



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 2, 2019

**Contact:** Jane Q. Sample, Board Chair

**Phone:** 503-555-1234

**Email:** [janesample@sample.com](mailto:janesample@sample.com)

### **Sample Water District Seeking Candidates for Board Vacancy**

Sample Water District is accepting applications to fill one open position on its board of commissioners.

The appointee will serve the remainder of Edward Exampleton's term, which expires June 30, 2021. Edward Exampleton resigned from the board effective November 1, 2019.

The Sample Water District Board of Commissioners is comprised of five board commissioners. Unless appointed, each member is elected by the registered voters of the district to serve a four-year term. Applicants for the vacant position must be registered voters who reside within the district's boundaries.

Interested candidates can request an information packet, which includes information about the district, position, and application/selection process from the district office by contacting Jane Sample at 503-555-1234 or by email at [janesample@sample.com](mailto:janesample@sample.com). You may also visit our office located at 1234 Sample Lane during regular business hours (8am-5pm Monday through Friday).

The deadline to submit applications for this vacancy is November 5, 2019 at 5pm.

For more information, please contact Jane Sample at 503-555-1234.

### **About Sample Water District**

Sample Water District was formed in 1950 in the bright and bustling community of Sample, Oregon. We serve 1,234 customers covering a span of about 20 square miles. You can visit our website at [www.samplewater.com](http://www.samplewater.com).

###



Sample Water District  
1234 Sample Lane  
Sample, Oregon 97123

Dear Interested Community Member:

We are excited that you are interested in serving on the Sample Water District Board of Commissioners. We hope that this information packet answers all your questions concerning the open position.

Within this packet you will find information about special districts, water districts specifically, what it means to be a commissioner, and how to serve on our board.

**Next Steps**

- Review this packet
- Contact Sample County Elections Office at 503-555-4321 for more information about running for election
- Download a copy of the Elections Manual at <https://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Documents/county-city-district-candidates.pdf>

Thank you for your interest in serving on our board! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Jane Q. Sample, Board Chair, at [janesample@sample.com](mailto:janesample@sample.com).

Sincerely,

Jane Q. Sample  
Board Chair



## **Sample Water District**

### **About Us**

Sample Water District was formed in 1950 in the bright and bustling community of Sample, Oregon. We serve 1,234 customers covering a span of about 20 square miles.

### **District's Mission**

It is our mission to provide our customers with high-quality water with impressive customer service. We value quality, reliability, sustainability, and excellence in the service we provide.

