

# **WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT**



## **APPLICANTS INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET**

Revised: January 10, 2014

Dear Fire Fighter Candidates:

As Fire Chief of the Williams Lake Fire Department, I am committed to providing the most effective and most efficient fire protection for our area. You will find your participation as a paid-call member of our department will bring personal rewards and satisfaction, and give you a tremendous sense of accomplishment for a job well done. It will also provide Williams Lake with a valuable service that has the potential to touch us all.

Service as a paid-call member of the Williams Lake Fire Department requires a serious commitment however, and your decision to apply should not be made quickly -- careful consideration should be made of the many factors associated with becoming a member of the Fire Department. The attached information has been developed to assist you in making your decision.

Once you understand what is required from a paid-call member of our Department, you may find that you are able to make the commitment we need. The service provided by our Fire Department is truly valuable to the citizens of Williams Lake, and I hope you are able to contribute to our public safety.

Des Webster

*Des Webster*

Fire Chief  
Williams Lake Fire Department

# WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

## THE NATURE OF OUR BUSINESS

The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging professions known today. It is this diversity that inspires men and women to enter the service -- as volunteers, paid-call firefighters or career employees. Imagine having to train to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires to motor vehicle accidents to hazardous chemical spills and almost any other possible emergency situation in between. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of day, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. These factors contribute to our profession being personally very rewarding.

Our primary goal is to protect the public. This is accomplished in two ways:

- a) The first is to prevent fire emergencies from occurring. This is done through fire prevention, inspections, fire safety education and code enforcement programs.
- b) Secondly, we are here to prepare ourselves to control fire emergencies and at times assist at other emergencies. This is done through education, training, pre incident planning, more training, state-of-the-art equipment and more training.

This business is not for everyone. You need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. The fire and rescue service is not for the meek or timid or for those who lose control of their emotions during times of crisis. Our service is one which calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from the fire and rescue services are often beyond description. There is a sense of accomplishment after controlling a building fire, joy and elation when a person is rescued, compassion for accident victims and fulfillment in teaching fire safety. The list goes on and on.

The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and property damage we have prevented and reduced. We exist and are prepared for one reason only: to provide service to the community.

If you feel, you have what it takes to meet the challenges of our business, we welcome you to apply for acceptance into our recruit program.

## **WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **Profile:**

The Williams Lake Fire Department is a combination career/paid-call service consisting of three career; one administration staff and approximately 43 paid-call members. Fire protection and backup emergency services are provided to the citizens of the Williams Lake and Fire Protection Area from one Hall located at, 230 Hodgson Road.

### **Mission Statement:**

To serve the community of Williams Lake by protecting life, property and the environment.

### **Organization:**

The Fire Department operates under the direction of the Fire Chief who is responsible to the City's Chief Administrative Officer.

In order to deliver the services needed to accomplish the above stated mission, the Department is organized into three major divisions:

- Operations -- responsible for the delivery of emergency services for fire and rescue, as well as backup emergency services.
- Fire Prevention -- responsible for inspections, plan reviews, permits, investigation and public education.
- Training -- responsible for achieving and maintaining the skills and expertise to accomplish the Department's stated mission.

### **Operations:**

The Williams Lake Fire Department responds to approximately 300-400 emergency calls per year, ranging from structure fires to grass fires, to on occasion, backup for other emergency services.

### **Paid-call firefighters:**

Paid-call firefighters directly participate in fire operations, including incident response and the operation of all apparatus and equipment. Men and women over the ages of 19, who are in good physical condition, reside in the fire protection area and have the desire to participate in emergency fire and rescue activities are eligible to apply.

## **TRAINING AND PARTICIPATION**

In order to ensure that all members of the Department are prepared to deliver the best level of services required, training standards have been developed to provide each member with the needed skills, knowledge and abilities necessary to deliver fire and emergency service to the citizens of Williams Lake and Area.

All individuals entering the Department, regardless of prior training or experience, must complete a Recruit Training program taught by Department officers. They work in the Hall for three to four months on probation prior to being accepted as full paid on call members of the Department.

