



*The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa
Staff Report*

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Subject

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) passing of new Regulations under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA).

Summary of the Recommendation

To advocate that the new Provincial Government continue to support rural fire services and provide sufficient funding to cover additional costs associated with the implementation of the new FPPA regulations.

Summary of the Issues

Three new FPPA regulations:

1. Mandatory training and certification for firefighter
2. Community risk assessments to inform the delivery of fire protection services
3. Public reporting on fire department response times

List of Stakeholders

Wawa Volunteer Fire Department
Council of Municipality of Wawa
Citizens of Municipality of Wawa
Visitors of Municipality of Wawa

Respectfully Submitted By:

Prepared By:

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Assistant Director Protective Services**

Purpose of Report

To inform Mayor and Council of the three new regulations under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act as outlined in a *Letter to Stakeholders* from Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister Lalonde.

To inform Mayor and Council of the burdens and impacts these regulations will have on our community and volunteer firefighters.

Analysis

Mandatory training and certification for firefighter is to increase public and firefighter safety by ensuring firefighters delivering fire protection services are trained and certified to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, which are best practice, evidence based and are used throughout North America. The mandatory certification requirements are applicable mainly to new firefighter hires but there are some requirements applicable to existing firefighters. Mandatory certification requirements will be implemented for the following firefighter roles; Suppression Firefighters, Pump Operators, Fire Educators, Fire Officers, Fire Instructors, Fire Inspectors, Fire Investigators and Technical Rescuers. This regulation will come into force July 1, 2019, with some requirements coming into force on January 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021. There is a current *Grandfathering Program* that allows existing firefighters to achieve alternative compliance with specific NFPA standards based on knowledge or experience gained to date. This program does not cover all the firefighter roles that require mandatory certification. The regulation has an *Internship Program* and would allow the hire of new uncertified individuals who would have up to 24 months, with the potential of an additional 12 months upon approval of the Fire Marshall, to become trained and certified. Current firefighters have been and are trained to the NFPA standards. None of the firefighters have challenged the test to become certified, as there was no requirement to do so until this new regulation.

Community risk assessment to inform the delivery of fire protection services will better ensure fire departments and Council understand the unique needs and circumstances of their communities, including fire risks. This will help municipalities make evidence based decisions on the provision of fire protection services in their communities. This regulation will come into force on July 1, 2019 and will have to complete the new community risk assessment by July 1, 2024. A full risk assessment must be conducted every five years with monitoring and reviewing conducted annually. The new requirements in the community risk assessment regulation build on the existing simplified risk assessments that many municipalities already conduct. This would standardize the process and help ensure a consistent and robust approach to assessing community risk across the province. OFMEM will be providing a risk assessment guideline that includes a sample template to assist municipalities in completing the risk

assessment. The Fire Department, has in the past, completed and submitted simplified risk assessments. The new community risk assessment will be a little more comprehensive and require attention to detail but will be of assistance to make decisions on fire protection services for our community.

Public reporting on fire department response times will create consistent reporting and increase transparency and accountability by providing the public with a clear understanding of what they can expect from their fire service in terms of their response times. Fire departments report response times using varying definitions which results in inconsistent data that may not be properly interpreted. This regulation will come into force on January 1, 2020. Currently, under the Fire Prevention Protection Act, fire departments report information through the completion of a Standard Incident Report (SIR) to the Fire Marshall. Through the existing SIR system, time stamp data will be provided to the Fire Marshall, he will use this information to calculate response times and will then provide calculated response times back to fire departments. Fire departments will prepare their public report, give report to Council then forward to the Fire Marshall within 180 days of fire department receiving information from the Fire Marshall. The Fire Marshall may publicly post this report on its website. The Fire Department regularly enters data on the Office of the Fire Marshall, Fire Department Data Entry site by completing the Standard Incident Report.

