



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Unification of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District &
Donald Wescott Fire Protection District



Q: Why are Tri-Lakes Monument FPD and Donald Wescott FPD unifying?

A: The unification of the two districts is anticipated to have many benefits to the community and the districts, including providing enhanced emergency services through more efficient use of integrated infrastructure, streamlined processes, access to additional resources without reliance on contractual mutual aid, and uniformity in training, operations, and administration. Further, unifying the districts is expected to reduce the cost of government by eliminating duplicative costs, thus ensuring that more taxpayer funds are being applied to providing life-saving emergency services. Residents in the southern half of Tri-Lake Monument FPD's jurisdiction are expected to see shorter response times, critical when responding to structure fires, heart attacks, and strokes. Concerning Donald Wescott FPD, unification will provide a depth of resources and response capability to avoid the otherwise likely need to partially close ("brown out") a fire station and will also provide career development opportunities for personnel. The unification will also provide significant cost avoidance to both districts by deferring the building and staffing of a new fire station (approximately \$12 million) and purchasing specialty resources such as water tenders (approximately \$350,000) needed in the un-hydranted areas of the districts.

Q: How long will the unification take?

A: The first step of the unification has been approved by the two boards and will be effective January 1, 2022. This step involved signing an Intergovernmental Agreement to Provide Administrative and Operational Services, also called the "partial services contract." Under the partial services contract, the Fire Chief of Tri-Lakes Monument FPD will manage the day-to-day operations and administration of both districts; however, the districts will remain legally separate entities and will continue to own their fleet and facilities and to employ their personnel. The second step of the unification is anticipated to be entering into a new broader scale intergovernmental agreement, or "full services contract." The full services contract would move all Donald Wescott FPD assets (both human and capital, including fleet and facilities) to Tri-Lakes Monument FPD. Negotiation of the full services contract is anticipated to take the better part of 2022 to accomplish. The third and final step of the unification would be a merger-by-inclusion action, pursuant to which the Donald Wescott FPD jurisdictional service area would be included in Tri-Lakes Monument FPD's jurisdictional service area. As there are several steps involved in this process, this third step is not anticipated to begin until 2024.

Q: Do the voters of both districts approve any mill levy changes as part of the merger?

A: Neither the partial services contract nor the full services contract will affect either district's mill levy, and no vote of the eligible electors is required at this time. Before completing the third step, merger-by-inclusion, Donald Wescott FPD may seek voter approval to dissolve the Donald Wescott FPD Northern Subdistrict and increase Donald Wescott FPD's mill levy to recover some or all the revenue lost as the result of the Northern Subdistrict's dissolution. The final merger-by-inclusion action, should it occur as anticipated, would result in a property tax decrease to Donald Wescott FPD property owners of

approximately three mills. The eligible electors of Tri-Lakes Monument FPD will not see any changes in their mill levy and, by law, do not vote on the inclusion.

Q: Do you expect the unification will drive cost savings?

A: Yes. Whenever two organizations are unified, the duplication of administrative and operational costs can be eliminated. For example, this merger will eliminate the need for (a) having two Fire Chiefs, two accountants, and two attorneys, (b) constructing multiple fire stations within close proximity to one another, and (c) purchasing duplicate specialty equipment. Cost savings will allow the single, unified organization to apply the revenue to other important initiatives, such as personnel recruitment and retention, long-term facility and fleet replacement, and purchasing state-of-the-art firefighting and EMS tools and equipment.

Q: Do you expect unification to make more station or fleet upgrades possible?

A: Yes. The unified organization will use revenue from cost savings to enhance capital upgrades and replace aging apparatus.

Q: Have you seen the demand for emergency services from both fire districts increase in recent years?

A: Yes. As observed all along the Front Range in recent years, residential and commercial development continues to increase at an exponential rate. As a result, the demand for emergency services has and is expected to increase. The districts need to keep pace with community growth without overburdening the taxpayer. Unifying Tri-Lakes Monument FPD and Donald Wescott FPD is anticipated to foster meeting the increasing demand for emergency services efficiently and cost-effectively.