



Levels of Service

Regional Fire Services Policy H1

Policy:	H1 – Levels of Service
Policy Department(s):	Regional Fire Services
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Policy Purpose

To identify the emergency services that the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service will provide and to identify the standard to which each service will be performed. This policy is required to meet the intent of the Occupational health and safety (OH&S) guide for firefighting (2019).

Policy Statement

The County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service provides incident response to a level and type as defined and ratified by Municipal Council.

The County maintains fire protection and emergency services to provide for the safety of its residents and visitors, as well as the protection of property within the County.

The County will utilize its Standard of Cover as a companion document to this policy. The Standard of Cover is a dynamic document that will be reviewed by administration in a timely way to ensure that this policy remains in alignment with the risks and needs of the County.

The County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service will provide fire protection and emergency services according to the provisions of this Policy, Regional Fire Services Bylaw, accepted best practice, and the Standard Operating Guidelines of the department.

Definitions

“Awareness level”: Responders will recognize risks and hazards, secure the area, and call for additional resources from other regional stations or agencies.

“AHS” means Alberta Health Services.

“Council” means the duly elected Council of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1.

“County” – means the municipal corporation of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 having authority under the Municipal Government Act and other applicable legislation.



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“County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Services” (CGPRFS) is the emergency services agency that provides fire suppression, rescue, and medical services within the County.

“EMS” means Emergency Medical Services.

“Firefighter” means a rescuer extensively trained in firefighting, primarily to extinguish hazardous fires that threaten life, property, and the environment as well as to rescue people and animals from dangerous situations.

“Incident” means any situation where a member of the public or mutual aid partner, such as Alberta Health Services or Emergency Medical Services, has requested assistance from County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service.

“Medical First Responder” means the Alberta Medical First Responder Program includes provincial standards for Medical First Responder service delivery, support for agencies providing Medical First Responder, ensuring safe patient care with medical oversight, and providing patient care guidelines.

“MFR” means Medical First Responder.

“Municipal Government Act” – means Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26 and amendments thereto, also known as MGA.

“OH&S” means Occupational Health and Safety and is in reference to the Act and regulations.

“Operations level”: Responders may take offensive and defensive action to contain and control the incident and seek assistance from other stations or outside agencies equipped to mitigate the incident

“Structure” means diverse types of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

“Technician level”: Responders will initiate offensive actions in environments identified as immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH), to bring the incident under control and to an end.

Policy Guidelines

1. The County works in cooperation with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to provide Medical First Response (MFR). Fire Services provides basic medical care to a patient or patients until the arrival of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) or a higher level of care.
2. Council has determined that the most cost effective and appropriate way to deliver fire protection and emergency services within the County is with a composite organizational structure, which is comprised of full-time, part-time, and paid-responders (volunteer) firefighters. The service is managed utilizing a coordinated regional model.



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3. Council is responsible for determining the applicable level of service for all areas of the County. The fire service responds within the capacity of the stated level of service defined in this policy.
4. The Fire Chief will provide hazard and risk analysis and assessments for the County in a timely and appropriate way and provide recommendations to Council related to levels of service, service provision and subsequent needs. This risk assessment is contained in the Standard of Cover document that will be updated from time to time.
5. The response times referenced in this policy are guidelines only. Response times may vary based on many factors defined in this policy.
6. The County does not guarantee delivery of service notwithstanding anything contained in this policy. Factors that may result in a variation of a delivery of service include but are not limited to:
 - 6.1 Environmental factors, obstructions, remote or isolated properties, private roadways, hazardous or unsafe conditions at the incident, or encountered while enroute to the incident,
 - 6.2 Impeded access, topographic or geographic configurations of land,
 - 6.3 The number of firefighters and equipment available to respond to any incident,
 - 6.4 The occurrence of multiple or simultaneous emergency events,
 - 6.5 Reliance on contract emergency support services, and
 - 6.6 Availability and access to rural water supply
7. Training of personnel will adhere to OH&S legislation and strive to achieve industry standards and best practices. No personnel will perform work they are not trained to do and have an obligation to refuse unsafe work.
8. This policy applies to all County firefighters and all personnel providing firefighting and medical services to the County in any capacity.
9. Hamlet and private water systems are not guaranteed to provide Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) recommended hydrant fire flows. Fire Services may use available hydrants, standpipes, dugouts, or alternate water sources to augment on-truck water supplies.

