



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

District of Tumbler Ridge Fire Department

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DISTRICT OF TUMBLER RIDGE MISSION STATEMENT

“Council is committed to excellence in government that reflects our citizens’ interests, values and goals. We will strive to deliver quality public services in a proactive and responsive manner while ensuring our objectives are clearly communicated to our citizens. We will strive to strengthen and diversify our economy by balancing public safety, industrial development, environmental responsibility and sustainability”.



TUMBLER RIDGE FIRE RESCUE MISSION STATEMENT

“Tumbler Ridge Fire Rescue is made up of a group of every day individuals with the primary goal of providing professional emergency services to residents and visitors in their time of need. Our mission is to enhance our community not only through the preservation of life and protection of property, but also through prevention initiatives and educational opportunities on a continual basis.

TUMBLER RIDGE FIRE RESCUE VISION

“We will continually strive to go above and beyond for those we serve.”

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Even in the midst of a pandemic, 2021 was a busy year for the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department. The department saw an overall increase in requests for service all while simultaneously having to pivot to the ever changing requirements and restrictions necessary to maintain our essential service delivery to the community. Balancing the health and safety of responders against the needs of the community was challenging at times, however, I am pleased to say that not once were we unable to render assistance when called upon.

Over the course of the year, firefighters adapted to wave after wave of new challenges as the months flew by. Training and skill development transitioned from in person to virtual and back again in effort to keep our people as safe and healthy as possible. Our response protocols, the way that we operate during emergent and non-emergent calls for service, also were in a state of flux for the majority of the year due to new data and guidance provided by health and fire service professionals alike. Even with all of these hurdles, firefighters continued to maintain the high standard of service and exceptional professionalism that the community has come to expect from their fire department.

In addition to another pandemic year, 2021 also presented Tumbler Ridge with the most significant wildfire season that it has experienced since 2006. Multiple wildfires kept BC Wildfire Services crews in the back country while local firefighters prepared to make a stand and protect the community should it become necessary. Having participated in the wildfire evacuations of 2006, I know all too well the pressures that a firefighter feels when facing the reality of sending loved ones away while you stay back to do what you can. This pressure is further compounded during a wildfire season where a town very similar to Tumbler Ridge was so heavily devastated elsewhere in the Province.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the firefighters of the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department for their dedication and commitment to the community during such a demanding year. All of you should be proud of the actions, and in some cases sacrifices, that you all have made throughout the year in order to make Tumbler Ridge a safer place for everyone.

