



# St. George Fire Protection District

14141 Airline Hwy, Ste 1-H Baton Rouge, LA 70817  
Eldon Ledoux, Public Information Officer

---

Phone: (225) 454-6573 Cell: (225) 279-1493 FAX: (225) 615-8019 Email: ERLedoux@StGeorgeFire.com

---

## MEDIA RELEASE

Date: October 7, 2010

The St. George Fire Protection District will place a 1.25 mill, five year, **NON-RENEWABLE**, Capital Improvements Proposition on the November 2nd ballot. The item will appear only on the ballots of voters living in the District, and the tax millage will only be assessed on property in the District.

The greatest challenge facing the St. George Fire Protection District is that of keeping up with the growth and changing land use within the District. Among the changes the area has seen and will continue to experience are the relocation of the Woman's Hospital and the medical complex certain to evolve around it; growing residential development - particularly along the Bluebonnet corridor; as well as additions to the Mall of Louisiana retail complex; construction of Perkins Rowe; and the expansion of the Baton Rouge General Bluebonnet Campus and other medical facilities in the area.

According to Fire Chief Gerard Tarleton, "Each of these represents a unique challenge to be met by the Department as we continually strive to provide our Citizens with the fire protection and emergency medical services they have come to rely upon and deserve."

These challenges had already been identified by the Department as needing long-range solutions when data collected during St. George's latest Property Insurance Association of Louisiana rating confirmed these issues as needing to be addressed. The Department retained its Class 2 Rating and thus assured a continuation of the excellent insurance rates its citizens enjoy.

The problem areas cannot be adequately addressed in a timely manner within the current Capital Improvements Plan. That plan was voter approved and the monies it generates are being spent exclusively in the manner the voters approved.

The two most pressing needs are the re-location of the existing fire station in the Pecue Lane/Airline Hwy area and the need for a new station, the Department's ninth, along the Bluebonnet corridor, preferably near the hospitals and major shopping developments in the area.

The Airline/Pecue area is currently served by the only fire station the District leases. When the Castille Rd station was placed into service in 1992 the growth pattern of the area had not been fully established; therefore the station's best placement was not evident. With the re-location of Woman's Hospital and the upcoming Pecue/I-10 interchange, the location of the station for maximum coverage and ratings benefit is now clear.

The need for greater protection along the Bluebonnet corridor has revealed itself in the fact that the response times from the Jefferson Hwy station to the Baton Rouge General and neighboring medical facilities as well as to the Mall of Louisiana have gotten longer. This is largely due to growing traffic congestion in the area that has accompanied the area's growth. The solution is the placement of a new station closer to the major human and economic assets.

## **St. George Fire Protection District Release ... page two (2) of two (2)**

Says, Fire Chief Tarleton, “These problems need to be addressed sooner rather than later. To that end the District is proposing a dedicated 1.25 mill property tax for a period of five years. In doing so, the District will be able to acquire the property and build the needed stations.”

This proposal is for capital improvements only. None of the funds generated will go to operating costs or salaries or benefits, only to meet the identified capital improvements needs. This tax is to be NON-RENEWABLE. When the five years are up, the tax goes away and cannot be offered for renewal as an extension of the Department’s ongoing capital improvement efforts.

The St. George Fire Protection District has scheduled two community meetings where members of the public can address their questions or concerns directly to the Fire Chief. The first of these is at 6:30PM Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Jones Creek Library. It will be followed by a meeting at 6:30PM Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Bluebonnet Library. If you cannot be there at 6:30, come later. Chief Tarleton will remain available as long as members of the public are there to speak with him.

Eldon Ledoux, Public Information Officer  
St. George Fire Protection District

Fire Chief Gerard C. Tarleton may be contacted directly at (225) 454-6551  
or by email at [GCTarleton@StGeorgeFire.com](mailto:GCTarleton@StGeorgeFire.com)