

## **Voters Will See Emergency Communications System Bond Levy on May Ballot**

### *Measure 34-243 Would Replace and Upgrade Outdated System*

Firefighters from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue rely on information from an emergency communications system (911) to answer the community's calls for help.

Whether it's a cardiac arrest, house fire, car crash or other emergency, vital details about the location and circumstances of a situation are relayed by dispatchers through a network, which includes transmission towers and radios.

Firefighters rely on this same system to communicate with each other once they're on a scene.

In the May 17 election, Washington County voters will be asked to consider a \$77 million bond measure to upgrade the emergency communications system TVF&R crews and all law enforcement and ambulance service providers countywide rely on.

This system is run by the Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency and staffed by 911 dispatchers who provide a lifeline between those who call seeking help and first responders.

The system has worked for decades, but now manufacturers no longer make key parts, the technology is outdated, and the buildings and towers are not designed to withstand a major earthquake.

For these reasons, voters will be asked to consider Measure 34-243 to replace and upgrade the system.

If approved by voters, the county would issue general obligation bonds to pay for capital costs associated with the following 911 equipment and facility enhancements:

- Convert the existing system to current technology.
- Improve countywide coverage by installing more towers.
- Strengthen facilities for earthquakes, storms, and other emergencies.
- Expand the 911 center and emergency facilities to meet future demands by a growing population.
- Replace about 3,000 aging, obsolete analog radios currently used by first responders countywide.

The projected levy rate is not expected to exceed 8 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The actual rate may vary depending on changes in bond interest rates and assessed property values. This rate would be levied over less than 21 years.

A typical homeowner would pay about \$20 in 2016. This rate assumes an average assessed value (not market value) of a \$255,408 home.

For more information, call 503-846-8685 or visit [wcemergencycommunications.blogspot.com](http://wcemergencycommunications.blogspot.com).