



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

**Subject: Okanogan Complex Firefighter Supply Drive News Conference**

**Contact: Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler – 901-1142**

**Release Date: Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **News Conference to Celebrate Yakima Community's Generosity**

A **news conference** will be held on **Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm** at the **Yakima Convention Center** to acknowledge the tremendous outpouring of donations from the local community during a City of Yakima-led supply drive this week for crews fighting the Okanogan Complex fires in North Central Washington.

The news conference will be attended by Yakima City Council members, City employees, supply drive volunteers, and others. Community members are also invited to attend. The event will mark the conclusion of the donation effort that began on Monday.

Assistant Mayor Kathy Coffey and Councilmember Maureen Adkison spearheaded the supply drive after seeing a request on social media for specific items to assist the Okanogan Complex firefighters. Since the effort began on Monday, people from Yakima and beyond have generously donated items ranging from t-shirts and socks to granola bars and water.

"We have been absolutely astounded by the willingness of people to answer the call for help," said Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler. "The response has been bigger than we could have imagined and items continue to pour in today. We'll keep taking items through tomorrow (Friday) at noon and then start sending truck loads of donations to Tonasket on Saturday," said Beehler.

Donations of specific, non-perishable items for Okanogan Complex firefighters will be accepted at Yakima Fire Department **Station 91 at 401 N. Front Street** and **Station 93 at 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Englewood Avenue** through **noon on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>**. Donations of money can also be accepted at the two fire stations (checks should be made out to the Yakima Firefighters Association) and will be used to purchase additional supplies.

Even though the Yakima supply drive will end at noon on Friday, donations will continue to be accepted at the Firefighter Relief Center in Tonasket. Donations can be mailed to the Tonasket Visitor and Business Information Center, Firefighter Relief Center, 215 South Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket, Washington, 98855.

As of today, the Okanogan Complex fires, which earlier this week earned the distinction of becoming the largest combined wildfire in Washington state history, are approximately 17% contained, the same level of containment that was announced yesterday. More than 1,800 firefighters and other personnel are currently assigned to the Okanogan Complex. According to emergency management officials, the fires are likely to continue burning for several more months.

Any questions about the Yakima supply drive can be directed to Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler by phone at 901-1142 or by e-mail at [randy.beehler@yakimawa.gov](mailto:randy.beehler@yakimawa.gov).