



2314 Appleside Boulevard
Clarkston, WA 99403
(509) 758-5181
acfd1@cableone.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 13, 2017
Contact: Chief Noel Hardin, Asotin County Fire District 1
Office (509) 758-5181 Cell (208) 790-3379 nhardin@acfd1.org

Lid lift to finish station project, purchase replacement apparatus

CLARKSTON, WASH. – Asotin County Fire District 1 is asking voters to return the fire levy to \$1.06 per \$1,000 of assessed property value during the November General Election. This would be the same rate it was in 1995. Revenue would be used to replace apparatus and equipment, and finish renovations to an existing building the district purchased to serve as a larger fire station.

Lid lift funds will be used to purchase fire training equipment, and replace the self-contained breathing apparatus (called SCBA's) for firefighters at a cost of \$250,000. It also will replace a fire engine that is past its usable life, which can cost as much as \$600,000.

The station project is another item that the lid lift will fund. Last September, Fire District 1 received a \$750,000 grant from the federal government for renovations. The new fire station is considered a critical infrastructure facility, which is why it was awarded funding. However, the grant amount was \$250,000 less than the fire district needed to fund the project.

Call volumes have been steadily increasing (13% since 2011). Fire District 1 requires more room to expand its volunteer firefighter program to be able to respond to these increasing numbers. A larger facility will provide training space for firefighters, and separate showers and sleeping quarters for a mixed gender workforce.

Firefighter health and safety is another reason driving the need for a larger station. The station will have upgraded mechanical systems to move diesel exhaust fumes – a known carcinogen – away from fire department personnel and community members who use the facility for meetings. It also will have better decontamination units and storage spaces where firefighters can keep their protective gear. This will reduce their risk of exposure to cancer-causing agents that accumulate on protective clothing at fires and other emergencies.

A larger fire station also will shelter expensive apparatus and equipment and help extend their usable lives. Currently, some engines and equipment must be kept outside because the apparatus bays at the existing station are too small to house them.

Renovating an existing building is saving taxpayers an estimated \$3 million compared to building a new facility. The fire levy lid lift would cost the owner of a \$200,000 home an additional \$5.66 per month (\$68 per year). This is not a new tax, and would be the first voter-approved increase to the fire levy in the history of the district, which formed in 1951.

###

Asotin County Fire District 1 provides fire suppression and prevention, emergency medical service (EMS), river rescue, oil spill response and wildland fire protection to 14,000 people over 120 square miles of land and 35 miles of shoreline. Thirty-two volunteer firefighters, 28 emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and 35 paramedics (through a partnership with Lewiston) respond to an average of 2,600 calls per year. The fire district operates under a balanced budget and has passed all financial and accountability audits by the state. Learn more about Asotin County Fire District 1 by visiting their web site www.acfd1.org or Facebook page /asotincountyfd1.