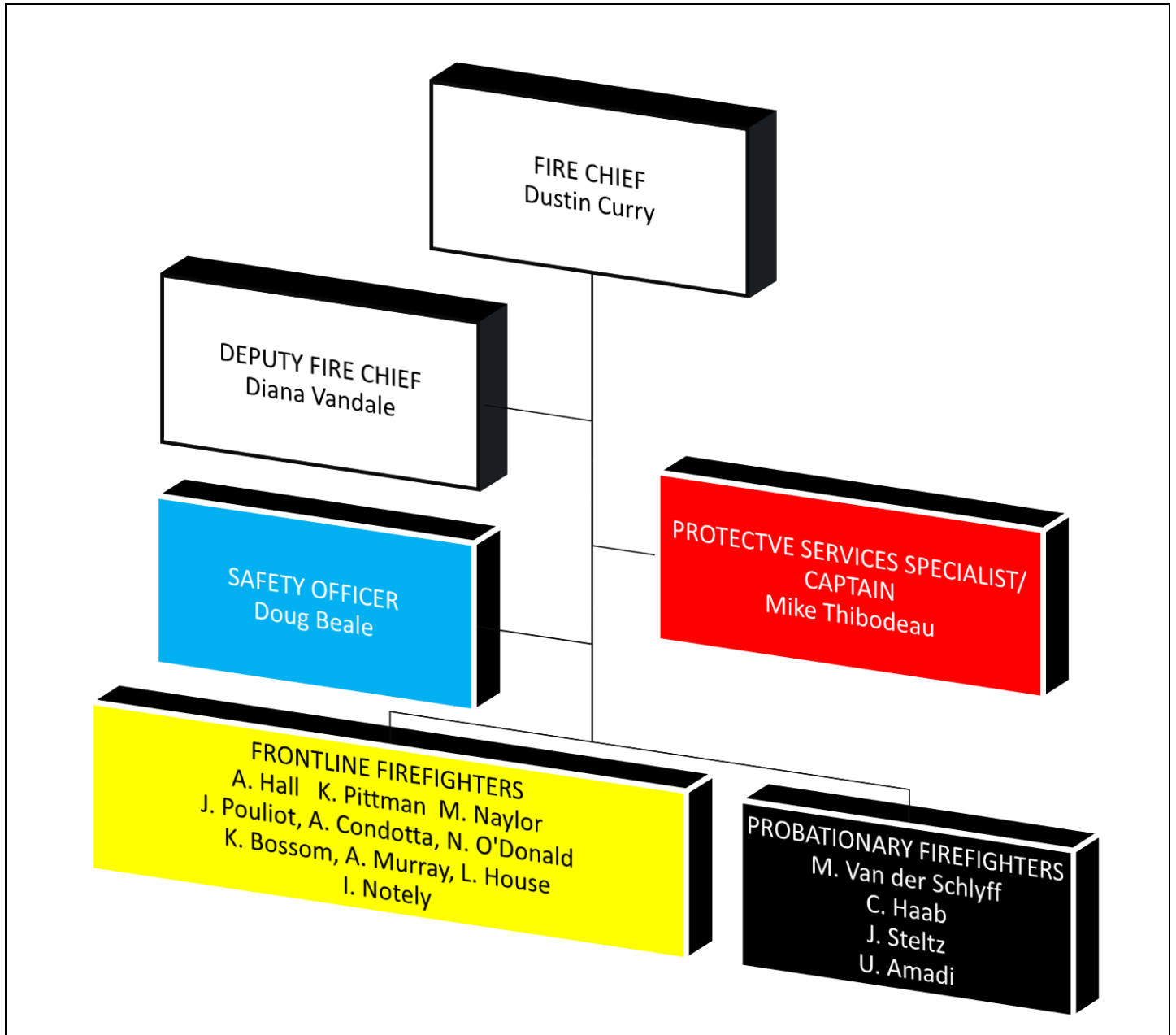
Respectfully,



Dustin Curry
Director of Protective Services/Fire Chief



2021 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



PERSONNEL

Deputy Fire Chief (ret.) Diana Vandale

Diana Vandale began her tenure in the fire service on November 9th, 1994. During her 27 years with the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department, she rose through the ranks ultimately becoming the Deputy Fire Chief in 2008. Her leadership and steadfast commitment to the department is something to be admired and strived for by those her junior.

Additionally, she has always been an active member of the Tumbler Ridge Firefighters Association holding various positions over the years. Her passion for helping others was truly seen in her work with Muscular Dystrophy Canada. As the Chair for the MD committee, she was directly responsible for overseeing the fundraising of over \$150,000 dollars in efforts to make muscles move.

Deputy Fire Chief Diana Vandale officially retired from the fire service on November 10th, 2021.



Deputy Fire Chief Diana Vandale

Deputy Fire Chief Mike Thibodeau

With the departure of Deputy Vandale, Captain Mike Thibodeau was promoted to the position of Deputy Fire Chief. A 17 year veteran of the department, Deputy Thibodeau holds a Fire Officer Level 3 through the National Fire Protection Association and is working to complete his full Fire Officer Certification as well as Fire Prevention Officer and Emergency Management Certifications. Deputy Thibodeau is the first paid full time Deputy Fire Chief for the department with the role merging with the Protective Services Specialist function already in place in the District.



*Outgoing and Incoming
Deputy Fire Chiefs*

Paid On Call Transition

In May of 2021, the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department made the transition from a truly volunteer organization to a paid on call model. This meant that firefighters were now being paid for every hour of training and emergency response that they provided to the community. Firefighters no longer risk the potential loss of income to provide emergency response to those in need. This transition occurred gradually in some respects as the relationship between the Fire Department and the Tumbler Ridge Firefighters' Association needed to be redefined as the department undertook more financial management. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 restrictions that were effect for the most of 2021 prevented many of the opportunities for team building from happening, and as such, the continued transition of these items will continue into 2022.

