

WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT



APPLICANTS INFORMATION BOOKLET

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, 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 can make the commitment we need. Our Fire Department's service is invaluable to Williams Lake's citizens, and I hope you can contribute to our public safety.

Erick Peterson

Fire Chief
Williams Lake Fire Department

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THE NATURE OF OUR BUSINESS

The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging professions known today. This diversity 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 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 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 assist in 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 calls on its members to perform demanding, 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 fulfilment in teaching fire safety. The list goes on and on.

Our business's bottom line 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 our business's challenges, 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 staff and approximately 43 paid-call members. Fire protection and backup emergency services are provided to the Williams Lake and Fire Protection Area citizens 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 Fire Chief's direction, 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 and, on occasion, backup for other emergency services.

Paid-call firefighters:

Paid-call firefighters directly participate in fire operations, including incident response and all apparatus and equipment operations. 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

To ensure that all department members 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 provide fire and emergency service to Williams Lake and Area's citizens.

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 advanced training.

WILLIAMS LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

QUESTIONS ASKED MOST OFTEN BY PROSPECTIVE PAID-CALL MEMBERS

1. Am I required to be vaccination?

Yes. To ensure a safe workplace, Members of City Council, Contractors, Volunteer Firefighters, and other Volunteers entering a City owned and/or operated facility or worksite will be required to be Fully Vaccinated.

2. What is the cost of the required training?

The required training for paid-call firefighters is provided by the department free of charge. The department funds transportation to and from accredited additional training.

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

The department provides all required protective clothing at no cost to the individual.

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

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

5. 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.

6. 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 quarterly.

7. 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, public education and maintenance.

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

Our system depends upon paid-call firefighters being available to answer all emergencies. Therefore, the department 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 significant 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 paid-call members' commitment 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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. However, participation in all recruit training programs is still required in order to demonstrate your proficiency.

12. 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.

13. 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 require an individual to take medical examinations throughout their Firefighting career.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. What is the recruitment process?

First, the application you will receive will have to be filled out in full and submitted to the department for review. Then, if selected, you will be contacted for the shortlisting and requested to provide pre-employment screening material. An interview will then be scheduled for your attendance

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

Yes. In addition to contributing to the community, firefighters often find personal satisfaction in belonging to the Fire Department community -- members participate regularly in Fire hall socials and department-related activities such as weekend campouts, golf, fun-ball tournaments and hockey, to name a few.