

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIGHORN No. 8

POLICY

Name: LIMITATIONS TO THE PROVISION OF
FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

Number: ES - 18

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PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Fire Protection response for the MD of Bighorn is met through a variety of approaches. In the Bow Corridor the Exshaw District utilizes up to 20 Volunteer Fire Protection Members to provide fire response, rescue services, first aid and Safety Codes services throughout the area. In the Jamieson Road area a number of Fire Protection Members assist the Exshaw District Chief to provide a first response service. This response is backed up by a response from Exshaw or Cochrane. In the Ghost River area the Ghost River District provides Fire Protection response, with a volunteer force of Fire Protection Members.

Mutual aid and first response agreements are maintained with a number of outside agencies. In addition there is a disaster mutual aid agreement, which covers Calgary west to Banff, of which the M.D. is a signator to the agreement. The M.D. also has agreements, with a number of agencies, to provide fire and rescue services, on a fee basis.

With respect to wild-fire responsibility, the Alberta Government handles forest fires as Bighorn lies within the Forest Protection area.

The M.D. covers a large area of land with diverse landscape and faces physical, social and budgetary constraints. As such, the M.D. is unable to provide Fire Protection services at a similar level in all areas of the M.D. The Limitations to the Provision of Fire Protection Services Policy establishes the circumstances in which the level of Fire Protection may vary or where Fire Protection may not be provided at all.

The M.D.'s Fire Protection response is responsible for providing services in dangerous situations. The Limitations to the Provision of Fire Protection Services Policy also addresses circumstances in which Fire Protection services may not be provided because it is unsafe for Fire Protection Members.

This Policy is prepared under the authority of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000 Chapter M-26, as amended; the Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSA 2000 Chapter O-2, as amended, the Forest and Prairie Protection Act, RSA 2000 Chapter F-19, as amended, and M.D. of Bighorn Fire Bylaw No. 07-10 as amended. For the purposes of this policy, the terms, phrases, words and their derivatives shall have the definitions used in Fire Bylaw 07-10.



POLICY

1. The M.D. recognizes that various conditions and circumstances in hamlets and other areas may create hazards with regard to the suppression of fires and other Fire Protection responses. Those hazards include, but are not limited to:

- The area surrounding the location of the fire may be heavily forested;
- The developed carriageway on the municipal road allowance may be narrow;
- Access and egress into the location of the fire may be restricted;
- Fire roads and fire guards may be inadequate or non-existent;
- Water may not be readily available;
- Structures may not be adequately fire-proofed;
- Yards may not be groomed to reduce fire hazards.

It is recognized that the M.D. may not have the financial resources to overcome these conditions and circumstances in all cases; nor, due to natural conditions (e.g. a lack of any nearby natural ground or surface water source), the ability to correct some situations.

In addition, it is recognized that many of these possibly-hazardous conditions and circumstances are actually desirable features of the community, on the part of the residents of specific hamlets and specific areas: for example, many residents find heavily forested areas to be particularly scenic, and choose to live in these areas, resisting any municipal "FireSmart" efforts to remove trees/foliage to create fire-breaks.

Finally, given that each of the three Fire Protection areas relies upon volunteer Members to carry out the Fire Protection services, and given that the volunteer Members may not be available at all times, or not fully qualified to handle every Fire Protection requirement that may come up (for example the handling of hazardous materials as defined by Provincial regulations), circumstances may limit response capabilities.

Given these hazards, conditions and circumstances, the M.D.'s Fire Protection response capabilities may be negatively affected, as:

- fire-trucks may not be able to drive down narrow streets/roads, or restricted accesses/egresses, particularly if there are vehicles parked on those roads;
- fire-fighting equipment and Fire Protection Members may not be able to enter into heavily-forested properties, non-fire-proofed structures, ungroomed yards, or those lands with any combination of the noted conditions;
- there may be difficulties with providing a sufficient supply of fire-fighting water, in some situations.
- timing of response: delays may be encountered, given any number of factors (such as severe weather situations).



Policy ES-18
 LIMITATIONS TO THE PROVISION OF
 FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

SCHEDULE "A"

Areas with Known Limitations to Provision of Fire Protection Services

AREA	LIMITATIONS
<p>Hamlet of Benchlands</p>	<p>Narrow streets Streets have sharp curves/steep slopes Only one access into/egress from lower residential sectors Considerable number of heavily forested properties Lack of a municipal water system and hydrants in the residential area</p>
<p>Hamlet of Exshaw</p>	<p>Laneways not snow-plowed in winter, nor graded in summer.</p>
<p>Hamlet of Harvie Heights</p>	<p>Narrow streets Laneways not developed Considerable number of heavily forested properties Only one access into/egress from residential sector of hamlet. Lack of a municipal water system and hydrants in the residential area</p>
<p>Hamlet of Lac Des Arcs</p>	<p>Narrow streets No laneways Vegetation/trees growing close to streets Considerable number of heavily forested properties Lack of a municipal water system and hydrants in the residential area</p>
<p>Rural Areas outside of the Hamlets</p>	<p>Considerable distance from Fire Halls May be limited water supplies Few access/egress roads into some areas No municipal roads to some properties Considerable number of heavily forested properties</p>