### **Board of Commissioners and Current Officers**

Jane Q. Sample  
Chair

John Doe  
Vice Chair

Joe Example  
Secretary

Vincent Waters  
Commissioner

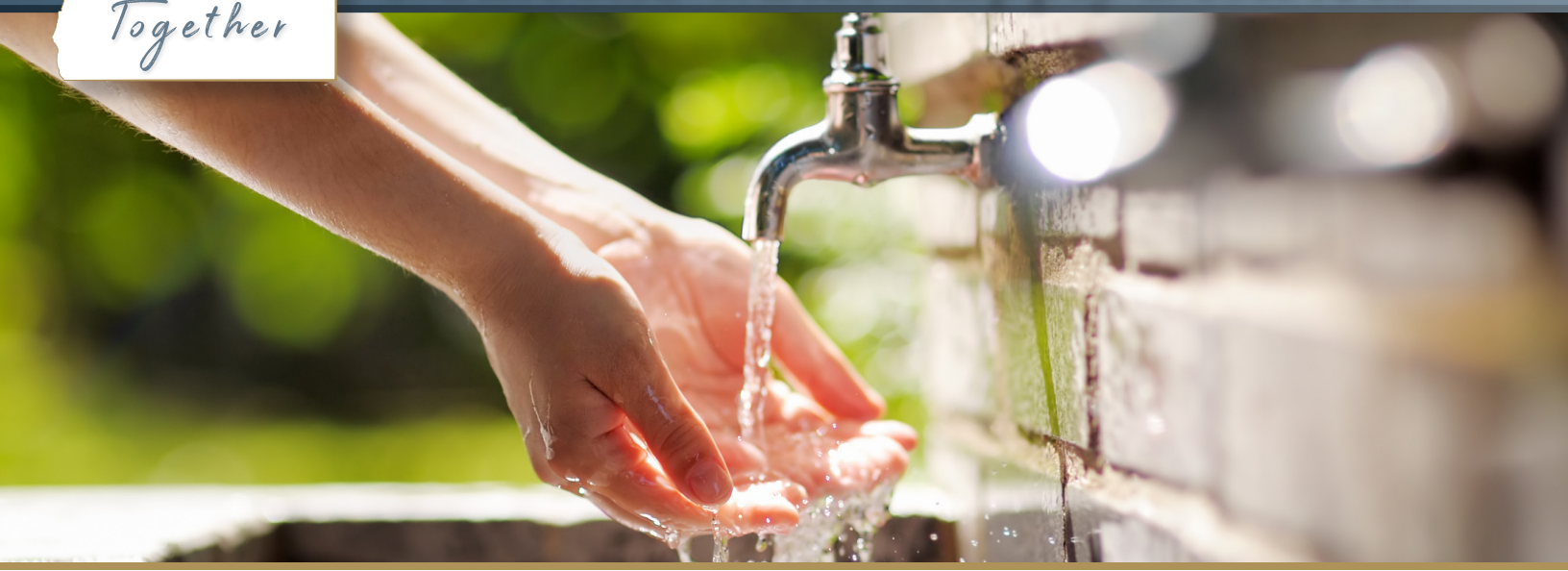
### **Board Commitment**

A strong, engaged, dedicated board of commissioners is one of the cornerstones to the successful public service of a special district. It is important to have each seat on the board filled by someone dedicated to seeing the district succeed in serving in the public's best interest. When a commissioner vacates a seat, there is an opportunity to bring in someone to fill that seat with a fresh perspective and unique experiences of their own, which will help contribute to the board's guidance of the district.

### **Upcoming Board Meeting Schedule**

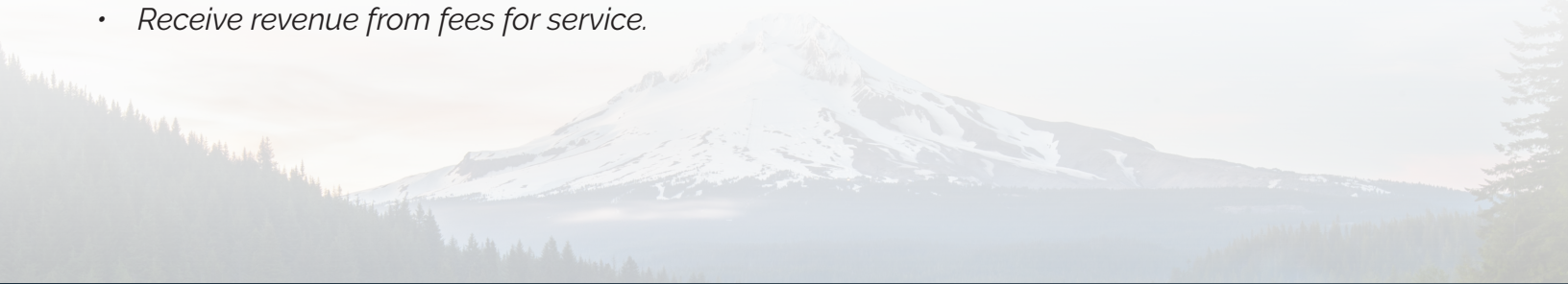
First Thursday of Each Month  
6pm-8pm  
District Headquarters

# Domestic Water Supply Districts



## *Districts invest in a sustainable future*

- 105 water districts exist throughout the state that are independent local governments and not part of a local city or county.
- Supply water for domestic purposes within its district boundaries and may supply, furnish and sell for any use any surplus water to persons living outside the district, or to other water districts, school districts or other local governments.
- Authorized to also purchase and maintain fire equipment, including fire hydrants, and maintain and operate street lighting systems.
- Implement measures to help conserve water, such as creating programs to encourage drought resistant lawns, educating the public to reduce water usage and developing innovative infrastructure solutions.
- Governed by a board of five commissioners elected in May of odd-numbered years for four-year terms. Each board member must be an elector within the district.
- District board is completely responsible for personnel administration, financial administration, and seeing that the requirements of laws governing areas ranging from public records and public meetings to civil rights are met.
- Receive revenue from fees for service.





