

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Policy Details	
Name	Fire and Emergency Services
Number	036
Legislative Authority	MGA Part X, sec. 296
Effective Date	

Preamble

Council of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg hereby adopts the following policy respecting fire and emergency services in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

Title

1 This Policy is titled the Fire and Emergency Services.

Definitions

2 In this Policy,

- (a) **Fire Department** means the incorporated entity that provides the service, assists others in providing the service or works with others to provide the service or a combination of means to properties in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.
- (b) **Municipality** means the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.
- (c) **Rate Payer** means the name(s) of the person assessed for the property.
- (d) **Registration** means the acceptance of the Municipality to permit a Fire Department to provide fire and emergency services to a prescribed area within the Municipality.
- (e) **Body Corporate** refers to the incorporated organization requesting to be registered as a fire and emergency services provider.
- (f) **Incorporated Organization** refers to those organizations that are set up to provide Fire Protection and are incorporated by way of an Act of Legislature, **The Rural District Fire Act**, or the **Societies Act**.
- (g) **Acts of Incorporation** refer to the organization's Memorandum of Association and/or articles of incorporation and/or by-laws.
- (h) **Pump Testing** means testing to assess that apparatus pump pressures and flows meet the NFPA/ULC Certification plate affixed to the pump panel or manufacturers requirement for the pump or system type being tested.

- (i) **Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Functional Testing** means testing performed as per NFPA 1852 (chapter 7.1 User maintenance) and manufacturer's requirements, to ensure all SCBA units in service in the department meet all operational specifications and performance parameters.
- (j) **Chief Officer** means a department chief, deputy or assistant chief or a member acting as the chief officer of a registered volunteer fire department.
- (k) **Third Party Investigator** means a person with the qualifications and training to provide investigative services following best practices and industry standards, and who is not directly connected to either the Municipality or fire services.

Form of Request

- 3 (1) Requests for registration as a fire and/or emergency services provider will be made through the completion of the Fire and Emergency Services Provider Registration package. The registration package can be obtained from the municipality upon request.
- (2) Requests must be accompanied with the organization's Act of Incorporation and a description of the area of coverage. The application must be signed by the individual(s) as assigned with signing authority under the incorporation document.

Organization Requirements

- 4 (1) An organization applying to be a registered fire and/or emergency services provider must meet the following requirements:
 - (a) Body Corporate does not provide the fire and/or emergency services for profit;
 - (b) The Municipality does not provide the same service for the same area;
 - (c) The Body Corporate carries group liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$10,000,000.
- (2) The Body Corporate carries a group personnel (accident and sickness insurance) policy for active volunteer firefighters and for volunteers assisting during non-firefighting activities.
- (3) The premiums covered in sections 4(1)(c) and (2) are to be deducted from the November fire payments.

Fire Protection Requirements

Pump Testing

- 5 (1) Fire Apparatus pump testing results are required starting on the June 15, 2021, registration cycle and continuing each fiscal year after.
 - (2) Apparatus pumps required to produce fire flows of 250 imp.gal (imperial gallons) per minute and greater, as per ULC/NFPA 1921 sec 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2. and will also include Compressed Air Foam Systems (CAFS) or high-pressure system types must meet their pumping requirements as per section 2(h) and must be tested annually.
 - (3) Portable pumps may be tested although not a requirement for registration.
 - (4) Pump maintenance and testing must be performed by a certified Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT).
 - (5) The Fire Services Coordinator will assist Fire Departments in developing a plan if issues arise from pump testing.
 - (6) In the event a pump fails its annual pump testing, registration may remain in effect if the registered fire department does the following:
 - (a) The Department provides the Fire Services Coordinator with a written plan for repairs required to the pump(s); or
 - (b) A temporary replacement apparatus in good standing can be found and is in place.
 - (7) If repairs are extensive and the Fire Department is unable to afford repairs or, on the advice of the EVT, repairs are not cost justifiable due to the condition of the apparatus pump, the Fire Department must have a neighbouring department(s) on automatic callout for any/all emergency calls requiring the use of a pumper/pumpertanker including, but not limited to, structure fires of any kind, motor vehicle fires, wildland fires, and other emergencies as required.
 - (8) Failure to complete a pump test in advance of the registration deadline may result in the Municipality withholding grants to the department until a successful pump test is completed.
 - (9) Where a total disregard for pump testing occurs, the Fire Services Coordinator will notify Council and recommend the de-registration of the department and options for alternative fire service coverage.

