

## Fire Services Recruitment – Frequently Asked Questions



### **What are the requirements to join the Red Deer County Fire Department as a volunteer that responds to emergency calls?**

- Be a resident of Red Deer County, living in either the "Red Deer or Spruce View, Bowden or Delburne Fire District Areas" or a resident of the city of Red Deer in a location that you can respond promptly to the assigned fire station within the Red Deer Fire District Area.
- Have obtained a minimum of grade 12 or equivalent
- Be a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age
- Hold a valid class 5 drivers license
- Hold a valid first aid / CPR C certificate
- Be able to meet the fire department's physical agility requirements
- Be able to obtain a medical examination certificate proving he/she is fit to participate in firefighting activities and;
- Be prepared to commit the necessary time and effort involved in being a volunteer firefighter.

### **Is there anything else that will aid in my chances of being a successful applicant for the fire department?**

Yes, obtaining one or more of the following will help your chances.

- Have an air brake endorsement certificate
- Have a Class 3 or better drivers license
- Hold recognized certificates for firefighting courses
- Live and/or work in locations in which response times would be beneficial to the fire department.

### **I do not meet all the above criteria, can I still apply?**

Yes, we strongly recommend that you still fill out the application form. The first step is to complete the application form with a resume and return it to either Station 1 or Station 4.

### **Where do I send my completed application?**

Completed applications can be mailed to: Red Deer County Fire Services, 38106 Range Road 275 Red Deer County, AB. T4S 2L9. Or, you can drop off the completed application form at Station 1, located at 19 Street and 30th Avenue or Station 4, located at 6400 Airport Drive, Springbrook. Please mark the envelope with: "Confidential, re: application" in the bottom left hand corner of the envelope. Our office hours are Monday to Friday 0830-1200 and 1300-1630 hours.

### **I have filled out my application, now what happens?**

All applications are reviewed by the District Fire Chief on an ongoing basis and kept on file for future reference. Successful applicants are contacted to participate in the interview process which may occur at any time throughout the year.

### **I have been accepted for an interview, what can I expect?**

The interviews for Red Deer District held at Station 4, are a typical employment interview where both parties get a chance to ask questions and receive answers. The fire department's interviewing committee is comprised of the Fire Chief and a minimum of two other Officers. You will be notified within the week following if you were successful to continue on to the next step. For Spruce View, Bowden and Delburne interviews are arranged with the Commanding Officers of those stations.

## **I have completed my interview and I have been asked to come to the fire station for a job related physical test, what can I expect?**

We realize that you may not have any firefighting skills at this point, but it is not a big problem, we will take you through step by step. We are not testing your technical skill, but we are checking to see if you can physically do the skill. We check three areas; the first is to see how you handle heights, the second is on upper body strength, and lastly we check how you do in confined spaces. This is not a stress test, just a basic physical job related test.

## **If I am successful with the physical testing, what happens next?**

If you are successful in the interview and the physical testing, you are well on your way to becoming a volunteer firefighter. The last phase requires you to provide a current drivers abstract, a letter from your family physician stating that you can medically partake in the activities of a firefighter, and finally a criminal records check by the RCMP. We have basic letters explaining what is required from both your family physician and the RCMP. You will have to pay the costs of obtaining these items. A drivers abstract will cost you approximately \$25.00, there is no cost for a criminal records check because you are a volunteering, and a medical done by your physician will vary in cost.

## **I have delivered my drivers abstract, medical and criminal records check to the fire department, now what happens?**

These three documents are reviewed by the fire department administration. If favorable, you are assigned to a fire station as a New Recruit firefighter. The District Chief in charge of the new recruit training will set up the dates for the training and advise you when and where to attend.

## **How long does it take from the time I drop off my application until I am accepted to the fire department?**

Applications are accepted any time during the year. Interview dates are determined by the District Fire Chief and may vary from year to year based on the needs of the fire department. Once interviewed, if accepted, you will be assigned to a station and new recruit training starts shortly afterwards.

## **How much time will I be expected to contribute?**

Members of the fire department are expected to attend as many fire practices as possible during the course of the year.