MEMBERS YEARS OF SERVICE

27 years of service

Deputy Fire Chief Diana Vandale

22 years of service

Senior Firefighter/Safety Officer Doug Beale

17 years of service

Protective Services Specialist/Captain Mike Thibodeau

16 years of service

Fire Chief Dustin Curry

8 years of service

Firefighter Adam Hall

6 years of service

Firefighter Kevin Pittman

5 years of service

Firefighter Michael Naylor

3 years of service

Firefighter Justin Pouliot

2 years of service

Firefighter Anthony Condotta

1 year of service

Firefighter Navada O'Donald

1 year of service

Firefighter Kevin Bossom

1 year of service

Firefighter Alex Murray

Less than 1 year of service

Firefighter Iris Notley

Firefighter Louis House

Michelle Van der Schlyff

Christian Haab

Jonathan Steltz

Uche "Frank" Amadi



"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."

-Joseph Campbell

*"If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together."*

- African Proverb



CAPITAL PROJECTS

Fire Services Master Plan

As part of the 2021 Capital budget, the department solicited that a Fire Services Master Plan be developed by a third party in order to review the current operational situation as well as provide recommendations to serve as a guidance document for the fire departments future.

A public tendering process began in March with FireWise Consulting named as the successful proponent out of five submissions. During the next few months, virtual meetings were held to finalize the project and gain insight as to how the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department operated. A four day site visit to Tumbler Ridge and the surrounding area was conducted in June with the final report being presented to Council in November. Tumbler Ridge experienced a significant wildfire season in 2021 which negatively impacted one aspect of the project - the release of the Satisfaction Survey to the public. While the project completion deadline had to be pushed back due to the delayed release of the survey, the overall project was ultimately completed under budget and still within the calendar year.

Below is a brief summary of the recommendations from the Fire Services Master Plan, and the Districts actions planned for 2022.

1. The District of Tumbler Ridge Council should adopt a service level policy that will provide qualitative direction to the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department related to desired service levels and include guidance on managing out-of-scope incidents.
 - *Staff will be reviewing current policies, and standard operating guidelines with the goal of developing a service level policy for Council's consideration in 2022.*
2. Council should consider establishing a volunteer recruitment and retention working group that works with organizations, including the fire department that depends on volunteer personnel for staffing.
 - *Future planning for this recommendation is still being determined.*
3. Council should consider doing a full assessment of the current fire station using the 2018 RDH Building Sciences Report as a baseline and evaluate options for renovation, expansion, or replacement of the existing fire station.
 - *An assessment project to evaluate the current building and infrastructure as well as to provide guidance on next steps is included in the Capital projects proposed for 2022.*
4. Fire apparatus replacement strategies and Council approvals should link to technology to maximize effective and efficient use of limited human resources.
 - *A Request for Proposal process for the replacement of Squad 4, the TRFD's Wildland Apparatus, was approved by Council in late 2021. Staff will be creating a build specifications using technology to maximize efficiencies in the field.*



5. Council should instruct Administration to develop and present a comprehensive fire prevention program that builds on the successes of the current programs but targets identified community risks, including wildland/urban interface programs.
 - *Staff has identified areas for improvement in fire prevention and will be moving forward with formalizing the program using a wider scope of topics including FireSmart principles.*
6. Council should consider providing instruction for Administration to develop and implement annual reporting processes that provide Council with specific information on the performance and relative effectiveness of the District of Tumbler Ridge's fire protection system.
 - *This newly created document satisfies this recommendation and will continue to be provided to Council on an annual basis.*

Firefighter Communication Equipment

Pagers are a critical tool in ensuring that responders are aware that they are needed to respond. The previous fleet of pagers was purchased in 2008 and had started to require more repairs as they aged and in some cases, were not able to be repaired at all. 20 New Motorola Minitor VI pagers were purchased to replace the older units with plans to either recycle older models or sell them as surplus in 2022.



Fire Training Facility

Upgrades to the Fire Training Centre, including moving the facility to another suitable location, were put on hold for 2021 as information that will affect some of the upgrade aspects is expected in the building assessment project planned for 2022. No work was completed on this project other than that which was required to maintain the safety of the current facilities.

Fire Hall Envelope/Replacement

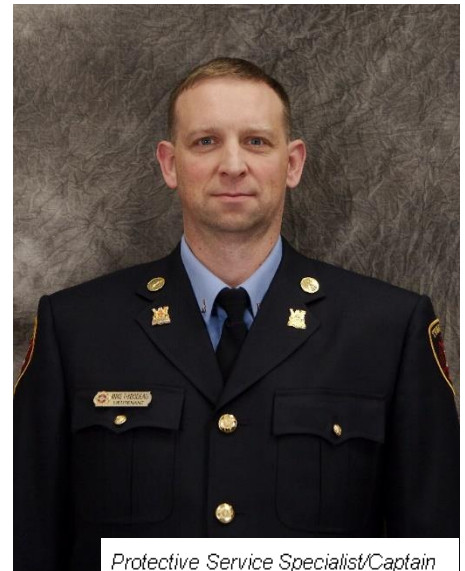
With the undertaking of a Fire Services Master Plan, the decision was made to put this project on hold until after the plan was completed. As previously stated, an assessment of the current fire hall and training facility is included in the 2022 Capital Budget projects.

