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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Fire Levy Lid Lift: Next Steps**

CLARKSTON, WASH. – Voters in Asotin County Fire District 1 approved a fire levy lid lift of 34-cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value during the November 7 General Election. Fire District 1 wants to report back on what will happen with the funding once the new rate takes effect in April 2018.

“We have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season,” said Fire Chief Noel Hardin. “Community support ensures that we can maintain emergency service levels that residents and businesses require.”

The first priority is to support the volunteer firefighter program that has served Fire District 1 well since its inception in 1951. Volunteer recruitment and retention is a priority because this program saves fire district taxpayers approximately \$1 million per year in personnel costs. Funding will be used to replace the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) that firefighters use when responding to calls as well as purchasing an air compressor to fill oxygen tanks. That cost is over \$300,000. The fire district also is looking at purchasing training props for live fire training.

Number two on the list is finishing the station project on Appleside Boulevard. Fire District 1 received a \$750,000 grant, but that was \$250,000 less than it originally applied for to finalize the new facility. Revenue from the fire levy lid lift will finish the project which is moving forward. Currently, Fire District 1 is finishing bid documents and anticipates putting them out to the public within the next 60 days. Federal dollars require a more stringent process, including sewer issues, easements, and catch basins for run off from apparatus.

Funding also will be used to replace apparatus that is approaching the end of its usable life. Fire District 1 pays cash for apparatus as opposed to financing these purchases which costs more for taxpayers due to interest payments. This approach will save money to replace an engine and a brush truck.

“We run a tight ship here,” said Fire Chief Noel Hardin. “Having money in reserve to replace apparatus is part of the reason we are financially healthy. And our taxpayers recognize that value because we’re not asking them for more money than we need.”

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*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](http://www.acfd1.org) or Facebook page /asotincountyfd1.*