



PUBLIC SERVICE UPDATE

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Public Service Update: Temporary Structure to be Placed at FS1

March 12, 2026

The Westwood Select Board approved plans to install a temporary structure outside of Fire Station 1 (FS1), which will restore the Westwood Fire Department's presence on the FS1-side of town as soon as possible.

A structural engineer conducted an emergency evaluation on February 26, following the observation by Westwood Fire Department personnel of increased water damage to the apparatus bay floor after the historic snowfall that week. The engineer determined that bays two and three were no longer suitable to house the ladder engine, or other large fire apparatus, until structural remediation could be completed.

Since the evaluation, several steps have been taken:

- Town and Fire staff reassessed the department's operational models and relocated all staffed apparatus and personnel to Fire Station 2, allowing Fire Station 1 to be used only during the day when the temperature exceeded a certain threshold, and the apparatus could remain on the front apron.
- The Fire Department implemented automatic mutual aid coordination with neighboring departments to ensure fast response time to emergencies.
- The Finance Department sought and received an emergency procurement waiver from the Commonwealth to allow the town to quickly develop a temporary solution for Fire Station 1.

Two temporary options were presented during the March 9 Select Board meeting. The first option would be to make emergency repairs to Fire Station 1. This would involve removing the epoxy floor, repairing the cracks, reinstalling the epoxy, and replacing and adding shoring in the basement. This option is budgeted to cost \$750,000.

The Select Board moved forward with an option to install a temporary structure in front of Fire Station 1's bay doors. This option is budgeted to cost \$400,000.

By choosing this option, fire department operations would be restored to the FS1-side of Westwood more quickly compared to a full repair of the station at a lower immediate cost. The temporary structure could also be moved and reused in the future. Additionally, this option will stabilize the fire department's operations while long-term solutions for Fire Station 1 are considered by residents.

"Both of these options restore response on this side of town, which is the benefit. They do not, however, improve conditions for the firefighters who work out of that building or meet the programmatic needs of Fire Station 1 or the Westwood Fire Department," said Deputy Town Administrator Molly Fitzpatrick.