Financial/Staffing Implications

The **Mandatory training and certification for firefighter** has numerous factors to consider which will affect financial implications. The first factor to consider is the time involved by an individual who is volunteering his time to provide a service to the community. Currently we have a great support from employers in our community to allow these individuals to respond to incidents. Families give support to these individuals by giving up family time, missing from meals and missing from special family functions. At present, firefighters volunteer 128 hours to calls and training annually. We can spread the training over a period of time that is convenient for the individual. We do a large portion of the training in house by our own qualified instructors. The new legislation will impact on the number of hours a person must volunteer to be certified in a specific time period. This **mandatory training and certification for firefighter** would be a minimum of 320 hours over two years. Our trainers would need to offer 320 hours of volunteering too. This is just one of the training sessions that firefighters take. We also need to train at pump operations, defensive driving, ice/water rescue, vehicle extrication, heavy vehicle extrication, first aid training, use of naloxone kits, hose testing, equipment use and maintenance to name a few. The mentioned training sessions each take roughly 8 hours preclass knowledge training and then 16 hours practical training. Based on the sessions listed that would be an additional 200 hours. The training listed should be done annually.

It is evident that the time factor was not looked at when the decision to implement *mandatory training and certification for firefighter*.

The financial considerations for *mandatory training and certification for firefighter* is instructors to be brought in to train firefighters, evaluators to be brought in to conduct certified testing, travel expenses for firefighters to attend training at Ontario Fire College or other training facilities in the province, reimbursement of wages lost by firefighters taking time off from their workplace, and compensation for time lost by firefighters and trainers from their families.

Community risk assessment will require some time to gather detail information that will be needed to complete the new more extensive risk assessment. The completion of the risk assessment can be accomplished using current members of the Fire Department. This may involve additional time by firefighters canvassing the community to gather information on building stock, type of occupancy and demographics. The Ontario Fire Marshall will be providing a guideline that includes a sample template for the Community Risk Assessment and provide support to assist with completing it. Since we have done a similar but simplified risk assessment previously, completing the proposed new risk assessment should only involve transferring of information with minimum research of additional information.

Public reporting will require additional minimal staff time to complete. Currently information is entered in the Ontario Fire Marshall's (OFM) Standard Incident Reporting (SIR) data base. The OFM will use this information to calculate response times and will then provide calculated response times back to fire departments. Upon receiving calculated response time data, fire departments must prepare a public report that must be submitted to Council. The additional staff time required will be to prepare a public report based on the information that will be provided in a report from the OFM.

Policies Affecting Proposal

The writer must provide a breakdown of existing policies. If the recommendation affects such things as the Official Plan, a by-law, etc., this should be noted.

If a municipal or departmental Mission Statement is developed, this section should also reflect compliance with that statement.

Alternatives

Mandatory training and certification for firefighter.

- Option 1: Financially compensate firefighter with recovery of wages lost for time from work. Actively negotiate with firefighter's employer to allow additional time from work over and above the regular vacation time or time away for work training given by the employer to employee.
- Option 2: Continue using in house trainers and assuming or expecting firefighters and trainers to continue volunteering additional time and committing to taking time from their families without some type of compensation.
- Option 3: Develop a regional training centre in our community. The centre to be used as a central location for training of firefighters in our Northeast Superior Region. Commitment from Community Leaders to utilize the training centre for training of firefighter. Negotiate with Ontario Fire College to endorse as a certified training centre.

Community risk assessment

- Option 1: Request an independent agency to conduct and complete the risk assessment.
- Option 2: Complete the risk assessment using current staff. Complete the risk assessment using information from current simplified risk assessment and assistance from the staff of the Ontario Fire Marshall's office.

Public reporting

- Option 1: Request an independent agency to provide a completed report as required by the Ontario Fire Marshall.
- Option 2: Complete the public report using current staff. Complete the report similar to one provided by the Ontario Fire Marshall's office.

Conclusion

This report is being provided to Mayor and Council for information of possible initial impacts that might possibly arise from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) passing of new Regulations under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA).

It is unknown at this time to definitely pinpoint financial impacts, staff implications and the future of recruiting new firefighters. Until the Ontario Fire Marshall's office sends out actual documents supporting these regulations, it is speculation on what will be required from the Municipality and staff.

Recommendation

Council is to actively advocate that the new Provincial Government continue to support rural fire services and provide sufficient funding to cover additional costs associated with developing and implementing the certification initiatives.

Attachments

Fire safety Regulations – Letter to Stakeholders
O.Reg.377-18 Public Reports
O.Reg.378-18 Community Risk Assessment
O.Reg.379-18 Firefighter Certification