The proposal for a new joint storage and training facility with Tumbler Ridge Search and Rescue was also put on hold until a clearer plan for both the Fire Hall and the Fire Training Centre was established.

FIRE PREVENTION

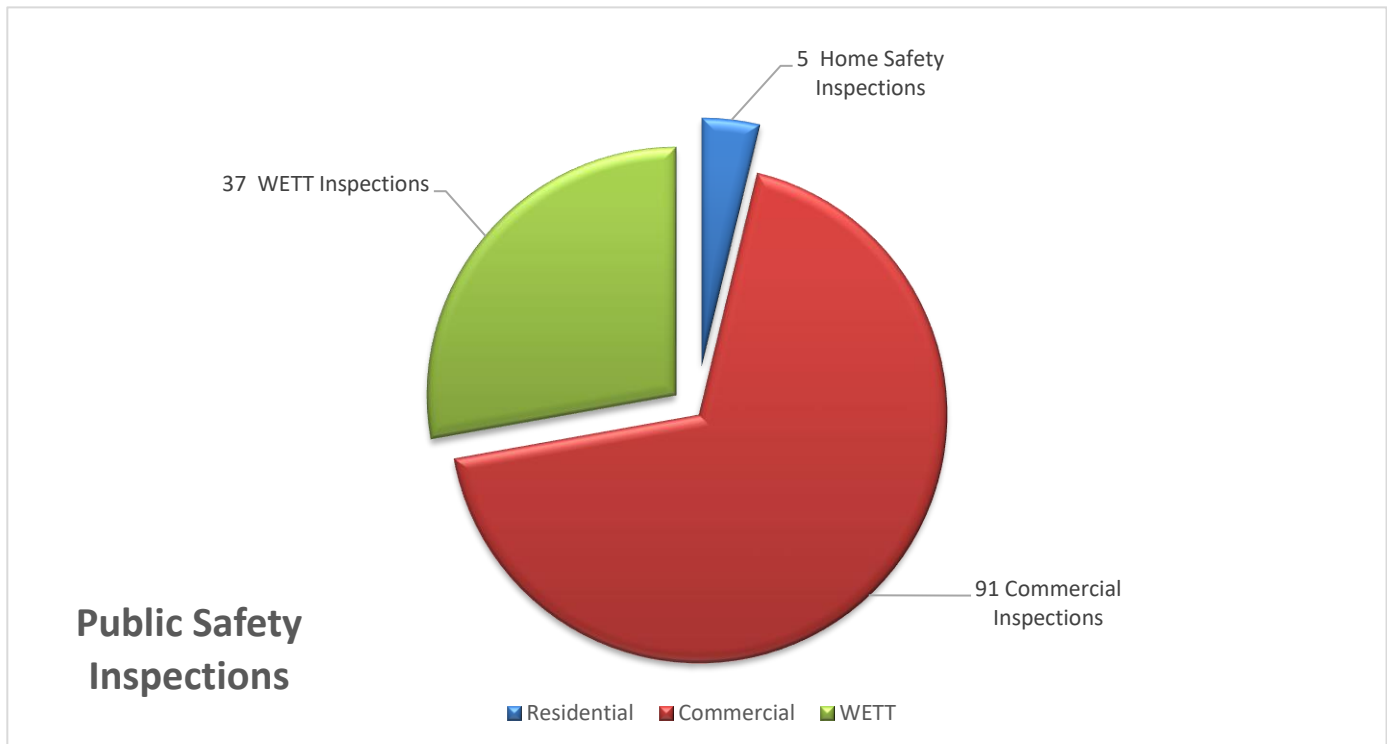
Inspections

In 2021, the department began electronically recording its fire inspection program using the Fire Pro 2 Records Management Software inspection module. This process replaced the outdated use of a paper based database model and enabled the department to record, catalogue, and track inspection findings more efficiently. It has also allowed us to better define the issues for the owner and give them the necessary information required to bring the building or its processes into compliance with the BC Fire Code and local municipal bylaws.



