



Lane Fire Authority

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Questions about the merger? We've got the answers!

[Veneta, Ore.] Fire district officials have scheduled three public meetings to answer questions about the proposed merger between Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue. Since 2012, the fire districts have been working together under the name "Lane Fire Authority" to reduce costs and improve emergency services. Now voters from both communities are being asked to finalize the merger on the November General Election ballot as Measure 20-268 for Lane County Fire District 1 and Measure 20-267 for Lane Rural Fire/Rescue.

All meetings will be held at Lane Fire Authority Headquarters, 88050 Territorial Highway in Veneta, Ore. 97487. The meeting dates and times are as follows:

- Saturday, October 22 at 9:00 a.m.
- Monday, October 24 at 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 25 at 12:00 noon

The meetings are expected to last an hour and refreshments will be served. The public is invited to attend and ask questions. Community members with questions who are unable to attend are encouraged to contact Fire Chief Terry Ney at (541) 935-2226 or terryney@lanefire.org.

Fire district officials wanted to make sure the partnership worked before asking voters to finalize the merger – and it has. Over the last four years working together, Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue have staffed one additional fire station full-time, added one more ambulance (with plans for another), and two more emergency response units to serve both communities.

The partnership has reduced administrative overhead and costs for training, equipment, fuel, and other supplies by as much as \$100,000 per district. Working together also has improved the fire insurance rating for both fire districts, which means that most homeowners and businesses will see lower property insurance premiums.

Voter approval would finalize the merger and reduce the bureaucracy and costs associated with running three organizations by approximately \$80,000 per year. Fire district officials plan to use the additional savings to hire one more paramedic for the Veneta Station. This would staff an ambulance during peak call times for the first time from this location.

The merger proposal establishes a new levy rate that would take effect July 1, 2017. The new rate is calculated to collect roughly the same amount for emergency services in 2017 as was collected in 2016. Based on 2016 assessed valuations, the rate would be approximately \$2.04 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This means that property owners in Lane Rural Fire/Rescue would see a tax decrease of 8 cents/\$1,000. Property owners in Lane County Fire District 1 would see a 5 cent/\$1,000 increase, or approximately a \$12 per year increase for the average homeowner.

More information about the merger can be found on Lane Fire Authority's web site at www.lanefire.org.

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Lane Fire Authority provides fire, life safety and emergency medical services (EMS) to 36,000 residents over 276 square miles in the Willamette Valley. This new partnership is actually two fire districts – Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue – operating under a special agreement since 2012 that saves money and improves emergency services for the community. Our career and volunteer emergency personnel respond to over 4,800 emergency calls per year, 81% of which are for EMS.



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