenge the Board of Trustees diligently addresses. We remain committed to our primary goal, providing an efficient, cost-effective emergency response to meet the needs of our entire District.