Protective Service Specialist/Captain
Mike Thibodeau

Fire department staff regularly conduct Commercial Fire Inspections, as well as residential Home Safety Inspections and WETT inspections for solid fuel burning appliances throughout the year. In 2021, Tumbler Ridge Fire Department partnered with the Fire Chief's Association of BC and the BC Office of the Fire Commissioner to deliver home safety packages and answer questions about fire safety and risk prevention. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 restrictions in effect at the time prevented many of the larger information sessions that were planned from occurring.



The 2021 Class that submitted the most fire escape plans was:

Ms. Leuze's Grade 4 class. Congratulations!

The 2021 individual plan winners were:

Mrs. Tobin - Noah C.

Ms. Leuze - Lily B

Mrs. Coonce - Hannah L.

Ms. Cotelo – Layla

Mr. Schwab - Caylin

Ms. Skarra - Emily

Ms. Bauer - Hailey W.

Mrs. Katnich – Smith

Mrs. Murray – Ainsley

Home Safety Program

In partnership with the BC Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Fire Chiefs Association of BC, and the Fire Prevention Officers Association of BC, a summer awareness campaign was conducted to give valuable information to residents about fire safety in and around the home. Although home visits were not conducted in the traditional means due to the pandemic restrictions at the time, staff still managed to visit 186 homes across Tumbler Ridge and give out over 70 smoke alarms!



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Junior Canadian Rangers

In 2021, the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department once again welcomed the local Junior Canadian Ranger Patrol to attend a Wednesday night practice to learn about firefighting. Rangers participated in a fire safety presentation, as well as learned about the tools and equipment firefighter's use and even had the opportunity to try on some firefighter gear to see what it feels like with all that extra weight.



Story Time Reading

Children are the future. Taking the opportunity to build a relationship with young people is fundamental in the reduction of risk and improved safety of our community. As COVID-19 restriction permitted, members of the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department took an opportunity to sit down and read a story about the fire department to some of our local pre-school students.



High School Student Fire Extinguisher Training

At the request of the ADST/Skills & Trades teacher, Mr. House, members of the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department conducted an afternoon of extinguisher field training to provide the opportunity for students to take what they had learned in their classes and put it into practical application.



Elementary School Cool Down

Near the end of the 2021 school year, the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department took the opportunity to set up a portable monitor for students to enjoy and celebrate the coming of summer break.



BC Wildfire Service & TRFD Appreciation Event

After a long and stressful wildfire season, members of the BC Wildfire Service and BC Conservation Service, along with Tumbler Ridge Fire Department and District of Tumbler Ridge personnel, held an appreciation event at the High School. Smoke jumpers dropped in for a visit and brought the newly adopted FireSmart mascot, Ember, too! Many members of the public dropped by with cards and goodies to show how truly thankful they were for all the hard work that everyone put in over the summer months!



Skate Park Winter Clean Up



During the spring of each year, members of the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department wash down the Community Skate Park to remove all the dirt and debris deposited over the long winter season. This activity helps make the area safer for its users, big or small, in hopes of preventing needless accidents from occurring. (Photo Credit: Tumbler Ridgelines)

Cops for Cancer

In 2021, a local RCMP member, Constable Thomas Peters, participated in Cops for Cancer, Tour de North and unofficially challenged our Fire Chief to pedal a stationary bike alongside him to raise funds for the cause. Police and Fire personnel all over the globe have long since had a friendly rivalry, and this was no exception! Both pedaled in their dress uniforms for 4 hours raising \$1500 towards Constables Peters goal.