*What is a Special District?*







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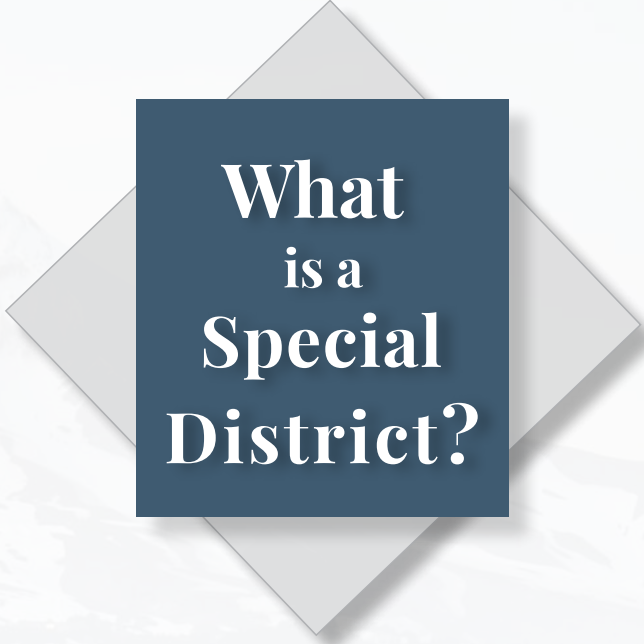
## **SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF OREGON**

PO Box 12613 Salem, OR 97309

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461 | Phone: 503-371-8667

Email: [memberservices@sdao.com](mailto:memberservices@sdao.com) | [www.sdao.com](http://www.sdao.com)





# What is a Special District?

**M**ost of us do not know much about local governments; and we know less about special districts. Special districts are a form of local government created by a local community to meet a specific need. Inadequate revenue bases and competing demands for existing taxes make it difficult for cities and counties to provide all of the services that their constituents want. When residents or landowners want new services or higher levels of existing services, they can form a district to pay for them. Each special district focuses on a specific set of services, like fire protection, water, healthcare, parks and recreation, among many others. There are currently 34 different types of special districts in Oregon.

Special districts can cross city and county lines to provide focused services to communities of different sizes, allowing them to address their common needs. Special districts can be small, such as a fire protection district serving a rural unincorporated area. They can also cover multi-county regions. The boundaries of special districts are not dependent on the county or city that the residents live in. Instead, special district boundaries are defined by the common needs of the communities and the services they want to be provided.

Like cities and counties, special districts can sign contracts, employ workers and acquire real property through purchase or eminent domain. Following constitutional limits, they can also issue bonds, impose special taxes, levy assessments, and charge services fees. Like other governments, special districts can sue and be sued.

Most independent special districts have boards elected directly by the residents and landowners in the district, making special districts accountable to the people they serve. The special district board is the governing body of the special district. They set policies that are carried out by the district's employees. The special district's general manager is charged with overseeing the day-to-day operations of the district and reports directly to the board of directors.

## **Statutory Authority for Special Districts**

All special districts are created based on laws passed by the State Legislature. These laws also determine which services the district can provide and how districts are managed and governed. Most special districts are created by laws that are applicable to specific types of special districts. These laws are known as "principal acts."

# OREGON

## *Special Districts*

### *Fast Facts*

- 1,000+ special districts located in every region of the state
- 920 special districts are members of SDAO
- Over 4,350 locally elected/volunteer board members
- Special districts of some type provide services to nearly every Oregonian
- 350 districts operate exclusively with volunteers
- Special districts are fiscally responsible. 350+ operate with budgets under \$100,000
- Large, regional special districts solve regional challenges and provide for economics of scale, saving tax and rate payer money



## Types of Districts / SDAO Member Profile



## What a Special District is Not

### • Special districts are not state government

Special districts are local agencies which deliver specific services to specific communities. Operating under state laws, special districts are autonomous government entities that are accountable to the voters or landowners they serve. State officials, however, oversee special districts. For example, special districts must send their annual financial reports to the Secretary of State Audits Division. Districts must also follow state laws for public meetings, public records, public contracting, bonded debt, and elections.

