



**EAST LAKE TARPON
SPECIAL FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT**
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AMENDMENT 3 INFORMATION SHEET— THE REAL FIRE & EMS IMPACT FOR EAST LAKE TAXPAYERS

**What the proposed 2026 Florida property-tax amendment could mean
for East Lake taxpayers**

WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED, AND WHAT'S NOT

- Increases the homestead property tax exemption from \$50,000 to \$150,000, beginning January 1, 2027.
- Further increases the exemption to \$250,000, beginning January 1, 2028.
- Does NOT create a state trust fund — there is no replacement revenue for local fire districts.
- Does NOT change the cost of fire and EMS services East Lake Fire Rescue is required to deliver.

Source: HJR 203, 2026 Special Session F

WHY EAST LAKE FIRE DISTRICT COULD BE HIT HARDER THAN OTHER COMMUNITIES

East Lake Fire Rescue is funded almost entirely by local property taxes and does not receive supplemental revenue from other government sources. Because East Lake's tax base is made up mostly of homes — with a much smaller commercial and industrial base than many other communities — a homestead-focused exemption increase falls disproportionately on East Lake's only funding source.

THE BOTTOM-LINE IMPACT - NUMBERS TELL THE STORY

99.3% OF DISTRICT BUDGET Goes directly to fire & EMS service (FY2025/26)	\$2M LOST IN YEAR ONE Fire & EMS revenue loss projected for 2027	\$3.5M LOST IN YEAR TWO Fire & EMS revenue loss projected for 2028
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Sources: East Lake District Budget FY2025/2026; Pinellas County Property Appraiser's Office

IMPACT ON STAFFING & STATION 57

Year	Revenue Loss	Staffing / Station Impact
2027	Loss of \$2 million	12 fire professionals cut; Rescue 57 ambulance removed from service
2028	Loss of \$3.5 million (cumulative)	8 additional fire professionals cut (20 total); Station 57 forced to close

IMPACT ON FIRE & EMS RESPONSE TIMES

East Lake already responds slower than nationally recognized benchmarks (NFPA 1710) — and funding cuts are projected to make it worse.

Measure	NFPA 1710 Benchmark	East Lake Response Time
Fire Suppression	5:20 benchmark	7:38 today
EMS	5:00 benchmark	8:06 today
2027 Projected (Rescue 57 removed)	—	10.5 minutes
2028 Projected (Station 57 closed)	—	12 minutes

Communities most affected by a Station 57 closure include Lansbrook, Ridgemoor, Tarpon Woods, Windmill Pointe, and Anchorage — with longer response times expected district-wide.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PROPERTY INSURANCE

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) rates fire departments on a scale of 1 (best) to 10 (no protection) through its Public Protection Classification (PPC) program. East Lake Fire District currently holds an ISO PPC Class 2 rating — among the highest-performing ratings in the country.

Reduced staffing and station closures could lower this rating. Lower PPC ratings are generally associated with higher property insurance premiums.

THE TAXPAYER TAKEAWAY

The issue is whether East Lake will have enough local revenue to maintain the current staffing, stations, ambulances, response capability, and level of emergency service. The figures above show the projected local consequences of the proposed funding reductions.

LEARN MORE

- Read the full text of the amendment before November - <https://initiativepetitions.dos.fl.gov/InitiativeForms/FulltextPDF/10-110.pdf>
- Direct questions to the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District for factual, local information: phone: 727.784.8668, website: elfr.org

Important: This fact sheet is for educational purposes. It does not tell voters how to vote. Residents should review the amendment and official election information before voting.

Prepared by East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District staff.