



Lane Fire Authority

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lane Fire Authority moves closer to merger

[Veneta, Ore.] Combining Lane County Fire District 1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue has improved emergency services and is more cost-effective for taxpayers in Lane County. The next step is to ask voters to finalize the partnership during the November General Election and equalize the levy rates.

The partnership is called Lane Fire Authority and it provides fire, life safety and emergency medical services (EMS) to 36,000 residents over 276 square miles in the Willamette Valley. The fire districts have been operating under a special agreement as Lane Fire Authority since 2012 – but the partnership isn't official until it earns voter approval.

Many fire agencies are forming regional partnerships to reduce costs and improve emergency services. Working together has helped both fire districts staff one more station full-time, add an ambulance (with plans for another), and have additional emergency response units ready to serve the community.

Lane Fire Authority has reduced administrative overhead, as well as costs for training, equipment, fuel, and other supplies. The partnership also has improved the property insurance rating for both fire districts, which means homeowners and businesses benefit from lower premiums.

Lane Fire Authority plans to hold community meetings in late June and early July to take public input about finalizing the merger. Based on 2016 assessed valuations, the new levy rate would be approximately \$2.04 per \$1,000 of assessed property value 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.

Voter approval for the merger will reduce the costs of running three organizations, as well. Currently, the fire authority manages three boards of directors, three budgets, and pays for three insurance policies and audits every year.

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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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