### • Special districts are not county governments or cities

Counties and cities are general purpose governments. Counties and cities perform a broad array of services to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Special districts are limited purpose governments. They can provide only the services allowed by state law and supported by their residents. Sometimes county commissioners are special district governing boards, but those districts are legally separate local entities.

### • Special districts are not school districts

School districts exist to provide one service – public education. Special districts can deliver a variety of public services, excluding education. School districts get most of their money from the state government. Special districts rely mostly on local revenues.

## Special Districts Provide Essential Local Services



- Airport districts manage airports and enhance local economies.
- Cemetery districts provide cost-effective burial services and preserve historical community information.
- County service districts offer over 22 different type of services, such as law enforcement, agricultural educational extension services, and street lighting.



- Diking and drainage districts protect lives and property from the threat of flooding.
- Fire protection districts protect homes, businesses, and the environment from fires and respond to medical emergencies.



- Port districts manage recreational, economic, and environmental coastal and river infrastructure.
- Health districts promote the physical and mental health of communities, which may include preventative care, nutrition education, health clinics, traditional hospitals, or other services.



- Library districts provide access to educational and informational resources, including collections of books, photographs, newspapers and videos.
- Park and recreation districts provide parks, open spaces, and community programs to improve quality of life.



- People's utility districts provide power.
- Sanitary districts treat and recycle wastewater.
- Soil and water conservation districts identify local conservation needs and support landowners in implementing solutions.



- Transit districts provide public transportation services that connect regions.
- Vector control districts control mosquito populations and reduce the spread of vector borne diseases.
- Water related districts deliver water to residential, commercial, and agricultural areas.

# Special District Advantages

## Special districts can...



- empower citizens to govern their own neighborhoods and community.



- provide opportunities for citizens to get involved in the governance of their community through service on the district's governing body and attendance of meetings, which are usually held near their homes.



- be a financing mechanism to help the private and public sectors govern, finance, construct, operate, and maintain essential public services and facilities.



- provide enhanced and specialized public services in response to citizen demand that a county or city is unable or unwilling to do.



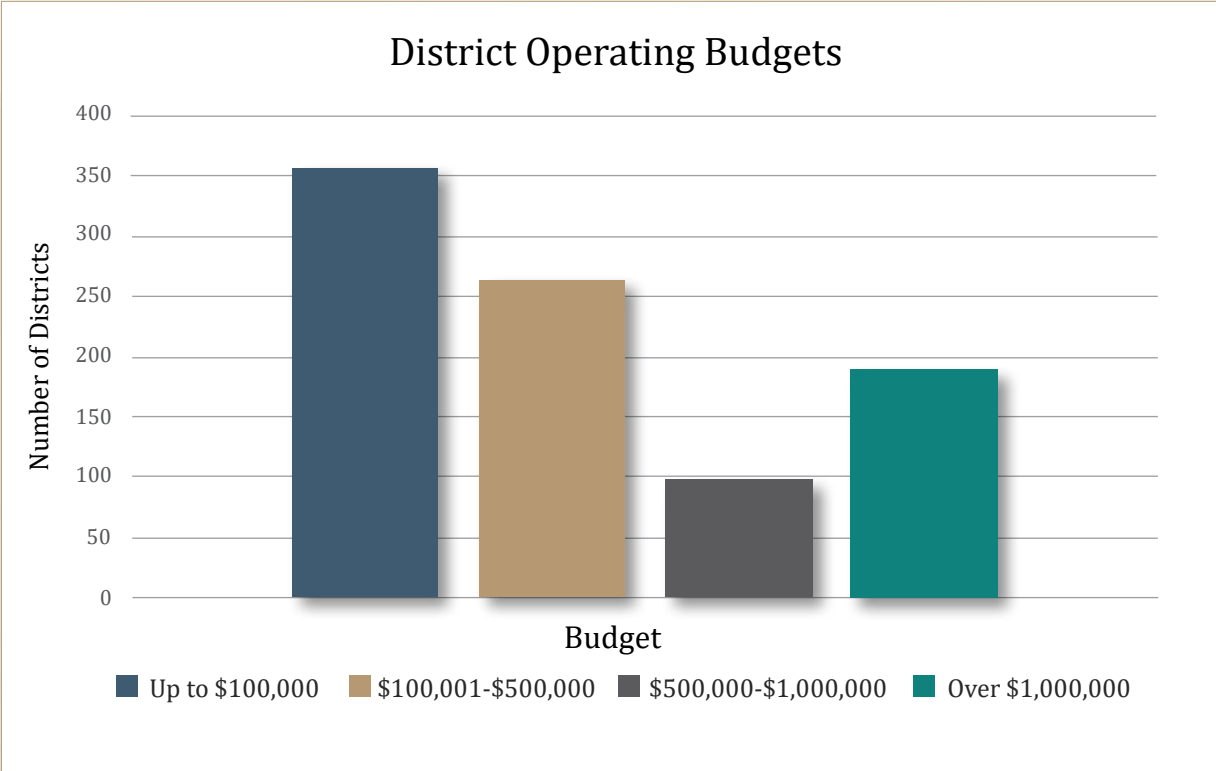
- allow cities and counties to focus more on general government issues.
- provide for a local special-purpose governmental agency with funding, employment, and missions separate from local general-purpose governments.
- provide governmental services when the need transcends the boundaries, responsibilities, and authority of individual counties and cities. This is one reason we have regional and multi-county special districts.



