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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Asotin County Fire District 1: Station Update
New roof installed to replace failed membrane

CLARKSTON, WASH. – Asotin County Fire District 1 continues to make progress on the new station on Appleside Boulevard. This facility is anticipated to meet the needs of the fire district for the next 50 years once renovations are completed.

One set back has been the cost to replace the flat roof covering a portion of the 22,000-square foot building on the 8-acre property the fire district purchased back in late 2014. That was an unanticipated expense of \$60,000 when the membrane failed earlier this year.

“Maintenance is always an issue, but we’re still ahead,” said Fire Chief Noel Hardin. “The property is valued at significantly more than the fire district paid for the structure.”

Fire District 1 also received a federal grant for \$750,000 to help renovate the former church into a new fire station. The Community Development Block Grant, one of the longest-running programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, funds local community infrastructure projects. The program is administered in Washington State by the Department of Commerce.

“We are doing everything possible to minimize the cost to taxpayers,” said Fire Chief Noel Hardin. “There’s just a lot of red tape to access these funds.”

Chief Hardin is referring to a National Environmental Policy Act study that is required as a part of the grant. The study is expected to be completed in May at which point funds will be released for construction and renovation purposes.

“Everyone associated with the program sees the importance of the new fire station to the safety of our community,” he said.

Fire District 1 originally requested \$1 million toward the project, which was the maximum allowed under the CDBG grant program. However, the total amount of funding for community development projects was reduced to \$750,000 in the middle of the application process.

Fire District 1 likely will ask voters to return the fire levy to \$1.06 per \$1,000 of assessed value (the same rate it was in 1995) to finish the station and replace aging apparatus. Call volumes have been steadily increasing (13% since 2011), and additional revenue is required to respond. If approved by voters, this would cost an additional \$5.66 per month (\$68 per year) for the owner of a \$200,000 home.

“We have said all along that community funding might be necessary,” said Chief Hardin. “However, the grant reduces that amount significantly.”

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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 or Facebook page /asotincountfyd1.