SERVICE PROVISION EXPECTATIONS

10. Within eight (8) kilometres of travel by road, County fire stations located in the Dunes and Clairmont will strive to provide at least four (4) firefighters on scene within ten (10) minutes 80% of the time. Fire protection and emergency services will include but are not limited to:



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- 10.1 Vehicle, agriculture and machine rescue, technical rope rescue operations level, ice-rescue technician level, interior structural fire suppression, exterior/defensive firefighting activities, wildland fire suppression, vehicle fire suppression, and dangerous goods response to a technician's service level.
- 11. Within eight (8) kilometres of travel by road, County fire stations located in the Hamlets of Bezanson, LaGlace, Teepee Creek and Hythe will strive to provide at least three (3) firefighters on scene within eighteen (18) minutes 80% of the time. Fire protection and emergency services will include but are not limited to:
 - 11.1 Vehicle, agriculture and machine rescue, water tender support, interior/offensive fire suppression, exterior/defensive firefighting activities, wildland fire suppression, vehicle fire suppression, and to an Operations Level.
 - 11.2 Ice-rescue to an Operations Level
 - 11.3 Dangerous goods response to an Awareness Level
 - 11.4 Response to oil and gas in a support role (not working within the plant compound or on well-site) including but not limited to, industrial emergency, fire, odor complaint. The exception may be made for cases of imminent rescue.
- 12. For all areas of the County within eight (8) kilometres of travel by road from the fire stations in the Towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley and Sexsmith, will strive to provide three (3) firefighters on scene within eighteen (18) minutes 80% of the time and may consist of but are not limited to the following service provision:
 - 12.1 Vehicle, agriculture and machine rescue, water tender support, interior/offensive fire suppression, exterior/defensive firefighting activities, wildland fire suppression, vehicle fire suppression, and to an Operations Level.
 - 12.2 Ice-rescue to an Operations Level (where defined in levels of service)
 - 12.3 Dangerous goods response to an Awareness Level
 - 12.4 Response to oil and gas in a support role (not working within the plant compound or on well-site) including but not limited to, industrial emergency, fire, odor complaint. The exception may be made for cases of imminent rescue.
- 13. A second or multiple unit response arrival is dependent on the proximity of the fire station(s) responding and dispatched using protocols (call determinants) adopted by all regional stations. This will provide a regional multi-station response based on the needs of the incident to provide adequate resources.
- 14. Wherever possible resources may be supplied from Clairmont and Dunes Stations to supplement the initial resource request from other stations defined in this policy.



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15. All calls will be monitored for performance and possible enhancement by County personnel.

STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING AND RESCUE

16. The strategies employed for firefighting and rescue involving structure fires may vary depending on the level of fire involvement of a structure upon the arrival of firefighters. The level of fire involvement of a structure is impacted by a variety of factors including but not limited to the distance of the structure from the responding fire station, road conditions, traffic congestion, the time of day, weather, early notification of the fire, witnessing the fire ignition, and the contents of the structure and their flammability. It is also affected by level of training and the understanding that responding personnel will only work within their scope of practice (training).
17. Entry into a structure for firefighting and rescue purposes is contingent on the life safety hazard, probability of survivability of occupants, and firefighter safety. This process is known as a risk benefit analysis and is affected by many factors such as fire conditions, time of day, resources available and competence of those resources (training levels).
18. For the protected areas of the County defined in section 11 of this policy, the accepted level of service for structural firefighting and rescue is predicated on the level of training and the personnel in attendance at the incident. It is understood that response is based on availability of personnel and inconsistencies may exist in the provision of service.
19. For the areas of the County defined in section 12 of this policy, the accepted level of service for structural firefighting and rescue is determined by Council and will be clearly defined in the contracts for service, agreed to by both the County and the respective Towns.