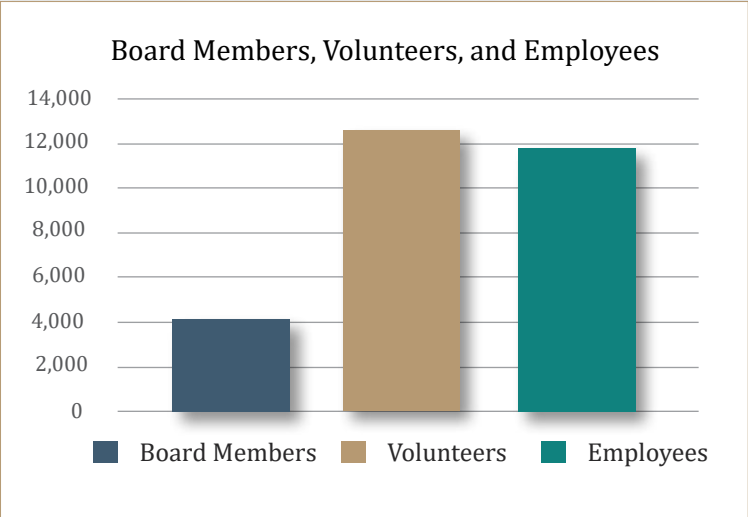
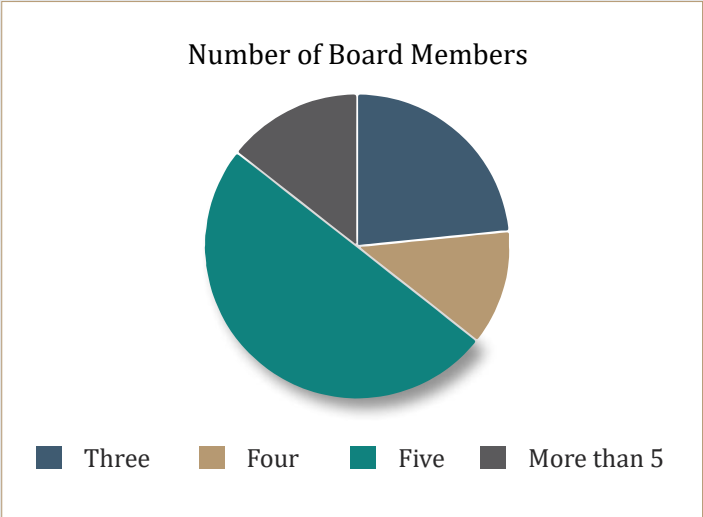
- ensure accountability of public resources, since they are held to the same high standard as cities and counties.

# By the Numbers

Special districts are funded by local property taxes and/or fees for service. The operating budgets of our members varies widely as do the services they provide. Amazingly, about 40% of SDAO members serve their communities with a budget of less than \$100,000 per year. The graph below shows the number of districts and the range of operating budgets.

