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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **Winter Safety Tips**

Clarkston, Wash. – In light of recent chimney fires in our area Asotin County Fire District # 1 would like to offer some winter safety tips. More fires happen in the winter months than any other time of the year. During the cold months, we spend more time indoors and use different methods to heat our homes. It is important to keep fire safety in mind when you are heating your home.

If you are using a portable heater:

- Make sure the heater has an automatic shut-off so if it tips over, it shuts off.
- Keep anything that can burn such bedding, clothing and curtains at least 3 feet from the heater.
- Plug portable heaters directly into wall outlets. Never use an extension cord or power strip.
- Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

If you are using a fireplace:

- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out and starting a fire.
- Do not burn paper in your fireplace.
- Before you go to sleep or leave your home put the fire out completely.
- Put ashes in a metal container with a lid. Store the container outside at least 3 feet from your home.

If you are using a wood stove:

- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned each year by a professional.
- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from the stove.
- Do not burn paper in your wood stove.
- Before you go to sleep or leave your home, put the fire out completely.

When heating your home, you need to be aware of carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide, also known as CO, is called the “invisible killer” because it’s a colorless, odorless, and poisonous gas. More than 150 people in the U.S. die every year from accidental CO poisoning from generators or fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fire places. Breathing CO at high levels can kill you.

Put CO alarms inside your home to provide an early warning of increasing CO levels. These alarms should be placed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.

As always, make sure you have a smoke alarm on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test your alarms every month. Have a home fire escape plan and practice your plan at least twice a year. Make sure everyone knows how to escape your home if there is a fire.

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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.*