

County Service Districts

Among the types of special districts that can be created under Oregon law are county service districts. Service districts are organized and derive authority from ORS Chapter 451. Service districts are separate governmental entities from county government, however the Board of Commissioners is the governing body of each district, as required by law. Service districts may have its own staff and operating procedures, however in Benton County's case all districts are managed by county departments and generally follow county procedures and processes.

Districts can be created directly by the Board of Commissioners, through an initiative process and by election. Districts may not levy property taxes unless authorized by a vote of the people. Districts are organized to provide specific services as defined in its organizing documents and as allowed by state law.

Benton County has six active service districts. The purpose of five districts is related to the provision of water and/or sewer utility services. One district provides funding for library operations. Two of the districts operate with two-year budgets, like the county. Four districts operate with annual budgets. One district, North Albany, has completed its remaining function of generating taxes to retire bonded debt. The future of the district will be determined in this biennium.

