



GRAND ISLAND FIRE COMPANY, INC.

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Grand Island Fire District Formation Info Sheet

Currently, the Town of Grand Island has a Fire Protection District, what is a fire protection district?

A Fire Protection District is a geographical area within the Town (such as GI) that receives contracted fire protection from a fire company/department (such as Grand Island Fire Company)

The Grand Island Town Board is considering moving from a Fire Protection District to a Fire District at the Grand Island Fire Company's Request – But what is a Fire District?

A fire district is a public corporation established to provide fire protection and respond to certain other emergencies. The New York State Constitution (Article X) recognizes that fire districts have certain characteristics of general-purpose municipal corporations, such as powers to incur indebtedness and to require the levy of taxes. A fire district is almost a completely autonomous political entity; it has its own elected governing body, and its administrative officers, and it must observe its expenditure limitations.

Advantages of Forming a Fire District:

- **Budget Stability and Planning:** A consistent and stable budget allows for long-term planning, eliminating yearly funding instability from negotiations with various Town Boards.
- **Increased Accountability and Oversight:** Fire districts are governed by state laws and are subject to annual audits and oversight by the NY State Comptroller, providing greater transparency and accountability.
- **Voter Influence and Participation:** GI Residents elect fire district commissioners, vote on debt incurred, and participate in capital project referendums, giving them more control over fire protection spending.
- **Operational Focus:** Fire districts focus solely on providing fire protection, removing annual negotiations and allowing officials to concentrate on this essential service.
- **Financial Benefits:** Districts can establish taxpayer-approved reserve funds for apparatus, equipment, and station upgrades, saving on interest costs and improving financial management.
- **Insurance Benefits:** Volunteer Benefit firefighter coverage for medical care and wage replacement in case of injury or illness is transferred from the Town of GI to the fire district, ensuring enhanced protection.