



## **FAQs on 2% Fire Dues**

### **Explanation of Fire Department Dues Payments**

The Industry Services Division (IS) of the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) is arranging payments to municipalities under the Wisconsin Two-Percent Fire Dues Payments Program. As in past years, a list of the computed Fire Dues payments planned for each municipality is available on our website at [Current Year Distribution](#). The list is first sorted alphabetically by county, and then, within the county, alphabetically in turn by towns, villages and cities. The amount of the check sent to the municipal treasurer is found under "Current Year Distribution." This online list replaces the mailings that were done in the past to announce the amounts of the payments. If there are questions concerning the list, contact [DSPPSSBFireDues@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DSPPSSBFireDues@Wisconsin.gov).

### **When Did NFIRS Become a Two-Percent Dues Fire Requirement?**

The 2013-15 state budget law, otherwise known as 2013 Wisconsin Act 20, modified the requirements for qualifying for Two-Percent Dues payments. Specifically, in order to be eligible for fire dues payments from the state, a local fire department must now be in substantial compliance with the [s. 101.141 Wis. Stats.](#), requirements to keep records of fires and submit the reports of fires to the U.S. Fire Administration for inclusion in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), in addition to being in substantial compliance with other current eligibility requirements. Finally, the changes to the law require that local fire departments and municipal clerks must self-certify compliance with the fire incident reporting requirements, in addition to self-certifying compliance with current eligibility requirements.

Section 101.141 Wis. Stats, [s. SPS 314.01\(11\)](#) Wis. Adm. Code, and NFPA 1 section 1.11.3.1 require fire departments to record fire and emergency responses to NFIRS. Fire departments shall make sure that data exported from private vendor incident reporting software or entered directly into NFIRS also known as DEBI is actually received by the U.S. Fire Administration by running and reviewing reports using the Web Based Tools feature in the NFIRS to ensure all incidents are correctly received.

Fire departments needing training assistance with submitting fire reports or with other questions should contact their district fire prevention coordinator.

Those needing assistance in resetting passwords to or reactivating their NFIRS accounts are encouraged to email those requests directly to the following email address for the quickest response: [dspsisnfirs@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dspsisnfirs@wisconsin.gov).

### **When Can Municipalities Expect to Receive the Fire Dues Payment?**

Wisconsin statute mandates the payment be made on or before August 1 of each year.

### **How Is the Amount Determined?**

There are three key factors to consider in understanding the computation of fire dues payments and why the amounts may change for a municipality from year to year:

1. The Fire Dues fund amount is subject to change based upon the amount of fire insurance underwritten in Wisconsin in the year.
2. The percentage each municipality receives changes due to the relationship between the growth of the local community and the overall growth within the state.
3. The amount of disbursement is subject to change due to the hold-harmless provisions.

**Hold-Harmless Amount:**

An important factor in the equation is called the “hold-harmless” amount. This amount, based on the payment received in calendar year 1979, ensures that each municipality never receives less than the amount they received in 1979. For some municipalities the “hold harmless” amount is higher than the current calculation and for some it is lower. It’s also the reason why some municipalities' fire dues payment remains the same from year to year.

**Calculation:**

The Fire Dues payment is computed using the calculations described below:

1. Divide the municipal equalized valuation of real property improvements by the total state equalized valuation of real property improvements (this gives the municipal percentage);
2. Multiply the municipal percentage times the amount of funding available for distribution. The resulting number is the current fire dues amount.
3. Determine the 1979 base Fire Dues payment (“hold harmless” amount) for the municipality.
4. Compare the 1979 base Fire Dues payment with the current fire dues amount. The larger of the two numbers is the current Fire Dues payment for the municipality.
5. Re-compute the current Fire Dues payment for all municipalities after adjusting the amount available by the difference between the current Fire Dues amount and the hold harmless amount for those municipalities who are held harmless.