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AIR FORCE AGREES TO REIMBURSE CITY OF AIRWAY HEIGHTS FOR PURCHASE OF CLEAN WATER

(Airway Heights, WA) --- The U.S. Air Force has agreed to provide the City of Airway Heights with nearly \$700,000 to cover the cost of alternative clean water supplies because of well contamination discovered earlier this year. The City Council agreed to an Environmental Services Agreement with the Air Force's Civil Engineer Center earlier this month. The monthly payments will cover the cost the City incurs from purchasing water from the City of Spokane through an existing intertie of its water transmission system.

"The agreement ensures the City's ratepayers will not have to pay for the purchase of alternative water sources," said Kevin Richey, mayor. "The City has a long and strong relationship with Fairchild Air Force Base and this agreement shows we can work together to find a long-term solution to our water quality and supply issues."

In May 2017, the City's domestic water supply was found to be impacted by chemicals known by the acronyms PFOS and PFOA, ingredients found in fire-extinguishing foam and other materials. The chemicals are believed to have seeped into groundwater from a fire training site on the eastern edge of Fairchild Airforce Base.

An intertie into the City of Spokane's water system has been providing an alternate source of clean water to Airway Heights until the source of the contamination is cleaned up, the City will continue to use water from the City of Spokane or other sources to ensure its citizens are provided with clean water.

Airway Heights water is safe to use and there are no restrictions on using City Water for drinking, bathing or other domestic uses. Early water conservation efforts reduced our water usage over the summer the City has reduced its own water usage by 50 percent.

The City's water supply was provided by three recharge wells which were impacted by the contamination. More than 15 million gallons was flushed from the water system. Recent sampling results show "non-detect" levels of the chemicals that original caused the contamination (PFOS/PFOA).

"We will continue to coordinate our efforts to address the immediate cleanup and contamination to ensure clean water for our community," added Richey. "We need the collaboration of federal, state, county and regional partners to secure a long-term solution. A city cannot exist without clean water."

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