



FAQs

FELTON FIRE 218 FIRE ASSESSMENT

In June 2025, LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission, an independent state commission that oversees special districts) issued a review of the Felton Fire Protection District (FFPD). It found that our current volunteer model is unsustainable. The demand on fire and medical services has never been greater: in addition to the needs of our own residents, we service two popular tourist attractions (Roaring Camp and Henry Cowell State Park), and a good portion of the valley's auto traffic runs through our fire district.

What does this 218 Fire Assessment accomplish?

In addition to our volunteers, this assessment will provide funding to allow for 3 paid firefighters to be on duty in the stationhouse 24/7, as well as upgrade our fire equipment and maintain our aging station. This will ensure immediate emergency response without needing to wait for enough volunteers to arrive at the station to be dispatched. It stabilizes fire and medical protection for now and into the future.

Why can't we rely solely on volunteers?

Ever since our fire district was created in 1935, we have had a proud history of volunteer service, but we are not living in the same world now. Emergency calls have increased dramatically: FFPD's annual call volume has risen from approximately 300 in the year 1999 to approximately 900 calls currently. Many volunteers work their full-time jobs outside of the area so fewer are available during the day. Calls are more complex. State-mandated training requirements have become more elaborate and expensive. FFPD needs both volunteers and paid staff.

Why can't we merge with another district?

There is NO avenue to "merge" with another district. FFPD will be required to dissolve and then be taken over by another district. We will be giving up control of our emergency services. Our funds, equipment, stationhouse and volunteer squad will be taken over by another entity. Decisions about staffing, equipment allocation and response protocols will be determined by whichever entity takes us over. Starting in October 2025, our community group (FC4ER) asked LAFCO and neighboring districts what services they would provide if they took us over and how much it would cost us – they would not give us answers or commitments. There are no guarantees on what would happen to our emergency services upon dissolving, and additional property assessments will be automatically applied by the new entity without our vote.

How much will it cost?

Unlike some of our neighbors, Felton has not passed a tax measure to support our fire district since 1946. This assessment reflects the real cost of reliable fire and medical response. Most single-family homes will be assessed \$550-\$650 annually, that's about \$50 per month. That is less than our typical trash and recycling costs (\$463 Greenwaste per year combined with \$57 "County Refuse" and \$155 "Recycling & Solid Waste" on an annual property tax bill = \$675.)

Can we trust how the money will be managed?

A clear 15-year plan has been defined and a detailed budget has been established. Funds from this assessment will be held in a separate bank account and can only be used for items identified on the ballot. There is mandated legal reporting annually for use of the funds and there will also be a Citizens' Oversight Committee specifically for the assessment funds. Additionally, in November of this year, 3 of the 5 FFPD Board of Director seats are up for election which gives our community a direct voice on oversight.

What happens if we vote NO?

If the assessment is voted down, our fire district will have continued instability and face takeover by another district. This will mean loss of local control and uncertainty of how our fire district will be managed going forward. **It does NOT mean the absence of an assessment;** additional funding will be imposed regardless of what district takes us over. Our level of service may be affected which in turn will affect our community's ISO rating, having a direct impact on our home insurance rates.

How do I vote?

Ballots for the 218 Assessment will be mailed to property owners on May 20th. Ballots must be returned by July 24th when the votes will be tabulated by SCI Consulting at the Felton Fire stationhouse on Kirby Street. Vote tabulation begins at 6pm and is open to the public.

THE CHOICE:

YES - Known plan, reliable response, local control

NO - Uncertainty, decisions outside of our control, funds leaving Felton, increased risk

Fire and medical emergency response is like insurance – you may not need it often but, when you do, it is critical. When you call 911, nothing matters more than knowing help is on the way.

Vote YES to fund Felton Fire!