

Springfield News and Views

Submitted by Reeve Peter Skrupski

FIRE CHIEF'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Fire Chief is charged with ensuring that the fire department is competently trained, proper equipped, and that accurate fire department records are maintained. The Fire Chief is responsible for ensuring the department is operating in accordance with the various Federal and Provincial Acts, supporting Regulations and Local Municipal By-Laws.

The Fire Chief is responsible for investigating and submitting formal reports of all fires within their area of jurisdiction. The Act provides the Fire Chief with the necessary authority to carry out their responsibilities in the areas of fire investigation and fire safety inspections. They are also required to enforce the Manitoba Fire Code. Public education, particularly those designed for pre-school and school age children is another task assigned to the position.

Most significantly the Fire Chief manages and co-ordinates the department's emergency response activities with effective training, purchasing proper equipment, developing policies, and accurate records management.

NEW 2007 FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION REGULATIONS

Annually, the municipality must ensure a fire safety inspection is conducted of each building within its boundaries that is used as an elderly persons' housing unit or hostel, a child care centre, a personal care home, a residential care facility and hospitals. At least every three years, the municipality must ensure a fire safety inspection is conducted of each building within its boundaries that is used as a licensed liquor premises, public or private school, recreation centre, arena, curling rink, community clubs, hotel or motel and restaurants located in a building that contains one or more dwelling units. A fee for carrying out a fire safety inspection may be charged under the Act by the municipality where the inspection is carried out. The Fire Chief is responsible for ensuring these fire safety inspections are completed in a timely manner and all the related reports have been submitted to the authority having jurisdiction.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Municipal councils are responsible to provide a reasonable level of protection through effective emergency planning, emergency service delivery and code enforcement. The growing demand placed on fire departments to handle virtually any type of emergency also increases the need for resources to provide such services. The cost of a piece of equipment can potentially be recovered the first time it is effectively used to avert a disastrous situation or prevent further personal injury or loss of life. Within its boundaries, a local authority (Council) must, in accordance with the procedures of the Fire Prevention and Emergency Response Act, enforce the Manitoba Fire Code as it is prescribed for the part for the province in which the local authority is situated.