



2314 Appleside Boulevard  
Clarkston, WA 99403  
(509) 758-5181  
acfd1@cableone.net

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: December 14, 2016  
Contact: Chief Noel Hardin, Asotin County Fire District 1  
Office (509) 758-5181 Cell (208) 790-3379 [nhardin@acfd1.org](mailto:nhardin@acfd1.org)

**Asotin County Fire District 1 passes budget for 2017**

Clarkston, Wash. – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Asotin County Fire District 1 unanimously passed its 2017 Budget at a recent meeting. Overall, the fire district is financially healthy, operating under a balanced budget and passing its most recent independent audit by the state. Budget priorities for 2017 include meeting the increased demand for emergency service, which means all funding is going to daily operations.

“Emergency call volumes have increased 38 percent since 2010,” said Fire Chief Noel Hardin. “We’re putting all our resources into meeting this increased demand for service by the community.”

Chief Hardin says that this includes expanding Fire District 1’s volunteer program to add firefighters. Volunteers save taxpayers approximately \$1,000,000 a year when compared to hiring full-time emergency personnel.

The fire district also is working to finish renovations on a building that will serve as a larger fire station. The station project, funded in part with a \$750,000 federal grant, will accommodate the fire district’s volunteers, apparatus and equipment for the next 50 years.

The fire district was able to purchase the property and building without raising taxes. It also funded architectural plans, state and federal permits for the project out of existing revenue. The \$750,000 grant will help with renovation costs, but it was \$250,000 less than the fire district originally requested.

“We’ve said that community funding might be needed all along,” said Chief Hardin. “This grant is important in that it reduces the amount we need to ask from our taxpayers.”

Emergency services at 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.

In 2017, the Board of Fire Commissioners will consider asking voters to increase the fire levy through a “lid lift.” Fire District 1 formed in 1951, and has never asked voters to increase the fire levy in its history.

###

*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.*