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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emergency Medical Service Saves Lives

LAKE STEVENS, WA – Lake Stevens Mayor John Spencer was in a staff meeting a few weeks ago when he felt his heartbeat change. He had recently been diagnosed with a heart condition called atrial fibrillation and knew exactly what was happening.

Atrial fibrillation (also called AFib or AF) is a quivering or irregular heartbeat that can lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure and other heart-related complications if not treated. The American Heart Association estimates that there are 2.7 million Americans living with AFib today.

Fortunately, Lake Stevens Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien was at that same meeting and immediately called for an ambulance to assist the Mayor and transport him to a local hospital. While in the ambulance, two highly skilled Paramedics monitored Mayor Spencer's vital signs on a piece of medical equipment called a LifePak heart monitor. An IV was started and oxygen was administered. Defibrillator paddles and life-saving medications were ready if needed. Mayor Spencer was treated and released the same day.

"It could have been a life-threatening situation, but it wasn't," said Mayor Spencer. "It's good to know that we have highly-trained emergency personnel and equipment to serve our community."

Ambulances, highly-trained Paramedics, medical equipment, supplies, and life-saving medication are just part of what a levy for Emergency Medical Service funds. Voters in the Lake Stevens community approved an EMS levy of 50-cents per \$1,000 of assessed property in 2000. Since that time, the levy funding the EMS program has fallen to 32-cents/\$1,000.

Levy rates fall as property values rise, which limits the fire district to roughly the same amount of revenue per year. The fire district is restricted to a 1% revenue increase above that amount by state law. But, what happens if the demand for and cost to provide emergency services is higher than that?

For example, EMS calls accounted for 76% of all emergency calls received by Lake Stevens Fire in 2016. As of August 31, 2017, EMS calls were almost 7% higher than the same time last year.

Overall, EMS call volumes have increased 35 percent in six years for Lake Stevens Fire. Crystalle Green, a Lake Stevens resident, was one of those calls when her daughter Jasmine went into cardiac arrest.

Mrs. Green performed chest compressions until Paramedics from Lake Stevens Fire arrived four minutes later. They were able to resuscitate Jasmine with a defibrillator and other advanced medical interventions. She then was transported by ambulance to an area hospital where she made a full recovery.

LAKE STEVENS
FIRE

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"Touching Lives Today ~ Planning for Tomorrow"

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“EMS saved my daughter’s life,” said Mrs. Green. “Jasmine is alive today because our community has an EMS program.”

Lake Stevens Fire is asking voters to consider returning the EMS levy to 50-cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value during the November election. The 18-cent levy lid lift would cost the owner of a \$300,000 home an additional \$54 per year (\$4.50 per month). 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.

More information about the levy lid lift can be found on the fire district’s web site at www.lsfire.org. Fire Chief Kevin O’Brien also is available to answer questions at (425) 212-3044.

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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.