(10) Council may de-register the department on recommendation of the Fire Services Coordinator. Council will not consider re-registration of the department until the department re-applies for registration with a satisfactory pump test.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Functional Testing

- 6 (1) The SCBA function test results will be required starting on June 15, 2025, registration cycle and continuing each fiscal year after.
- (2) The test must be performed by certified technician trained in the maintenance of the SCBA type being tested.
- (3) The Fire Services Coordinator will assist Fire Departments in developing a plan if issues arise from SCBA functional testing.
- (4) In the event that an SCBA fails or needs repairs during testing, resulting in the inability to perform the required fire firefighting activities, registration may stay in place if the registered fire department does the following:
- (a) The Department provides the Fire Services Coordinator with a written plan for repairs / replacement required to the affected SCBA.
- (b) Temporary replacement SCBA in good standing can be found and is in place.
- (5) If repairs are extensive and the Fire Department is unable to afford repairs or on the advice of the certified technician, repairs are not cost justifiable due to the condition of the SCBA, the Fire Department must have a neighbouring department(s) on automatic callout for any/all emergency calls requiring the use SCBA.
- (6) Failure to complete the SCBA functional testing in advance of the registration deadline may result in the Municipality withholding grants to the department until a successful SCBA functional test is completed.
- (7) Where a total disregard for SCBA functional testing occurs, the Fire Services Coordinator will notify Council and recommend the de-registration of the department and options for alternative fire service coverage.
- (8) Council may de-register the department on recommendation of the Fire Services Coordinator. Council will not consider re-registration of the department until the department re-applies for registration with satisfactory SCBA functional testing.

Registration

- 7 (1) The Municipality, if satisfied by all categories of Sections 4 to 6, must register the Body Corporate as a fire and emergency services provider. This registration must continue in force until withdrawn by the Municipality for cause or the fire department requests that the registration be revoked.
- (2) Annual updates of the registration form will be submitted to the Municipality no later than June 15 annually.
- (3) Any changes to the services provided by the Body Corporate must be filed immediately with the Municipality throughout the year.
- (4) All other required forms and documentation, including the annual registration form, financial statements, officer information, rate and grant forms must be submitted to the Municipality no later than June 15 annually, in order to receive collected fire taxes and grant monies.
- (5) All fire tax payments must be made available to approved fire and emergency service providers 30 days from the due date of municipal taxes upon meeting section 7(4) above.

Notification

- 8 The Municipality must advise in writing of Council's approval to register as a new Body Corporate for Fire and Emergency Services as per sections 7 of this Policy.

Rate Payers Meeting

- 9 (1) Every registered fire and emergency services provider must have an annual ratepayer meeting. Minutes of these meetings must be maintained and available upon request.
- (2) Fire Service providers must have proposed budget documents available to the public seven (7) days prior to their ratepayer meeting and the budget must be linked to the service levels being provided.
- (3) Fire Service providers may conduct an information session on the proposed budget seven (7) days prior to the ratepayers meeting to assist the ratepayers in understanding the fire service levels being provided and any costs associated with providing such service.
- (4) All proposed fire tax rates must be supported by the service provider's budget, which is presented to the ratepayers at the annual ratepayers meeting.

- (5) Ratepayers must have the opportunity to discuss service level expectations during ratepayer meeting.
- (6) Ratepayers cannot request a reduction in the proposed fire rate that diminishes the overall operation of the fire service provision.
- (7) The notice of the annual ratepayers meeting must be advertised in the local paper (a weekly circular) for a minimum of (2) two weeks prior to the annual meeting date. This advertisement must include the following:
 - (a) fire service provider name
 - (b) date of meeting
 - (c) location of meeting
 - (d) contact name and phone number; and
 - (e) where proposed budget documents may be viewed.
- (8) For the departments that are required to have an annual ratepayer's meeting to set their fire tax rate, this information must be clearly identified in the notice.
- (9) All annual ratepayer's meetings must be conducted before June 15th of the following fiscal year.
- (10) Requests must be made to the Municipality for appropriate rate payer's list a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.
 - (a) This list will provide the chair of the meeting with information to confirm that only those who are ratepayers may vote on motions that are made at the meeting.
 - (b) The Municipality will also provide upon request a property civic report to help the department locate properties.
 - (c) Fire departments members do not need to be a ratepayer or a resident of the area, a member of the fire department can move motions, but the seconder must be a ratepayer.
 - (d) Once the question has been called, only ratepayers can vote on the motion. 50% + one of the ratepayers **in attendance** at the meeting in favor of the motion will be required to pass a motion.
 - (e) Voting may be done by secret ballot.

(11) All fire tax requests by a registered fire and emergency services provider must be provided to the Municipality on the approved registration package forms received at the Annual Fire Services meeting held in April of the current year or can be requested electronically following the Annual meeting.

(12) For all registered fire and emergency services providers who do not have fire taxing power provided by their Act of Incorporation, the Municipality will approve the rates.

(13) For those providers that have taxing power for fire tax, these approved rates will be added to the fire tax schedule for inclusion with approved rates for that fiscal year.

WCB

10 The Municipality will pay the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) premiums for all registered volunteer fire department firefighters and junior firefighters. This will be at the minimum yearly salary used by WCB and set by the Municipality to calculate premiums for all registered volunteer firefighters.

Recognition

11 The Municipality recognizes the value and commitment of the fire services and will provide recognition for both individual departments and members for years of service to the Municipality.

