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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: June 9, 2017  
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**Board of Fire Commissioners to consider resolution for fire levy lid lift**  
*Public invited and encouraged to attend*

CLARKSTON, WASH. – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Asotin County Fire District 1 will consider a resolution asking voters to approve a fire levy lid lift during the November General Election. If approved by voters, the fire levy would return to \$1.06 per \$1,000 of assessed property value – the same rate it was in 1995.

The meetings will take place on June 13 and July 11 at the home of Fire District 1's new fire station at 2314 Appleside Boulevard, Clarkston, WA 99403. Community members unable to attend are encouraged to send their comments to Fire Chief Noel Hardin at [nhardin@acfd1.org](mailto:nhardin@acfd1.org) or (509) 758-5181. All communication is welcome and becomes part of the public record.

This is the first time in the history of the fire district that voters will be asked to approve a fire levy lid lift. Call volumes have been steadily increasing (13% since 2011), and the fire district has a plan to respond. It has expanded the volunteer firefighter program, and has purchased land with a building that will serve as a larger fire station and training facility for firefighters. This station, funded in part with a \$750,000 grant, will accommodate district volunteers, apparatus and equipment for the next 50 years.

A portion of the lid lift would be used to finish the station project and pay cash to replace aging apparatus and equipment instead of financing these purchases which costs taxpayers more. These projects are necessary to save lives, but also to maintain the fire district's insurance rating which impacts premiums paid by homeowners.

The maximum a fire district is allowed to ask for is \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Fire District 1 would be asking voters to return the fire levy from 72 cents to \$1.06 per \$1,000. This would cost the owner of a \$200,000 home an additional \$5.66 per month (\$68 per year).

"We're only asking for what we need to maintain service levels and our insurance rating," said Chief Noel Hardin. "That amount is significantly less than premiums would increase if the fire district's insurance rating were to fall because of inadequate facilities and apparatus that is past its usable life."

Emergency services through Fire District 1 are funded through two levies paid through property taxes. Voters renewed a levy for emergency medical service at 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value last year. The fire levy, which provides a majority of funding, has fallen from \$1.06 in 1995 to 72 cents per \$1,000 in 2017. Fire District 1 formed in 1951, and has never asked voters to increase the fire levy in its history.

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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](https://www.facebook.com/asotincountyfd1).*