



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Mike Bucy, Fire Chief  
Office (509) 262-9660 Cell (509) 953-3189 [mbucy@scfpd1.com](mailto:mbucy@scfpd1.com)

**Fire District 1 Board places a bond and levy lid lift on November ballot**

*Board and citizens concerned about firefighter and community safety*

(Clayton, Wash.) – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Stevens County Fire Protection District 1 voted unanimously to place two measures on the November General Election ballot. Voters will be asked to approve a bond for facilities and a levy lid lift for fire district operations to improve safety for the community and its firefighters.

Before the vote, Fire Commissioner Mark Whittaker commented, “I am concerned about our ability to provide an adequate emergency response. I believe this is the safest way forward and a sound plan for how we will meet the emergency service needs of our community over the next 20 years.”

The fire district has spent the past several months communicating about the challenges it is facing to provide an adequate emergency response. It serves 22,000 people in the communities of Clayton, Deer Lake, Ford, Loon Lake, Suncrest, Tum Tum, Williams Valley and the Town of Springdale. Record call volumes, a decline in volunteer firefighters and aging facilities are impacting the fire district’s ability to respond to emergencies.

Phil Rodriguez, a retiree from Suncrest, was so concerned about the state of his local fire station that he sent a letter to the Board in support of the ballot measures. Rodriguez wrote, “[T]here are no decontamination areas for Firefighters to rid themselves and their clothing of unknown substances from exposures during a firefighting experience. Firefighters are subject to exposure to a long list of hazardous materials all harmful to themselves and their families...THIS IS NOT OK!”

The 20-year bond would replace the two busiest fire stations at Suncrest and Loon Lake. The aging stations are past their usable lives and too costly to renovate. New stations would have decontamination units, training space, and proper ventilation to move exhaust fumes away from personnel inside buildings. They also would contain sleeping quarters so that firefighters can respond directly from the station, as opposed to home or work. It is estimated that this would reduce emergency response times by an average of five minutes.

The levy lid lift would hire one full-time firefighter and help fund the fire district’s equipment replacement program. The additional firefighter would provide some relief for existing volunteers and add one more person to day time shifts when call volumes are highest.

The estimated amount for both measures would be 52.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, or \$8.75 per month (\$105 per year) for the owner of a \$200,000 home. For more information about the ballot measures, please visit <http://scfpd1.com/about/proposed-funding-measures/> or contact Fire Chief Mike Bucy directly at [mbucy@scfpd1.com](mailto:mbucy@scfpd1.com) or (509) 262-9660.

Stevens County Fire Protection District 1 provides structure and wildland fire protection, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, and emergency medical service for 13,500 people (22,000 during the summer) over 375 square miles. The fire chief, seven full-time and 40 volunteer firefighter/emergency medical technicians (EMTs) respond to an average of 1,100 calls per year.

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**STEVENS COUNTY**  
**Fire Protection District 1**

4532 Railroad Avenue  
PO Box 246  
Clayton, WA 99110  
(509) 262-9660  
[www.scfpd1.com](http://www.scfpd1.com)