Code of Conduct for Chief Officers

12 (1) This Code of Conduct is to establish clear standards of professional behavior for all Volunteer Fire Chief Officers, ensuring integrity, accountability, transparency, trust and respect within the fire service and the community.

(2) The code is intended to guide decision-making, interactions, and leadership actions. This Code applies to all Fire Chief Officers, Deputy Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, and interim or acting chief officers.

(3) The code governs conduct of chief officers during emergency response, training, administration, public representation, meetings, and interactions with municipal partners and the public. The code applies to both on-duty and off-duty actions when those actions affect the reputation or functioning of the fire service.

Principles of Conduct

13 (1) Chief Officers must:

- (a) Operate transparently, avoid deception, declare conflicts, and uphold truthfulness in reporting, documentation, and communication. They must not misuse authority for personal interest.
- (b) Treat all individuals with dignity regardless of background, identity, or role. They must actively support an inclusive environment free from harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.
- (c) Behave in a manner that maintains public trust and departmental integrity, modelling safety and professionalism on emergency scenes and respectful interaction with members and the public while conducting department business. Chief officers will also refrain from engaging in behaviour on social media that negatively impacts the reputation of the department.
- (d) Refrain from attending scenes, meetings, training, or public events while under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicants. They must enforce impairment-related policies and act when a member is suspected of impairment, prioritizing safety.
- (e) Chief officers have a duty to report violations of the code by other chief officers using the process outlined below.

Complaint and Investigation Process

- 14 (1) A structured, transparent process ensures fairness, accountability, and public trust. Complaints may come from members, the public, or the Municipality and will be addressed as follows:
- (a) A confidential complaint form is filed with the Fire services coordinator (FSC).
 - (b) The complaint is provided to a third-party investigator who will seek clarification as required to determine if a full investigation is warranted.
 - (c) If a complaint is dismissed at this stage the fire services coordinator and the complainant will be notified by the investigator.
 - (d) If there is sufficient reason for investigation, the 3rd party investigator may review documents, conduct interviews, and take other reasonable steps to decide on the matter.

- (e) report with the investigator’s findings will be submitted to the FESC Advisory Board. The investigator may also recommend referral to the relevant policing agency if there is the possibility of criminal activity.

FESC Advisory Board Role

- 15 (1) The FESC will appoint a three-(3) member Board to review the investigator’s report. The members must consist of a Fire representative, a Municipal council representative, and a member-at-large representative. Advisory board members cannot be affiliated with anyone involved in the complaint.
- (2) The board must review the investigative findings and make an in camera recommendation to council on whether there was a breach of the code and possible remedies if there is a breach.
- (3) Council will make a final determination on breaches and corrective actions required.

Breach of the Code

- 16 (1) If it is determined that a chief officer breached the Code Council may require any of the following:
 - (a) an apology to the individuals harmed by the breach;
 - (b) corrective coaching,
 - (c) suspension or removal from the position of chief officer.
- (2) If a department fails to comply with the requirements of council following a breach, Council may de-register the department and consider options for alternative fire service coverage until such time as corrective actions have been taken.

Acknowledgement

- 17 (1) As part of the annual registration process Chief Officers must confirm they understand their obligations and agree to comply with this Code.

Policy Adoption	
Date of Original Passage	May 14, 2024
Date of Notice of Intent to Amend	
Date of Council Approval	
Date of or Effective Date	
I certify that this Policy 036 Fire and Emergency Services was amended by Municipal Council as indicated above.	

Signature of Municipal Clerk	Date

Version	Amendment Description	Approval Date
Original V1	Fire and Emergency Services Policy	Sep 11, 2007
V2	Amended Annual Registration Form, Schedule A	Feb 12, 2008
V3	To allow option for secret ballot at rate payers meeting	Oct 13, 2009
V4	Require Accident and sickness insurance or workers compensation	Feb 8, 2011
V5	Added deadline for registration forms to be submitted, and for cheques to be distributed, added SCBA and pump testing to annual form, along with clarity of service levels, and procedure for public transparency and accountability at rate payer meetings.	Jan 28, 2014
V6	Amendments to the Annual Registration Form	May 9, 2017
V7	Removed Schedules and reference to schedules (registration application form)	Feb 27, 2018
V8	Added definition of “pump testing” and new section for requirements of conducting pump tests, premiums for WCB covered by municipality, and clarified accident and sickness insurance coverage for activities that are non-firefighting related, renumbering.	Apr 13, 2021
V9	Addition of flow rate for pump apparatus	Oct 12, 2021
Repeal & Replace	Added definition of “SCBA” and new requirements for testing, new WCB and Recognition section, updated pump requirements, plain language and accessible formatting.	May 14, 2024
V2	Added definitions of Chief Officer and Third party Investigator; added new sections for Code of Conduct, Principles of Conduct; Breach of Conduct; and Acknowledgement.	