

Topic: Fire Services Bylaw 2023-17

Introduction:

This report provides background information on the proposed Fire Services Bylaw 2023-17

Facts (Background Information):

The Fire Permit Bylaw was last updated in 2012 and since that time, Administration has identified opportunities for improvement to streamline process and incorporate resident and business feedback that has been received in the past as well as a part of the formal public engagement process during this review. The new bylaw incorporates the Fire Permit bylaw (22-2012) and the False Alarm (2016-24) under a single bylaw with an expanded purpose to describe the scope and responsibilities of Fire Services.

Analysis:

The following summarizes the enhancements to the bylaw as well as any relevant updates to existing language.

Summary of Changes of the Fire Services Bylaw by Section (*** Denotes Major Changes)**

1. **Definitions section:** Definitions section revised to meet the needs of the subsequent sections.
2. **Establishment and Purpose of County Fire Services:** This is a new Section that articulates the purpose and main role of having Fire Services within the County.
3. **Authority and Responsibility of the Fire Chief:** This section has been expanded to clarify the Fire Chief's role and the ability to delegate that role.
4. **Authority and Responsibility of Members and the Member in Charge:** These sections have been expanded to allow for flexibility and delegation within the Member in Charge role.
5. **Appointments and Powers of Fire Guardians:** This section has been expanded to reflect the authority of Fire Guardians to be in line with provincial regulations. The power to appoint Fire Guardians has been delegated from Council to the Fire Chief
6. **Permitted and Prohibited Fires:** This section combines current bylaw language from previous bylaw sections "Exemptions and Offenses". Also includes language to limit within Industrial Land Use Districts to within an Incinerator compliant with provincial legislation. Removed permit requirement for recreational fires within defined containers or fires lit for religious or ceremonial purposes.

7. **Fire Permits:** This section has been streamlined to improve readability and improve communication of expectations for Permit holders.
8. **Fire Permit Types and Eligible Timeframes:** This section clarifies the definition of an Outdoor Fire permit and Major Burn permit. 90 day permits for recreational Fire Pit's without an approved screen are no longer required.
9. **Fire Restriction:** Provides the Fire Chief with discretion to declare a Fire Restriction and keep that rating in place until the environment changes and risk has subsided.
10. **Fire Ban:** Provides the Fire Chief with discretion to declare a Fire ban and keep that rating in place until the environment changes and risk has subsided.
11. **Fireworks Permit:** Streamlined language on application process
12. *******Fireworks Vendor Permit and Responsibility:** The updated Bylaw contemplates the creation of a Vendor Permit. A retail vendor wishing to sell fireworks to persons in Parkland County shall obtain an annual Fireworks Vendor permit from Fire Services.
13. *******Fireworks and Discharge:** No Fireworks will be used or discharged within Parkland County in Restricted Burn areas having a lot size less than four (4.0) hectares and;
14. Labour Day has been removed as one of the current three days to discharge fireworks due to the higher wildfire risk at this time of year. Canada Day and New Years Eve remain as eligible days to receive a consumer fireworks permit
15. Limit the sale of consumer fireworks unless within 14 days immediately preceding New Year's Day and Canada Day.
16. **Fire and Dangerous Goods Incident Reporting Requirements:** Ensures that all spills and releases (residential and commercial) are reported locally and to required provincial departments. This keeps the Local Fire services aware of any hazards.
17. **Service Fees and Charges:** Established a reference to the County *Fees and Charges Bylaw for the establishment of and fees.*
18. **Fire Service Charges:** Clarifies who is responsible for potential costs associated with Fire Protection. Previous language was vague on this issue.
19. **Inspection and Enforcement:** Added language to better communicate the Fire Chief's ability carry out inspections as well as the County to enforce the bylaw and remedy contraventions.
20. **Fire Department Building Access and Lock Boxes:** The Commercial lock box program is being transitioned out of the provincial legislation. Parkland County will maintain the program locally through the updated Bylaw.

***Any reference to the use of Coal, Coal Fired appliances, EPA Standards, CSA Standards, Solid Fuel appliances and Solid Fuel have been deleted from the updated bylaw as these are regulated by Provincial legislation.

***All schedules relating to fees and penalties have been deleted from the updated Bylaw. A new stand-alone Fees and Charges Bylaw will contain all the County's fees and charges.

Conclusion/Summary:

Administration supports the proposed bylaw.

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