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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Fire Commissioners passes resolution for EMS levy renewal

Fire authority has measures on August and November ballots

(Stanwood, Wash.) – The Board of Fire Commissioners for North County Fire/EMS, also known as the North County Regional Fire Authority, passed a resolution asking voters to renew a levy for emergency medical service (EMS) on the November General Election ballot. In the first quarter of 2015, more than 80% of calls received by the fire authority were EMS-related.

This will be the second ballot measure in 2015 for the fire authority. During the August Primary Election, voters are being asked to amend the bylaws of the fire authority to allow neighboring areas to annex.

“The August election is just a housekeeping item,” said Fire Chief John Cermak. “The law didn’t allow for annexations when our fire authority was created. The Washington State Legislature has fixed that and now we have to change our bylaws, as well.”

The August ballot measure will not impact the amount of taxes property owners pay for fire and EMS.

Similarly, the EMS levy rate would stay the same at 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation if approved by voters in November. That means the owner of a \$200,000 home would continue to pay \$100 per year or approximately \$8.33 per month for a 24-hour Paramedic response.

The EMS levy allows North County Fire/EMS to provide Basic and Advanced Life Support using Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics, who can perform life-saving procedures. The levy pays for emergency personnel, their training and certifications, ambulances, maintenance, medical equipment, first aid supplies, and equipment replacement.

North County Fire/EMS is asking for a permanent EMS levy, like 22 of 29 other fire agencies have in Snohomish County. This would stabilize funding for the most widely used emergency service, and save money on future election costs. Ballot measures can cost taxpayers in the fire authority as much as \$22,500 per election, which would be better used to purchase life-saving equipment or fund emergency personnel.

Anyone with questions on either ballot measure is encouraged to contact Chief John Cermak at jcermak@northcountyfireems.com or (360) 629-2184.

North County Regional Fire Authority, known as “North County Fire/EMS,” provides fire suppression and emergency medical service to 25,000 people over 107 square miles, including the City of Stanwood. Learn more about North County Fire/EMS by visiting www.northcountyfireems.com or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NCFireEMS.

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