



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Assessment Audit Report

Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1

For the period January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021

Published June 8, 2023

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**Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy**

June 8, 2023

Board of Commissioners
Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1
Connell, Washington

Report on Assessment Audit

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

The attached report describes the procedures performed and conclusions for the areas we reviewed. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff, and value your cooperation during the assessment audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor
Olympia, WA

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AUDIT SUMMARY

Results in brief

Based on the procedures performed, nothing came to our attention in the areas we reviewed that caused us to believe the District was not in substantial compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, or had not provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported.

We noted certain matters related to timely and accurate annual financial reporting that we communicated to the District's management and Board of Commissioners in a letter dated May 30, 2023. We appreciate the District's commitment to resolving those matters.

About the assessment audit

This report contains the results of our independent audit of Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1 from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives. State law (RCW 43.09.230) also requires local governments to prepare and submit certified annual reports to our Office summarizing such things as revenues received, collections made, amounts receivable or payable, expenditures made, and debt owed.

This assessment audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.260, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all local governments at least once every three years. Assessment audits are risk-based, limited-scope reviews of small local governments, generally defined as local governments with less than \$300,000 in annual revenues. To help minimize audit costs, our work for this engagement was conducted off-site primarily using financial and other information provided by the District.

This assessment audit was limited to the following:

- Reviewing meeting minutes for compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act
- Inquiring as to internal controls over assets, revenues, and disbursements
- Verifying that annual reports submitted to our Office were complete and filed timely in compliance with state law
- Reviewing the District's annual revenues and expenditures for unusual transactions or trends
- Corroborating financial information reported by the District by comparing reported revenues, expenditures, and cash and investment balances to third-party sources
- Reviewing expenditures for indications of unusual activities, excessive Board of Commissioners compensation, conflicts of interest, or procurement requirements
- Evaluating the District's financial information for indications of financial distress

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT

Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1 provides fire protection and suppression services to the central part of Franklin County. The District has approximately 35 volunteer firefighters. In 2010 the city of Connell established an inter-local agreement with the District to ensure the city has an adequate response service for wild land/brush fires within the city limits.

An elected, three-member Board of Commissioners governs the District. Each Commissioner is elected to a staggered, six-year term. The District received annual revenue of about \$378,000 in 2020 and \$257,000 in 2021, primarily from property tax collections; 2020 included debt proceeds of about \$146,000.

Contact information related to this report

Address:	Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1 P.O. Box 186 Connell, WA 99326
Contact:	Heather Benson, Administrator
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Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for Franklin County Fire Protection District No. 1 at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, www.sao.wa.gov. Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

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