In the Red Deer Fire District practices or training occur the first four Tuesday evenings of every month, starting at 1900 hours and normally go to 2200 hours.

The Spruce View Fire District has practices or training every second Wednesday evening, starting at 1900 hours and normally go to 2200 hours.

The Bowden Fire District has practices or training every Wednesday evening, starting at 1900 hours and normally go to 2200 hours

Delburne Fire District practices 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday evenings from 19:00 hours to 2200 hours

New recruits are also expected to attend the "new recruit" orientation program. This training is scheduled over several evenings, in such a way that everyone has the opportunity to attend all sessions. There will also be weekend courses scheduled throughout the year that you are encouraged to attend.

When you are available you are expected to be on voluntary call, for any emergency calls that occur in either the Red Deer, Spruce View, Delburne or Bowden Fire District areas.

## **How many calls does the County respond to in an average year?**

It depends year to year, hot dry spring conditions usually increase our call volume substantially because of grass fires. An average year would be approximately 300-400 actual responses.

## **Am I expected to attend all emergency calls?**

For the Red Deer Fire District there are three (3) fire stations located around the city of Red Deer. You will be assigned to one of these stations. When the call comes in, the closest station will respond with back up from at least one other station. If you are assigned to Station 1, you can expect to respond to approx. 60-70% of the calls; the other two (2) stations will respond approx. 50-60% of the time.

For the Spruce View and Bowden and Delburne Fire Districts there is only one (1) fire station for each district therefore you would be responding to any or all calls in those districts dependant upon your availability.

## **I am not around all the time, or I work shift work, or at times I would just not be available to respond to calls or attend the training sessions, does this pose a problem?**

No. Most of our current members also have similar times when they are not available for calls. The administration of the fire department watches this area very closely. If a member is not very active or does not attend many of the calls, they could be asked to step down from their position as a volunteer firefighter. This doesn't happen very often. We realize that your family and work comes first, all we ask is that you make an honest effort to attend as many functions and calls as possible.

## **I have never belonged to a fire department or never had any special training dealing with fire emergencies, am I wasting my time applying to be a volunteer firefighter?**

No, definitely not. We have our own in house training programs and practice sessions to educate you on the job of a volunteer firefighter. This is an ongoing process within our department. The more time you invest, the quicker you will learn. As stated before, a successful applicant will be expected to attend the new recruit orientation training this will give you the very basics of firefighting. You will expand on your knowledge at the practices which are held on the first four Tuesday evenings of each month. We also hold extension courses from fire etc on a regular basis. In total this is an 11 week training package that meets the professional qualification for a firefighter, as set out by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Of course, we do not expect everyone to pursue this goal of taking all 11 weeks of training. We normally hold different courses of this training program on an annual basis. We teach these courses on weekends, trying to fit in everyone who wishes to participate. It is expected that you take some of the fire etc courses in the first two years of being with the department.

## **I did not realize that you have five fire stations, where are they located?**

Station 1 is located on 19th Street and 30th Avenue or Secondary 595 and Range Road 272. Equipment located at Station 1 consists of 1 engine, 1 tender, 1 bush truck, 1 rescue unit, 1 utility truck, 1 UTV and air trailer.

Station 23 is located in Burnt Lake Industrial Park located to the west of the City of Red Deer. Equipment located at Station 23 consists of 1 engine/tender combination unit, and 1 bush truck.

Station 4 is located in the Hamlet of Springbrook at 6400 Airport Drive across from the Red Deer Airport. The equipment for Station 4 consists of 1 ladder truck, 1 bush truck, 1 investigation unit, and 1 rescue unit.

Station 5 is located in the Hamlet of Spruce View. The equipment for Station 5 consists of 1 bush truck, 1 engine, 1 rescue unit, 1 UTV, and 1 tender.

Station 7 is located in the Town of Bowden at 2114 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The equipment at Station 7 consists of 1 bush truck, 1 engine, 1 rescue unit, 1 UTV, and 1 tender.