BC Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) Program



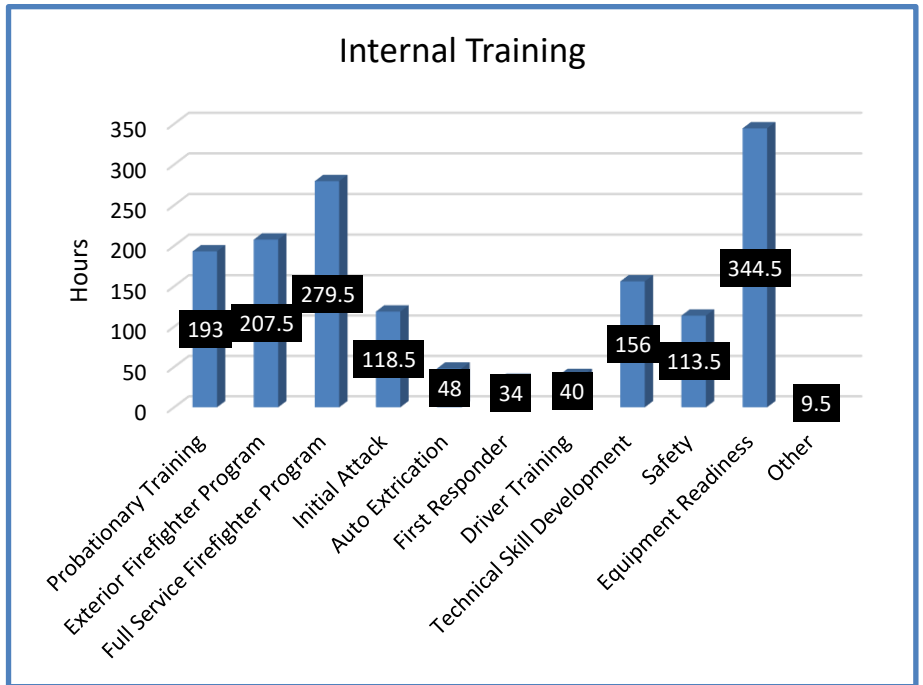
The District of Tumbler Ridge, through the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department and the BCEHS PAD's Program, monitors and maintains 11 public access Automated External Defibrillators (AED) throughout many of the District owned buildings in the community. This ensures that when the public is in or near any of our buildings, a lifesaving device is readily available for use when it counts the most!



FIREFIGHTER TRAINING

Company level training hours

Fire Department members train weekly to learn new skills and maintain existing disciplines. These internal training sessions typically range from 2 to 3 hours every Wednesday evening with an optional Friday morning to allow for personnel who may work shift work to attend. In 2021, the combined training time of the whole department was 1481 hours consisting of a variety of subjects. The training that the Tumbler Ridge Fire Department conducts on an annual basis is in adherence with the *BC Structural Firefighter Competency and Training Playbook*.



External training courses

In 2021, members of the department attended several external training courses. While most were conducted virtually, these courses focused on learning new skills, promotional development and best practices in the fire service.

2021 EXTERNAL TRAINING COURSES	
COURSE	TYPE / SUBJECT
Air Brakes	Driver/Operator
Elevator Rescue	Rescue
BC First Responder Mental Health	Health & Safety
Hazmat Awareness - JIBC	Fire Suppression
Incident Command Systems 200 - JIBC	Fire Suppression
Incident Command Systems 400 - JIBC	Fire Suppression
Intro to Emergency Management Exercise Design - JIBC	Emergency Management
Intro to Business Continuity - JIBC	Emergency Management
Psychological Resilience in Disasters - JIBC	Emergency Management
Developing Emergency Management Plans - JIBC	Emergency Management
Community Evacuations - JIBC	Emergency Management
EOC Operations - JIBC	Emergency Management
Community Recovery Planning - JIBC	Emergency Management
EOC Planning - JIBC	Emergency Management
EOC Logistics - JIBC	Emergency Management
Developing Emergency Preparedness Programs - JIBC	Emergency Management
WETT Code Compliance, Wood Burning & Site Basic	WETT Inspector