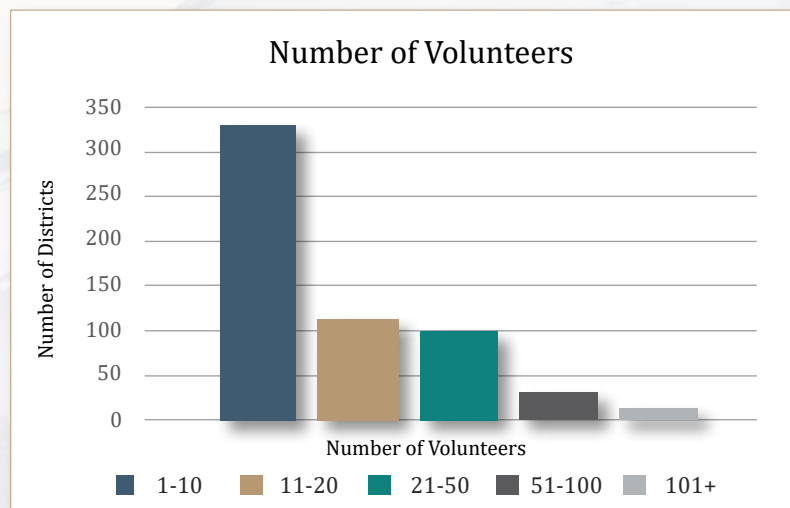
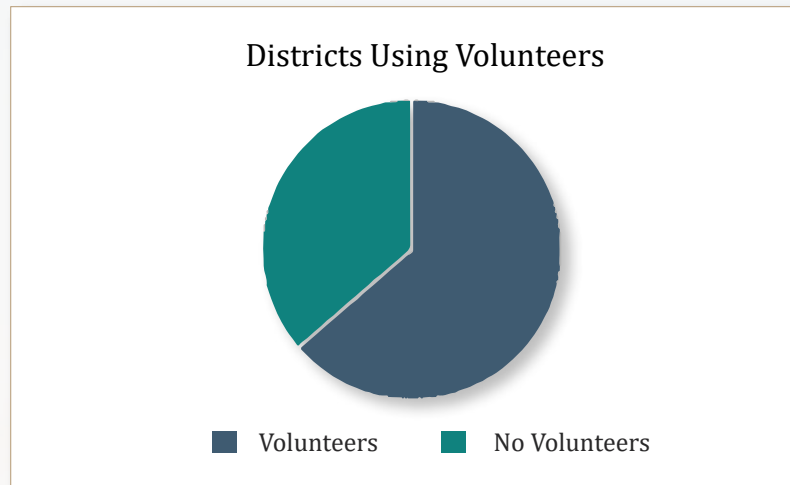


A strong board is essential to the successful governance of a special district. Board members must follow state requirements regarding public meetings, record keeping, ethics, and more. A minimum of three members is required to conduct business. The graphs below show the number of board members for our special districts.

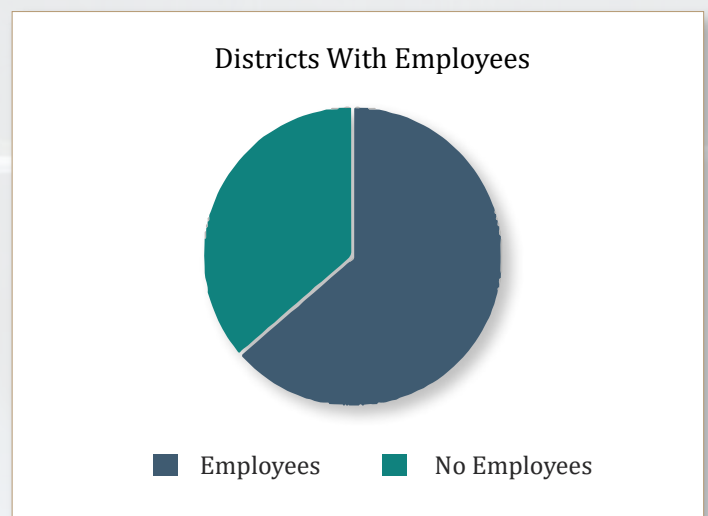
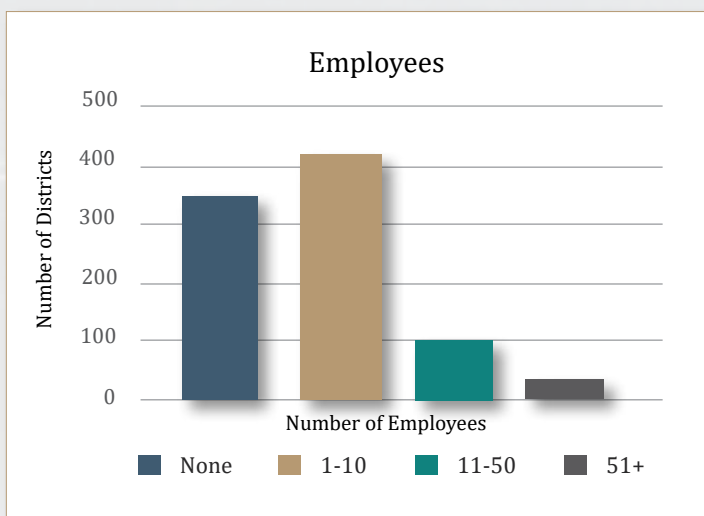




