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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Call volumes up 7.3 percent for Lake Stevens Fire YTD
Chief available to speak to community groups on EMS levy lid lift

| Service Response | Calendar 2016 | Calendar 2017 | % Change from 2016 |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| | Jan-July | Jan-July | |
| EMS | 2,485 | 2,620 | 5.43% |
| Fire/Rescue | 776 | 879 | 13.27% |
| Grand Total | 3,261 | 3,499 | 7.30% |

LAKE STEVENS, WA – Lake Stevens Fire reports that emergency call volumes are up an average of 7.3 percent compared to the same time period (January -July) in 2016. Emergency medical service (EMS) calls have increased 5.43 percent, while Fire/Rescue calls are significantly higher at 13.27 percent.

“Our community continues to grow, and with it, the number of emergency calls we receive,” said Chief Kevin O’Brien. “We want our community to know that we have a plan in place to maintain service levels as we grow.”

Chief O’Brien is referring to the Strategic Plan the fire district completed at the beginning of the year. The document outlines how the agency will plan for personnel, apparatus, facility, and funding needs to serve the Lake Stevens community for the next five to 10 years.

Of primary importance is adequately funding its emergency medical service (EMS) program, which accounted for 76 percent of all emergencies in the fire district in 2016. Long-term, the fire district will focus on renovating facilities to meet the growing demand for service in the community.

The Board of Fire Commissioners for Lake Stevens Fire unanimously passed a resolution to place an 18-cent levy lid lift for its emergency medical service program on the November General Election ballot. If approved by voters, the lid lift would cost the owner of a \$300,000 home an additional \$54 per year (\$4.50 per month).

EMS call volumes have increased 35 percent in six years for the agency. In contrast, Lake Stevens Fire is limited to a 1 percent revenue increase per year by state law. More calls mean added costs, and revenue is not keeping up with the demand for service.

Voters originally approved an EMS levy of 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value in 2000. Since that time, the EMS levy has fallen to 32 cents per \$1,000, which happens as property values rise. More information about the levy lid lift can be found on the fire district's web site at www.lsfire.org.

The EMS lid lift would continue to fund Basic and Advanced Life Support with 14 full-time and part-time firefighters and paramedics responding 24 hours a day. In addition to emergency personnel, funding is used to replace ambulances, maintain existing apparatus, training and certifications, medical equipment, and first aid supplies.

Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien is available to speak to community groups about the EMS levy lid lift. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Laana Larson, Communications Director, to schedule a presentation at (425) 212-3046 or llarson@lsfire.org.

"EMS is the emergency service our community relies on most," said Chief O'Brien. "My goal is to make sure we have left no stone unturned when it comes to sharing information about this life-saving service."

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Lake Stevens Fire provides fire suppression and emergency medical service to 44,000 people over 42 square miles. During 2016 our highly-skilled firefighters and paramedics responded to more than 5,600 calls, 76 percent of which were for emergency medical service (EMS). Lake Stevens Fire is proud to be debt free, operate under a balanced budget and has a long history of passing independent audits by the state. More information about the fire district can be found at www.lsfire.org.