MEDICAL FIRST RESPONSE

20. As a Medical First Response agency, the County strictly adheres to a set of Medical Control Protocols (MCP's) outlined by Alberta Health Services (AHS).
21. The minimum training for firefighters is Standard First Aid or its equivalent, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Health Care Professional certification.
22. Fire Services for Clairmont and Dunes fire stations may be dispatched to a medical response call:
 - 22.1 at the request of EMS based on information received during the 911 call, on scene patient assessment, or for manpower.
 - 22.2 when the criteria are consistent with the AHS classification (determinants) for Bravo, Charlie, Delta, and Echo calls; and
 - 22.3 when an ambulance response is greater than 20 minutes away.



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23. Fire Services for Bezanson, LaGlance, Hythe and Teepee Creek fire stations may be dispatched to a medical response call:
 - 23.1 at the request of EMS based on information received during the 911 call, on scene patient assessment, or for manpower.
 - 23.2 when the criteria are consistent with the AHS classification (determinants) for Charlie, Delta, and Echo calls or AED protocol; and
 - 23.3 when an ambulance response is greater than 20 minutes away.
24. Fire Services for the Towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley and Sexsmith fire stations have defined in their levels of service response to medical calls.

DISASTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE

25. In the event of declared disaster or emergency the County fire service will operate at the direction of the Director of Emergency Management while ensuring business continuity for the County of Grande Prairie.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS:

26. Council relies on Administration to recommend Mutual Aid Agreements and Service Agreements with neighboring Municipalities.

LEVEL OF SERVICE:

27. Council has established the following levels of service for the County:
 - 27.1 Fire Suppression
 - 27.1.1 Structure
 - 27.1.2 Brush/grass
 - 27.1.3 Wildland/Urban interface
 - 27.1.4 Motor Vehicle/Equipment
 - 27.1.5 Oil and Gas (support only)
 - 27.2 Rescue
 - 27.2.1 Motor Vehicle/agriculture/equipment
 - 27.2.2 Ice rescue
 - 27.2.3 Technical rope (Slope/low angle)
 - 27.2.4 Large animal rescue
 - 27.2.5 Industrial emergency (Excluding Oil & Gas)



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- 27.2.6 Oil and Gas (support only)
 - 27.2.7 Power lines and electrical hazards (ATCO guidelines)
 - 27.3 Medical First Response
 - 27.4 Dangerous Goods Response
 - 27.5 Fire Prevention Services (Accredited Municipality/Agency for Safety Codes)
 - 27.5.1 Investigations
 - 27.5.2 Inspections
 - 27.5.3 Public Education and Prevention
 - 27.6 Mutual Aid (upon request)
 - 27.7 Emergency and Disaster Management and Response
- 28 Response to Oil and Gas incidents is done at a support level only unless imminent rescue is apparent. The roles and responsibilities of the County related to this level of service is provided for in the document entitled County of Grande Prairie - Oil & Gas Emergency Response Plan (ERP) Responsibilities which is aligned with the Emergency Management Act and the Alberta Energy Regulator Directives.
- 29 It is understood that training levels and service provision will differ between career and paid responder stations, but all personnel will work within the scope of the OHS Act, Regulation and Code and will act in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures for the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service.

Attachments

N/A

References

Legal Authorities	Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Code or Act Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Guide for Firefighting (2019) Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26 Emergency Management Act September 1, 2020
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, Etc.	Policy B1 - Policy Development Regional Fire Services Bylaw County of Grande Prairie Standard of Cover County of Grande Prairie – Oil & Gas ERP Responsibilities
Other	County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service Standard Operating Procedures



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Revision History

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August 22, 2022	Reviewed and Amended CM20220822.006
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