Each day, thousands of Oregonians volunteer their time and efforts for special districts. They are a vital resource and often make it possible for districts to fully serve their communities. 64% of our district members have at least one volunteer.



The majority (62%) of our district members employ individuals to provide services to the community. However, most of them do so with a very small staff. In fact, 75% of our members that utilize staff have ten or fewer employees.



## Profile of a Small District

### JASPER KNOLLS WATER DISTRICT

- Domestic water supply to 53 metered properties
- 45-acre service area in Prineville
- Two 20,000 gallon concrete water reservoirs enclosed within a 1,300 square foot wood frame building and an 80 square foot filtration building
- Five volunteers, no paid staff
- 2017-18 Budget: \$16,000



## Profile of a Large District

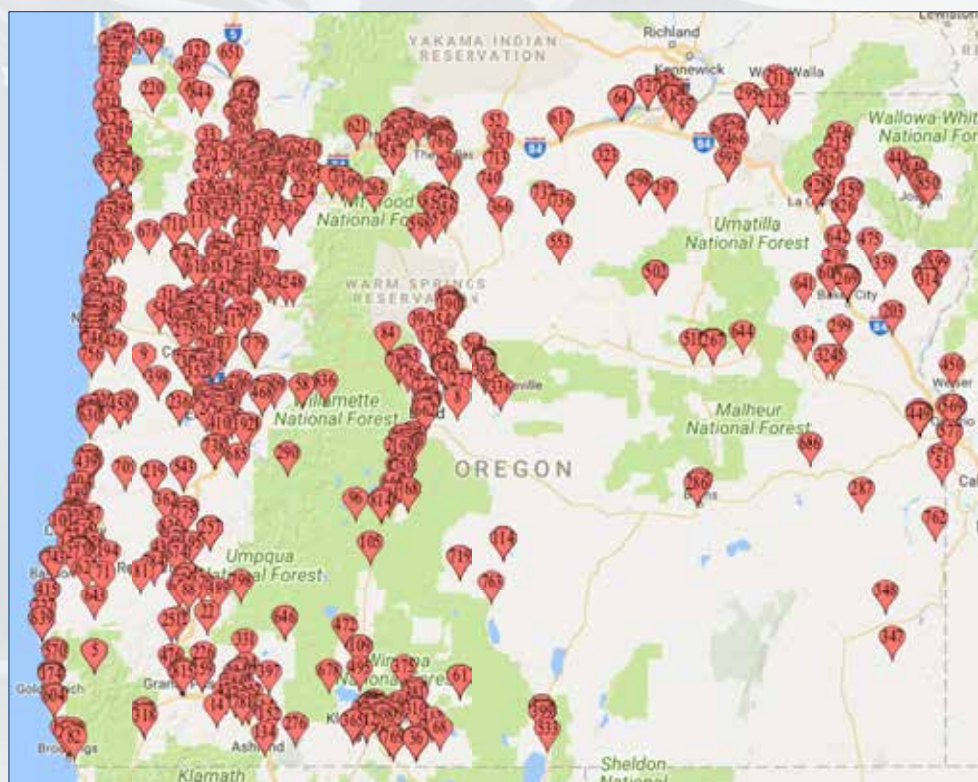
### TUALATIN VALLEY FIRE & RESCUE

- Fire protection and emergency medical services to approximately 530,000 residents
- 390-square-mile service area includes 11 cities and unincorporated portions of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties
- 26 fire stations staffed by more than 400 career firefighters and 90 volunteers
- 2017-18 Budget: \$149,782,000





## OREGON SPECIAL DISTRICTS MAP



Special districts are the most basic, grassroots form of government. Members of the public can feel like they can have a real impact on the direction, control and services they receive. Nationwide government satisfaction surveys show that special districts are the most popular type of government because they are focused on specific missions and engaged with the public they serve.

