



# AVALON FIRE / RESCUE NEWSLETTER



Volume 4, Issue 1

June 2012

**Fire Commissioners Meeting** held the first and third Monday of each month at the North Station located at 5408 Mulat Road, Milton, FL. 7 PM.

Please attend and see your tax dollars at work.

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

To get an application to volunteer you can:

- Go to our Web Site at [www.avalonfirerescue.com](http://www.avalonfirerescue.com) to download application and bring by the Station 1.
- Come by Station 1 for application.

## **ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER**

THE AVALON FIRE RESCUE NEWSLETTER IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS AND CITIZENS. BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE AT [www.avalonfirerescue.com](http://www.avalonfirerescue.com)

## An Important Message from the Fire Chief

Sid Wiggins

The Avalon Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners has given me (your Fire Chief) direction to present a millage referendum that will be placed on the Primary Election ballot on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The referendum will ask voters that live within the Avalon Fire District to support enough funding to maintain the current level of services we provide and to hire needed day time staffing.

In order for the District to meet its financial needs, the referendum needs to increase our 1.0 millage rate to **no more** than 2.0 mills in an effort to collect an adequate amount of revenue each year. The referendum would take effect during the 2012 property assessments but the fire district would not receive any of the monies until 2013.

With the exception of your Fire Chief and one day time support member we are a fully operational volunteer fire department with an average of 12-15 volunteers. Unfortunately, less men and women can find the time in their hectic lives to volunteer. Moreover, we have seen the nature of our services dramatically shift, as improved fire prevention practices continue to reduce the number of fires and the ever-growing and aging population demands more emergency medical services. It is not uncommon for us to spend 70% of our time responding to emergency medical calls. And the need for these emergency medical services is often greatest during the work days, when most volunteer firefighters are required to be at their regular jobs. This trend is forcing the need to hire paid firefighters during the day to ensure that emergency services can be provided during these high demand periods.

As your Fire Chief, I have experienced thousands of terrible car accidents, responded to hundreds of fires, plane crashes, train wrecks, medical emergencies and performed many water rescues. I know that people in general like the fire department and realize the importance of what we do every day.

It has been **32 years** since the fire district has requested any increase or adjustment outside of our allowable millage rate approved in 1980. In most cases, your family pays more for one month of cell phone service than you pay all year for fire protection. For less than the cost of a gallon of gas a month, we will save millions of dollars in property from fire or provide that resource during those precious minutes needed to save a life during a cardiac arrest. How do I describe the feeling that firefighters get when someone calls 911 and for the next 4 minutes of their life, we are the most important thing in the world to that person? During fires, vehicle extrication and rescue calls, we are the only ones that can fix your problem. To a family member that calls for help, nothing else in the world matters more than the fire department responding to your emergency

No matter how big your emergency is, you should expect Avalon Fire Rescue District to be trained, equipped and ready to respond. All we ask in return is that you, as a property owner take a few minutes of your time to reach out to us and let us brief you on the financial status of your fire department so you understand how important your vote for the increase is. Unlike the surrounding MSBU Fire Districts, these dollars stay in the Avalon Fire District for the benefit of the community.

You can read more FAQ's on the Millage Referendum and your Avalon Fire Rescue Department on our "new" website at [www.avalonfirerescue.com](http://www.avalonfirerescue.com)

**Example: The following would apply to your fire taxes at a max rate of 2 mills:**

If your property taxable value is \$50,000, you would expect your millage payment to be **an additional \$4.17 per month** or **\$50 per year from what you are paying today based upon our current charge of 1 mill.**

Assessed Value	\$100,000.00
Homestead Exemption	\$ 25,000.00
Amendment One Exemption	\$ 25,000.00
<b>Taxable Value</b>	<b>\$ 50,000.00</b>
Millage Rate (2.0 mills)	x .002
<b>Taxes Payable</b>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>