

**TOWN OF KINGSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**MASTER FIRE PLAN**

**ORGANIZATIONAL RISK ANALYSIS**

**TRAINING**

The fire services of Ontario are called upon to provide a variety of services, in addition to fire suppression, to their citizens. While the Fire Protection and Prevention Act mandates certain services (see organizational risk analysis for fire prevention), the municipal council determines the types and levels of services to be provided by the fire service in their respective municipality. The efficiency of the department and the safety of personnel are dependent on an effective and comprehensive training program in order to provide these services. The marked decrease in the number of structure fires annually has also been a contributing factor to the need for training in order to fill the gap left by practical experience. The purpose of this report is to outline the current training programs of the Kingsville Fire Department and to determine if any improvements or alterations are required. A Working Group consisting of nine fire department personnel, including officers and firefighters, was formed to provide input and suggestions to the Master Fire Plan Steering Committee regarding this subject.

**General Firefighter Training:**

The Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal provides the Ontario Firefighter Training Curriculum for use by Ontario fire departments, both career and volunteer, and it has been almost universally adopted across the province. The Kingsville Fire Department utilizes this curriculum for recruit personnel (see next section) and the general training of firefighters. The curriculum is based on the Ontario Firefighter Standard and consists of three components which are then broken into modules:

- Fire Related Modules:
  - Introduction to the Fire Service.
  - Fire Sciences.
  - Fireground Operations.
  - Operating and Maintaining Fire Apparatus.
- Specialized Modules:
  - Environmental Hazards.
  - Rescue.
  - Emergency Patient Care.

- Firefighter in the Community Modules:
  - Public Education.
  - Public Relations.
  - Fire Inspections and Pre Fire Plans.
  - Applied Communications.

Each module consists of a number of individual subjects each of which contains a theory section, a practice session and a practical test session. The practical sessions must be "signed off" by a Trainer-Facilitator who has been certified by the Office of the Fire Marshal to do so. All Kingsville Fire Department officers and a large number of firefighters at each station have received this certification. An outside training agency is currently brought in to provide the Emergency Patient Care section of the curriculum. Once a firefighter completes a module, a provincial examination is written. Successful completion of all three exams results in a firefighter receiving a Certificate of Completion of the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum. It takes approximately 5 years to complete this process. There have been isolated cases where some personnel have experienced difficulty in completing the process within the required time. Personnel who complete the curriculum have the option to complete an On the Job Performance Checklist and two additional specialty modules to become Certified Ontario Firefighters. Many of our staff have chosen to complete this option and 80% of these eligible to certify have done so.

In addition to the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum, a number of other subjects (see section on specialized subjects) are also covered in general training. At the present time, each station has two training sessions per month of three hours duration each. As well, operational guidelines are reviewed at each truck check night, as scheduled by each Station Chief, to ensure that they are reviewed in their entirety on an annual basis. A drill is also conducted on a specified piece of equipment on each of these nights. These are recorded on the truck check sheets but are not currently included in the training records. The general training subjects to be covered are chosen by the fire chief with input from the firefighters and officers and a schedule is posted in late December for the upcoming year. Training sessions are conducted by officers and/or Trainer-Facilitators and they are provided with additional training compensation on a per session basis in accordance with the Volunteer Firefighter Wage and Benefit Agreement with the municipality. The training subjects at each station are the same in order to afford personnel the opportunity to attend the opposite station for training should a scheduling conflict occur. There is also at least one full day training session conducted annually, and sometimes two, based on scheduling. Normally, regular training sessions are suspended for the month of August and replaced with a full day of training in the fall. These sessions enable both stations to train together on a formal basis.





## **Recruit Training:**

Recruit firefighter training utilizes the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum as well. At the present time, extra training sessions are held for recruit firefighters on weekends and "off" training evenings for a total duration of 51 hours. These sessions enable recruits to complete their initial training in a shorter time frame but do not provide them with all of the curriculum signoffs. Much success has also been achieved in past years with inviting other county departments to participate in this training with their recruits and trainer-facilitators. This has promoted positive inter-departmental operations. Recruit personnel are placed on a graduated wage scale, as per the Volunteer Firefighter Wage and Benefit Agreement with the municipality whereby their wage is increased on an annual basis over a five year based on their training and performance each year. Performance appraisals are conducted for each recruit by their captain at 3 months, 6 months, and then annually until they reach full pay scale. The appraisals are reviewed by the respective station chief and fire chief upon completion. Recruit personnel are encouraged to attend the Volunteer Firefighter Modules at the Ontario Fire College. These week long modules are groupings of Ontario Firefighter Curriculum subjects and provide recruits with the opportunity for live fire and smoke training exercises. Three of our Kingsville Fire Department staff are currently on the roster of associate instructors at the Ontario Fire College that are utilized to teach these modules. The Town of Leamington has identified the construction of a training tower in their Master Fire Plan in the near future which will be available to area departments on a rental basis which will also assist with live training exercises.

There is a good selection of training material available to support the Ontario Fire College curriculum. Each recruit is supplied with the most recent edition of the Essentials of Firefighting textbook as a resource. The department does not, however, have an up-to-date set of training DVD's to support training sessions. The training program would also be enhanced with the creation of standard lesson teaching plans for each of the subjects covered in the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum.