The number of special districts in Oregon has been on an upward trend for the last 70 years. Since 1942, this number has grown about 400% to just over 1,000. The State of Oregon estimates that the state's population will increase to approximately 5.5 million people by the year 2050. As our population grows, city and county resources will be stretched, causing a need for cities, counties and special districts to work together as a means of installing the infrastructure to support the growth.





SPECIAL DISTRICTS  
ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

**Special Districts Association of Oregon**

Main Office: PO Box 12613 | Salem, OR 97309-0613

Toll-free: 800-285-5461 | Phone: 503-371-8667

Fax: 503-371-4781 | Email: [sdao@sdao.com](mailto:sdao@sdao.com)

Web: [www.sdao.com](http://www.sdao.com)





## **Why Would I Want to Become a Commissioner?**

Becoming a commissioner for Sample Water District is a serious commitment to your community. It takes time and dedication but is worth the effort. If you are looking to feel like you are making a difference and want to share your knowledge and experience, we invite you to consider being a part of our board.

Volunteering to serve on our board is the best way to know what is happening in local government and your neighborhood. You can be a part of the decision-making process and have a voice. This is also a great way to gain experience in government and leadership that can translate into other career or political opportunities.

For more information about opportunities with our district, please contact Jane Q. Sample, Board Chair at 503-555-1234.



## **Sample Water District Board Commissioner Duties**

A commissioner of Sample Water District serves on a five-member Board of Commissioners responsible for conducting the affairs of the district in compliance with Oregon Revised Statutes. The Board of Commissioners has the legislative authority and power to establish policies and procedures that are in the best interest of the residents it serves.

The board ensures that the district achieves its mission in an ethical, transparent, accountable and prudent manner. Each commissioner is accountable for the functions described below, all of which are accomplished at board meetings and committee assignments through review of information, strategic planning, conversation and decision making.

Together, the board makes decisions and sets policy for the district. Individually, you do not have any power, but acting with your fellow commissioners you have an opportunity to have a positive impact on your community. The board's major responsibility is setting policy.

Commissioners also do the following:

- Attend the board meeting held on the first Thursday of each month (sometimes special meetings can be held to address specific issues)
- Review and adopt the annual budget
- Approve financial reports
- Set goals and evaluate progress towards those goals
- Ask voters to approve bond measures and local option levies for facilities and operations
- Hire and evaluate the executive director
- Help set standards, controls and policies that support sound risk management practices are in place; e.g. safety and security, insurance, data controls and personnel management practices
- Delegates authority
- Connects with the community



### **How Do I Become a Commissioner for Sample Water District?**

Commissioners can either be elected or appointed. Currently, Sample Water District has one position that is being filled by appointment. Included in this packet is a board commissioner application. Please complete the application and return to the district by November 5, 2019 at 5pm. The district's mailing address is 1234 Sample Lane; Sample Oregon 97123.

The board will review applications, and if necessary, conduct interviews on November 18, 2019. A decision will be made on December 5, 2019. If you are selected, you will be sworn into office at the January 2, 2019 board meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Jane Q. Sample, Board Chair, at 503-555-1234.



## Board Commissioner Application

Term Ends: June 30, 2021

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a resident of our district? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a registered voter? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to serve on the Sample Water District Board?

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Describe past experiences or positions held that would assist you as a board member.

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Outline strengths, abilities and talents that you would bring to the board.

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In your opinion, what is the most important role of a commissioner?

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**\*\*Attach additional sheets if needed\*\***

If appointed, would you be able to serve the entire term? \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit your application to:

Jane Q. Sample  
1234 Sample Lane  
Sample, Oregon 97123

**Application Deadline: Friday, January 3, 2020 at 4:00pm**