



Lane Fire Authority

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 18, 2016
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Lane Fire Authority: Savings from merger would staff another ambulance during peak call times

[Veneta, Ore.] Fire officials have calculated the savings involved with merging two agencies that are currently operating under a special agreement as Lane Fire Authority. The agency would use the savings to hire one additional paramedic for the Veneta Station, which would staff an ambulance during peak call times for the first time from this location. However, voters still need to approve the measure during the November General Election this fall.

“This is great news for our community where 81 percent of our calls are for emergency medical service,” said Fire Chief Terry Ney. “One additional paramedic means one more ambulance in service for the people we serve.”

Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue partnered in 2012 to reduce costs and improve emergency services for taxpayers. Both Boards of Directors wanted to make sure the partnership, called Lane Fire Authority, would work before asking voters to take this final step.

And work it has. The agencies have been able to staff one more fire station full-time, add an ambulance (with plans for another), and have additional emergency response units ready to serve both areas in Lane County. These increased emergency response capabilities have improved the ISO rating for the fire districts, which means many homeowners have benefitted from lower insurance premiums. Working together also has reduced costs for administrative overhead, training, equipment, fuel, and other supplies.

Chief Ney says funding for the paramedic would come from reducing the bureaucracy required of running three organizations. Currently, the fire authority manages three boards of directors, three budgets, and pays for three insurance policies and financial audits every year.

Lane Fire Authority will hold two community meetings in late June and early July to take public input about finalizing the merger during the November General Election ballot. If approved by voters, the new levy rate (based on 2016 assessed valuations) would be approximately \$2.04 per \$1,000 and take effect in July 1, 2017.

This means that property owners in Lane Rural Fire/Rescue would see a tax decrease of 8-cents/\$1,000. Those in Lane County Fire District 1 would see a 5-cent/\$1,000 increase for improved service, or approximately \$12 per year for the average homeowner.

More information about the merger can be found on Lane Fire Authority’s web site at www.lanefire.org. Fire Chief Terry Ney is also available to answer questions at (541) 935-2226 or terryney@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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