***Recommendation #2: That the Recruit Training Program schedule be revised to include all of the sign offs for Component 1 of the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum.***

***Recommendation #3: That consideration be given to reviewing the Wage and Benefit Agreement for the volunteer firefighters of the Kingsville Fire Department to reflect that recruit personnel complete the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum including the provincial tests prior to being placed at the full wage scale upon the completion of Year 4.***

***Recommendation #4: That a complete set of Essentials of Firefighting training DVD's be included in the 2010 capital budget at an approximate cost of \$7,500 for consideration.***

***Recommendation #5: That the Officers and Trainer-Facilitators create a set of standard lesson teaching plans for the subjects covered in the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum as they deliver the next recruit program for the department and, further, that these plans be reviewed for currency on an annual basis.***

### **Trainer-Facilitators:**

As previously mentioned, the Trainer-Facilitators are personnel who are certified to evaluate and "sign off" firefighters on the skill testing for the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum. Trainer-facilitators must have the training and experience necessary (normally completion of the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum) in order to attend the Trainer-Facilitator course. This course provides them with an overview of adult learning principles, how the Ontario Firefighter Curriculum is set up and how to prepare lesson plans/training sessions. A practical delivery session where each student presents a lesson and is evaluated concludes the course. This course was updated quite significantly last year. Although all of the department officers and many firefighters have attended the original course, only three personnel have completed the updated new course. The Fire Chief is currently certified as a Master Trainer Facilitator which enables him to conduct the Trainer-Facilitator Course.

***Recommendation #6: That the Fire Chief investigate the possibility of providing an upgrade Trainer-Facilitator Course to bring current Trainer-Facilitators to the present course standards and, further, that Trainer-Facilitators must participate in the signing off of recruit firefighters on an annual basis, as a minimum, in order to maintain their Trainer-Facilitator status.***

### **Officer Training:**

The Ontario Fire College provides two major programs for officer training and development-the Company Officer Program and the Fire Prevention Officer Program. These programs involve a significant number of courses which include precourse assignments, attendance at the Ontario Fire College and post course assignments. At the present time, the Fire Chief has completed the original Fire Protection Technology course and Advanced Fire Protection Technology course

(the precursors to the current program) and the Fire Prevention Officer has completed both the Fire Prevention Officer and Company Officer programs. The department currently has eight personnel who have completed a portion of these advanced courses at the Fire College. We also have three personnel who have completed the Public Fire and Life Safety Educator program and two who are registered to take the program this year. There exists the option to train some of our staff to become associate instructors for some of these officer courses offered by the Ontario Fire College. This would give the ability to offer the most relevant courses locally to our staff.

Personnel who wish to apply for promotion to officer positions in the department currently must have successfully completed the Legislation and Orientation officer course and the Introduction to Incident Management officer course from the Ontario Fire College. Additional officer training is provided at an officer training session at each of the four officers' meetings each year.

***Recommendation #7: That the Trainer-Facilitator course as provided by the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal be added to the list of required courses for personnel who are applying for promotion to an officer position.***

***Recommendation #8: That the Fire Chief investigate the possibility of training one Kingsville Fire Department staff member to associate instructor level for the 400 and 500 series Company Officer courses offered by the Ontario Fire College.***

### **Specialized Training:**

In addition to the regular fire service training of the department, there are several specialized subjects which are also of importance:

- High angle rope rescue.
- Emergency patient care.
- Hazardous materials response.
- Water and ice rescue.
- Vehicle and machinery extrication.

The high angle rope rescue team consists of six personnel from each station. Training for these individuals has been conducted by the Municipal Health and Safety Association to N.F.P.A. 1670 at the Ontario Fire College. Nine have completed the training and three are registered to attend this summer. The team trains monthly in order to keep their skills current. It may be advantageous to train some of the team members to technician level in the future.

The Windsor Fire Department currently provides hazardous materials response under the automatic aid agreement for the County of Essex. A requirement of receiving their services is that we have personnel available trained to N.F.P.A. 472 operations level in order to assist them with decontamination and non invasion mitigation. The Kingsville Fire Department currently has staff at both stations trained to the required level.

All personnel receive basic water and ice rescue training. Operators of the department rescue boat have received Med A-3 training in order to certify them for this type of operation. It may be of benefit to train some personnel to the technician level of water and ice rescue in the future.

***Recommendation#9: That consideration be given to training two high angle rope team members from each station to N.F.P.A. 1670 technician level for the high angle rope rescue team and two personnel from the south station to technician level in water and ice rescue in 2010.***

In addition to the specialized courses noted in detail, fire department personnel annually avail themselves of the opportunity to attend seminars such as the Fire Department Instructors Conference held in Indianapolis, training programs offered by the Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers' Association, seminars held at the Ontario Public Fire and Life Safety Conference, hands on training sessions at the Ontario Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Meeting and Educational Seminar, courses offered by the Municipal Health and Safety Association and other specialized courses provided by the Office of the Fire Marshal.

### **Training Policies:**

The Kingsville Fire Department currently has several policies related to training in place. It would be of benefit to merge these into a single comprehensive training policy. This comprehensive policy should address the following issues:

- Training attendance and punctuality.
- Reimbursement for training courses to the municipality by personnel who leave a specialty team they have trained for or the department entirely following a specified time period.
- Dealing with the training credits of personnel who leave the department and then return after an extended time period.
- The number of Ontario Fire College, and other outside courses, personnel should be permitted to attend at the expense of the municipality on an annual basis.
- Travel issues for personnel attending courses outside the municipality.
- Making certification as an Ontario Firefighter mandatory for our personnel.

***Recommendation #10: That the Fire Chief and Kingsville Fire Department officers create a draft comprehensive training policy for the Kingsville Fire Department which addresses the issues as outlined in the training organizational risk analysis for presentation to the Town of Kingsville Municipal Council to be considered for approval.***

***This report was approved by Kingsville Municipal Council on May 25, 2009.***