All paid-call members of the Department are trained to the “NFPA 1001 Qualifications for a Professional Fire Fighter,” and **must** successfully write the examinations and complete all practical evaluations on all subjects within 24 months after successfully passing their probationary period. Members are expected to attend a minimum of 70% of the weekly practices each year. Individuals who have the desire to increase their skills are provided with the opportunity for advance training.

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## **WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **QUESTIONS ASKED MOST OFTEN BY PROSPECTIVE PAID-CALL MEMBERS**

- 1. What is the cost of the required training?**

The required training for paid-call firefighters is provided by the Department free of charge. Transportation to and from accredited additional training is funded by the Department.

**2. How much will I have to pay for my protective clothing?**

All required protective clothing is provided by the Department at no cost to the individual.

**3. What is the format of the paid-call training schedule?**

The Recruit Training program is spread over a 4 month period. It combines Monday evenings, Tuesday evening regular practices and possibly some weekend sessions to complete the program.

**4. Who provides insurance coverage for my activities as a paid-call firefighter?**

Normal Workers Compensation Board coverage is in effect whenever the individual is working for the Department. The City also has insurance coverage for auto liability when operating Department vehicles, as well as Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage for all members.

**5. Are paid-call firefighters directly paid in any way?**

Paid-call firefighters are paid for required training and for all emergency call outs at the rate set by Municipal Council and is paid to the firefighter annually.

**6. After my initial training, how much time will I be expected to give as an active member?**

While the exact time requirements vary, the average training and call out time is at least 20 hours per month. There is no ceiling on how much you can participate in optional duties such as tours and public education, as well as maintenance.

**7. How often will I be on call to respond to emergencies?**

Our system depends upon paid-call firefighters being available to answer all emergencies. The Department therefore expects that paid-call firefighters, when in the Williams Lake area, will be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. There are also “weekend standby” requirements from May until September. These are major commitments that need careful consideration before you choose to join. The Department realizes that no one can be available 100% of the time, but it relies on the commitment from paid-call members to respond whenever they are available.

***Potential members should be aware that this is a serious commitment, it cannot be taken lightly. Your response to emergencies is a lifeline to the public that you serve.***

**8. How quickly will I have to respond to emergencies?**

The Department would normally expect that all available members would respond immediately to a call out.

**9. How long do emergency call outs last?**

The average call out lasts less than an hour. A working structure fire may extend to 3 to 4 hours. Major, multi-alarm fires may last 8 to 10 hours. Very rarely, a major emergency may extend for days.

**10. If I have prior fire/rescue training and experience, will it count towards the Fire Departments training requirements?**

Prior training will likely reduce the time necessary to develop the minimum skills that the Department looks for in its paid-call firefighters, but participation in all recruit training programs is still required in order to demonstrate your proficiency.

**11. Is it possible for me to concentrate my participation and specialize in one area of Fire Department response?**

All paid-call members are generalists, capable of doing any of the fire or rescue tasks that may occur at an emergency. Specialist training is provided, but not to the exclusion of the requirement to be able to participate in all Department activities.

**12. Is there a medical and physical examination prior to acceptance by the Department?**

You must be in good physical condition to carry out the required duties of a firefighter. We do not require an individual to take a medical, at this time, however there is a questionnaire and release form to fill in and sign.

**13. Will there be written or physical tests prior to acceptance by the Department?**

Yes. You will be required to perform a series of written tests and you will be evaluated on the physical component during training to ensure that you are capable of doing the tasks required as a firefighter.

**14. How are the paid-call members integrated with career employees?**

Operation procedures dictate the training levels required in the Department, and these standards apply to both paid-call and career members. In training and at emergency scenes, paid-call and career members operate without distinction.

**15. Can a female be a firefighter with the Department?**

Yes. There is nothing in our policies or training that prohibits women from being a member of the Department.

**16. Is there a social aspect to belonging to the Fire Department?**

Yes. In addition to the contribution to the community, firefighters often find a personal satisfaction in belonging to the Fire Department community -- members participate regularly in Fire hall socials and dances as well as Department related activities such as week-end camp outs, golf, fun-ball tournaments and hockey to name a few.