



**Montana Legislative Services Division**  
**Office of Research and Policy Analysis**

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TO: Environmental Quality Council members

FROM: Leanne Kurtz, Research Analyst

DATE: March 5, 2018

RE: Fire-related materials

Enclosed for your review are documents intended to help you prepare for the fire-related agenda items scheduled at 8:30 a.m. on March 22.

Regarding the EQC's study of landowner fire protection assessments, the following documents, prepared by DNRC, are included.

- a history of the fire protection assessment program;
- a map showing current wildland fire protection districts; and
- five charts showing different fire protection assessment scenarios. Each chart includes DNRC's discussion of the data being analyzed.

DNRC staff will be on hand at the meeting to discuss these assessment models with you.

The Council has included in its work plan time to learn about volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention. The Local Government Interim Committee was assigned SJR 21, a study of emergency medical and volunteer firefighter service systems in the state, including what the stresses are on the systems and how they may be addressed. Personnel shortages have been among the key problems facing volunteer fire departments for years. Local fire chiefs who participated in LGIC's November meeting voiced concern about the trend of fewer people able or willing to volunteer combined with longer and more extreme wildland fire seasons. The next document is a review prepared for LGIC on its study progress, as well as a compilation of previous efforts to study the needs of volunteer fire departments and provide incentives to volunteers. LGIC meets on March 14-15, so any additional action by that committee will be included in my report to you on March 22.