Station 8 is located at 1925 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in the Village of Delburne. The equipment at Station 8 consists of 1 bush truck, 1 engine, 1 tender, and one rescue truck.

## **What type of calls do you respond to?**

The Red Deer County fire district does respond to highway traffic accidents or to medical emergencies as requested.

The Spruce View, Delburne and Bowden fire districts respond to highway traffic accidents and medical emergencies.

All districts respond to vehicle fires, grass fires, structure fires, emergencies at the airport, carbon monoxide and smoke alarms ringing.

### **Are there any full time staff working on the fire department?**

Yes, the full time staff consists of a Fire Chief – Administration & Training, District Fire Chief, Fire Inspector and one Administrative staff.

### **I am a little apprehensive about being the new kid on the block.**

This is not a big problem; we usually try to bring a group of people on at one time. As a group you will go through the recruit training no matter what your experience or background are. The instruction of the new recruit training is done by some of the officers and senior firefighters. In a short time you will get to know all your fellow firefighters. Firefighting is a vast and varied field of expertise; we don't expect you to learn it all in a short period of time. You don't become a firefighter over night, and the members that are here now know that, so you do not have to worry about being asked to do something you do not know how to do. After your orientation, recruit training, and attending a few regular practices you should start to feel fairly comfortable with the whole atmosphere of being a volunteer firefighter.

### **What are the duties of a volunteer firefighter within the Red Deer County fire department?**

As a volunteer firefighter you will: Respond to emergency calls regarding fires within the Fire District area you are assigned to, from time to time you will also respond into other fire areas as outlined in our mutual aid agreements, you will train towards professional qualifications for a firefighter as set out by the NFPA standards, you will be part of a team that keeps the units ready for the next emergency call, as a team member you will keep the fire station neat and tidy, you may be placed on a special committee to look after items such as communications or self contained breathing apparatus, and other related duties.

### **What items will I be specifically trained in as a volunteer firefighter?**

There are many areas that you will be trained in, some of them are: use of self contained breathing apparatus, search & rescue, ropes & knots, radio communications, the structure of command, basic pump operations, working from hydrants, working from draught, hose laying, hose loading, operation and selection of nozzles, driving, ventilation, structure suppression, fire prevention, overhaul, ladders, salvage, foam, extinguishers, dealing with flammable products and many more. The training is an ongoing process, and you should be continually learning for as long as you are involved with the fire department.

### **How many volunteer firefighters are on the department?**

We maintain approximately 60 volunteer firefighters to provide coverage for the Red Deer Fire District area. Spruce View Fire District area maintains 15, Delburne 12, and Bowden Fire District area maintains 20.

### **What area of Red Deer County does the Red Deer Fire District provide fire coverage for?**

The North boundary is the Red Deer River or the Lacombe County/Red Deer County border. The East boundary is 3 miles East of Secondary 816 or Range Road 250. The West boundary is Range Road 10, or the beginning of the fifth meridian. The South boundary is along Secondary 592 and Hwy 42. We cover over 600 km<sup>2</sup> of Red Deer County, which surrounds the City of Red Deer. This area has an approximate population of 7750 people.

### **What area of Red Deer County does the Spruce View Fire District provide fire coverage for?**

The North boundary is Township Road 380 to the Medicine River and the eastern border runs adjacent to the west side of the Medicine River, Gleniffer Lake Reservoir and Red Deer River.

### **What area of Red Deer County does the Bowden Fire District provide fire coverage for?**

The North boundary is Township Road 350 to the Red Deer River and the farthest South border is Township Road 340. Range Road 41 is the West boundary and Range Road 253 is the Eastern most boundary.

### **What area of Red Deer County does Delburne Fire provide coverage for?**

The North boundary is Township Road 390 (Red Deer River Valley), East to Range Road 221 (Red Deer River Valley), West to Range Road 250, and South to Township Road 364 (Hwy 42).

### **How long do you keep completed applications on hand?**

Normally we will keep all applications for a one year period.

**If you have any questions regarding the application form or any of the process of being a volunteer firefighter please do not hesitate to give us a call at 403.343.6667. Our Administration staff will be glad to assist you.**