Mutual Aid Training – Conuma Resources

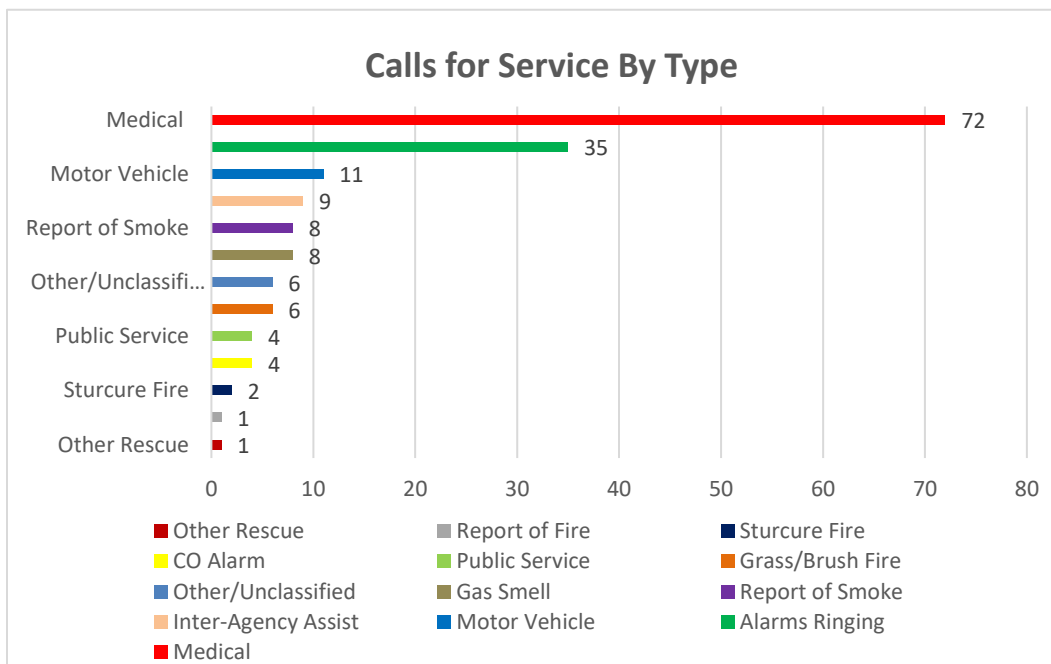
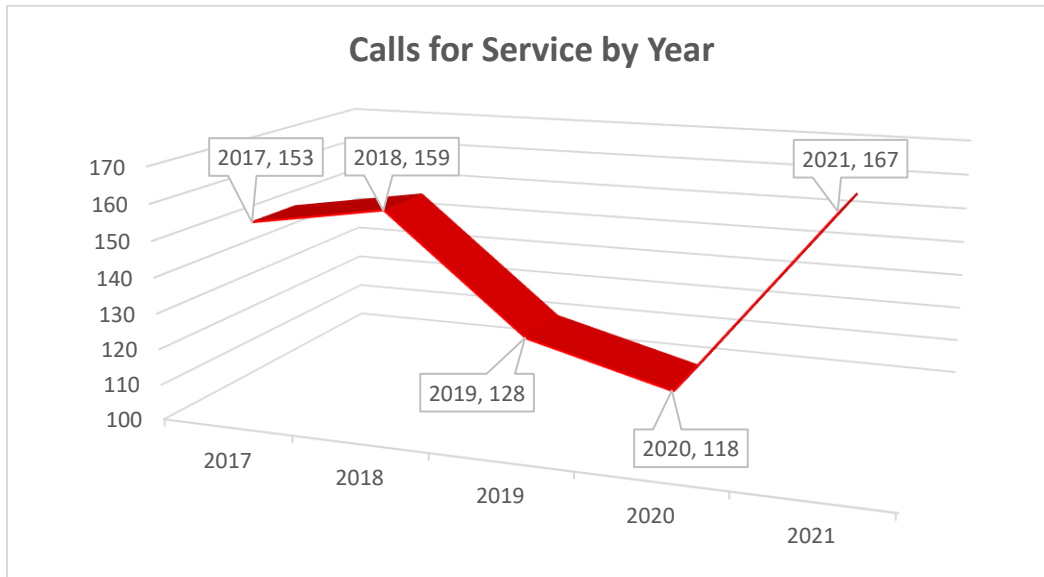
In 2021, members of the department facilitated fire and smoke training for Conuma Resources Emergency Response Teams in hopes of building a mutual aid relationship between industry and the community as well as giving the team a different perspective. Various skills are touched upon during these training days including fire suppression, search techniques, and water supply.



