



November 29, 2023

To Clare Municipal Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide quarterly reports on behalf of the Clare Firefighters Association. The following are the number of calls for service August - October.

Havelock 13	Hectanooga 0	Little Brook 19	Meteghan 58
Saint Bernard 39	Salmon River 7	Southville 10	

August saw a down turn, thankfully, in wildfires in our region due to rain. Now as winter approaches we are reminding people to clean their chimneys, practice fire safety if decorating for the Holidays and to drive according to road conditions.

During Fire Prevention Week in October many of our departments hosted open houses at their stations and were involved in fire prevention activities in schools and other public places. The theme was "Cooking Safety Starts With You. Pay Attention to Fire Prevention." Some departments took advantage of this time to check residential homes for smoke detectors and provide batteries and/or detectors if needed.

It continues to be challenging dealing with significant wait times by EHS during emergencies. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of our paramedics! We also appreciate the support from RCMP when needed. It takes a team for us to provide protection of life and property.

There are significant delays when chiefs make requests or inquiries of Municipal Staff. For example Chief Wayne Comeau waited months for a request from LBFD to pay for security that was required for a structure fire in their district. While this has been rectified now, situations like this are taking too long. It shouldn't require multiple trips to the municipal office. Could there be one staff person designated for fire services to contact when issues arise and to assist fire chiefs with administration needs? It seems to be unknown who we should be directing these requests and inquiries to.

There has been a significant increase in administration responsibilities for fire chiefs over the past few years from insurance companies and government agencies. They have the same responsibilities as career fire chiefs in these regards but do it in volunteer time. We need support for the level of service we are providing to continue.

As inflation causes departments operating expenses to increase, the operating funding we are receiving is not covering the operating costs we incur to provide fire service for the municipality. Costs such as insurance, heating, vehicle maintenance and required equipment. Fundraising should not be used to cover operating costs. We fully recognize that this need is not unique to the fire service. As the demands continue to increase for our volunteers it becomes more difficult for fundraising efforts. If the municipality was to assume defined operating costs of each department it would be a great support. We will of course continue to fundraise for the "extras" that do allow us to do our job in an efficient manner.

It has been brought to our attention that Clare Municipality has an ATV and trailer at its disposal. What would be the procedure for us to have an agreement to access the ATV when needed? It doesn't make sense for us to rely on the use of the public's property or our volunteer's property when our municipality has one available. Also, what would be the procedure for us to secure the use of the municipality's vehicles when needed. There have been instances when smaller vehicles than our vehicles are needed to access certain areas of our municipality.

Thank you for your continued support. We have a phenomenal team of volunteers in the fire service in our municipality that sacrifice time, money and resources to protect the lives and properties of our residents and those who visit our amazing community. We are grateful for the more than 100 people that allow us to provide this service.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Doucette  
Clare Firefighter Association President

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Clare Firefighters Association Vice-President