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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Questions about the fire levy lid lift?

CLARKSTON, WASH. – Asotin County Fire District 1 invites community members with questions about the proposed fire levy lid lift to one of two public meetings. Both meetings will be held at 2377 Appleside Boulevard, Clarkston, WA 99403, which is the proposed building for a larger fire station for the District. Meeting dates and times are as follows:

- Tuesday, October 24 – 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 28 – 10:00 a.m.

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 – the same rate it was in 1995. 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.

If approved by voters, revenue would focus on two key areas. First, funding would be used to replace apparatus, such as firefighter self-contained breathing apparatus, training equipment and a fire engine. Fire District 1 prefers to pay cash for apparatus and equipment instead of financing these purchases, which can cost more due to interest payments.

Second, funding would be used to finish renovations to a building that will serve as a larger fire station for the community for the next 50 years. Renovating an existing building is saving taxpayers an estimated \$3 million compared to building a new facility. Fire District 1 received a \$750,000 grant from the federal government for renovations; however, that amount was \$250,000 less than it requested to complete 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 increasing call volumes. The station will improve firefighter health and safety with upgraded mechanical systems and decontamination facilities. This will reduce their risk of exposure to cancer-causing agents from diesel exhaust, fires and other emergencies.

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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 /asotincountyfd1.