



Public Hearing

Olympia/Tumwater

Regional Fire Authority

Fire Benefit Charge

January 9, 2023

Jay Burney, Olympia City Manager



Cities of Olympia and Tumwater



RFA Funding

Four Funding Sources:

- Fire Levy: a property tax
- Fire Benefit Charge (FBC): Fee based on the fire risk associated with the size and type of structures.
- EMS Levy Revenues
- Fees for Service: including revenue from permits and service contracts with other governments



What is a Fire Benefit Charge?

- Formula based on fire flow – Fee assessed based on risk of fighting fire and personnel needed
 - Based on Square Footage and Weighted Risk
- Formula and collection amount set annually by RFA Board of Commissioners
 - Cannot Exceed 60% of RFA Operating Budget
- Bill is sent with property tax bill by the County assessor/treasurer and paid like property tax
 - Annual appeals process
- FBC must be reauthorized by voters after 6 years
- FBC reauthorization can be for another 6 or 10 years (50%+1 approval required), or a permanent authorization can be requested from voters (60% approval)

A benefit charge imposed must be reasonably proportioned to the measurable benefits to property resulting from the services afforded by the authority. RCW 52.26.180(5)

Proposed FBC Classifications and Weights

Structure Classification	# of Tiers in this Classification	Proposed Weights	Number of Parcels in this Classification
Residential	3		20,246
	Residential 1 ($\leq 2,000$ sq. ft)	0.45	
	Residential 2 (2,001-3,000 sq. ft.)	0.55	
	Residential 3 ($\geq 3,001$ sq. ft.)	0.64	
Mobile Home	1	0	454
Apartments (5 unit or more)	1	1.5	354
Commercial	6 (See next slide)		2,142

The FBC increases as the weight and square footage increases.

Proposed FBC Classifications & Weights Continued

Tier	Max Sq. Ft in this Tier	Weight	# of parcels in this category
Commercial 1	5,000	0.8	1300
Commercial 2	20,000	1.5	611
Commercial 3	50,000	2.7	145
Commercial 4	100,000	4.1	53
Commercial 5	200,000	5.5	29
Commercial 6	No Max	6.5	4

FBC CALCULATOR

www.ci.Tumwater.wa.us/FBC



FBC CALCULATOR

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FBC Calculator

Fire Benefit Charge

State law RCW 52.18 allows fire districts, with the approval of the voters in their district, to collect a benefit charge from residential and commercial property owners. Once voters approve the benefit charge collection, the normal property tax collection rate authorized by State Law drops from \$1.50 per thousand to \$1.00 per thousand of assessed value.

The Fire Benefit Charge is not a per-call charge, and it is not based on the assessed value of property. It is a fee that will apply only to the structures on properties, based on how the property is used and the size of the structures. There is no charge for undeveloped land. Under the FBC, those who benefit more from fire protection services, such as large structures and structures that pose higher fire risk – pay more for that service.

Online Calculator

Please enter your tax parcel number to get an estimated cost of your FBC.

Don't know your parcel number? You can [look it up](#) on the Thurston County website.

Submit