



Lane Fire Authority

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lane Fire Authority celebrates three years of serving community

Partnership is working, but it's not official yet

(Veneta, Ore.) – July 1, 2015 represents the third year that two area fire districts started working together to save money and improve emergency services for the community. Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue began operating under a special agreement July 1, 2012 and the partnership calls itself Lane Fire Authority.

Many fire agencies in Oregon and elsewhere are merging or forming regional partnerships. One benefit is that it is more cost-effective and efficient for taxpayers. By working as one agency, the two fire districts have reduced administrative costs, as well as those for training, equipment, fuel, and other supplies.

Best of all, emergency service coverage has improved to residents in both fire districts. Lane Fire Authority now responds to nearly all of its own emergencies, whereas before the individual fire districts relied more on mutual aid from other fire agencies, which often took longer. This is because the fire authority has added one more ambulance, staffed one more fire station full-time, and has additional emergency response units ready to serve the community.

Fire Chief Terry Ney says that the partnership is working, but it's not official yet. Both fire districts wanted to make sure working together would be of benefit before asking voters to finalize the merger, which will likely happen sometime in 2016.

"Our community is receiving better emergency services and it's more cost-effective for taxpayers," said Chief Ney. "The next step is to finalize the merger sometime next year and reduce all the bureaucracy."

Because the partnership is not yet official, three boards of directors must meet every month: one for the fire authority and two for the fire districts that formed the new agency. Every year this means passing three budgets and paying for three insurance policies and audits. Voter approval to finalize the merger will reduce the three agencies to one, which is more cost-effective and efficient.

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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 4,200 emergency calls per year, 85% of which are for EMS.



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