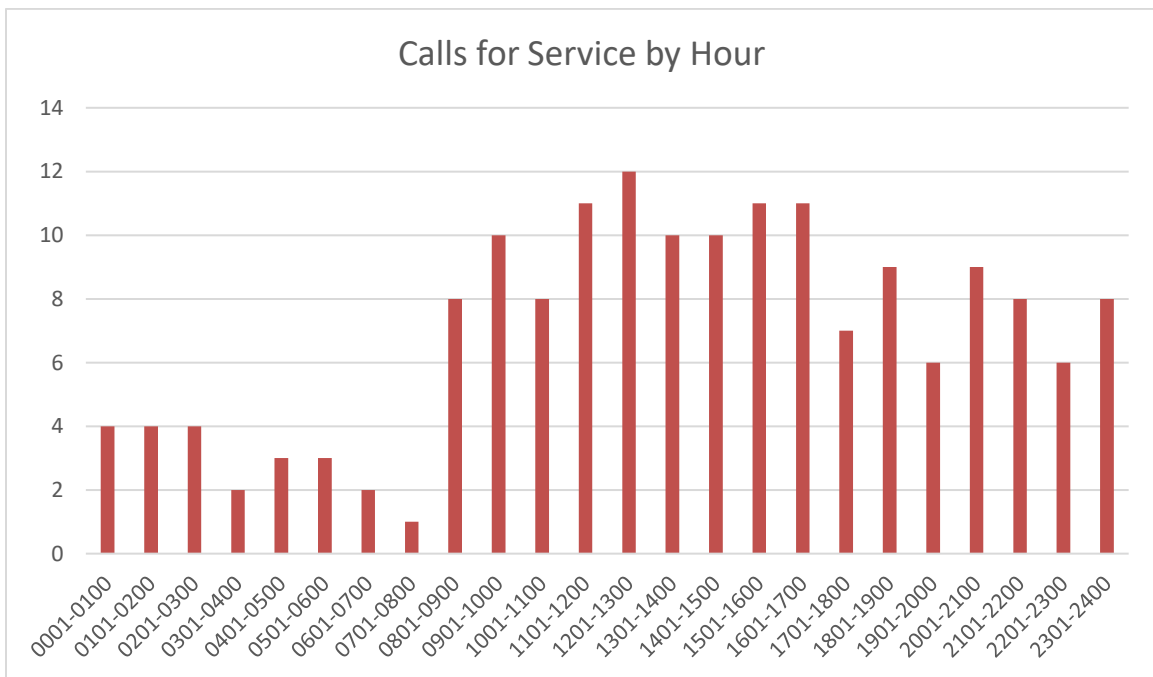
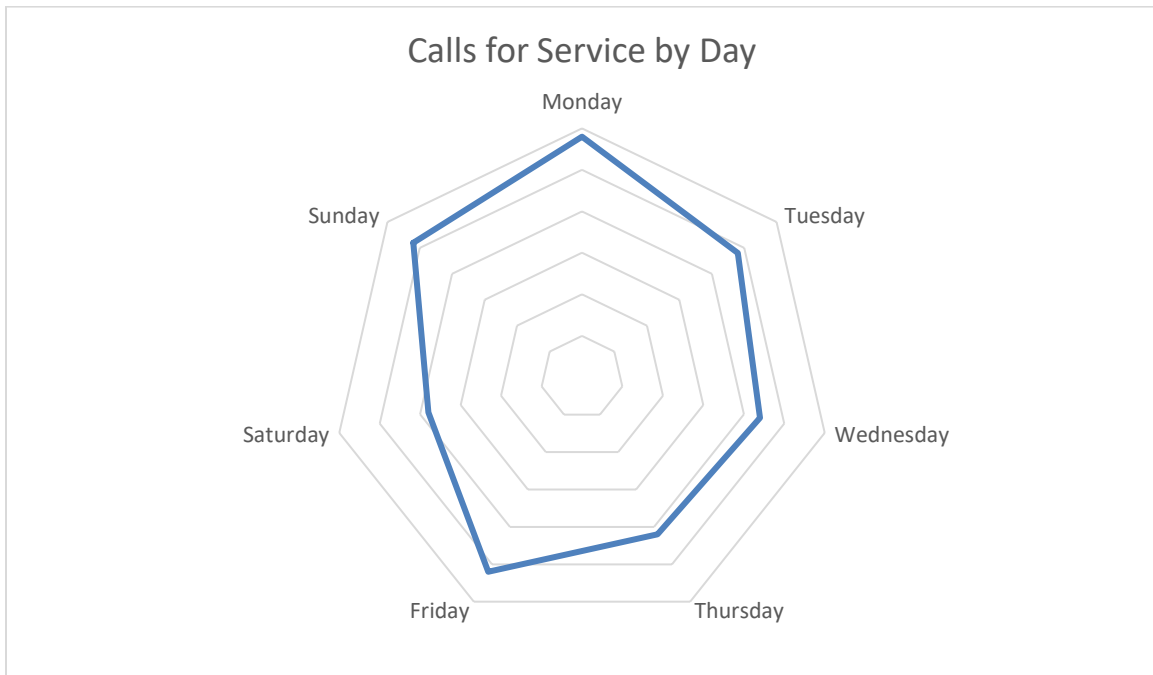
OPERATIONAL RESPONSES

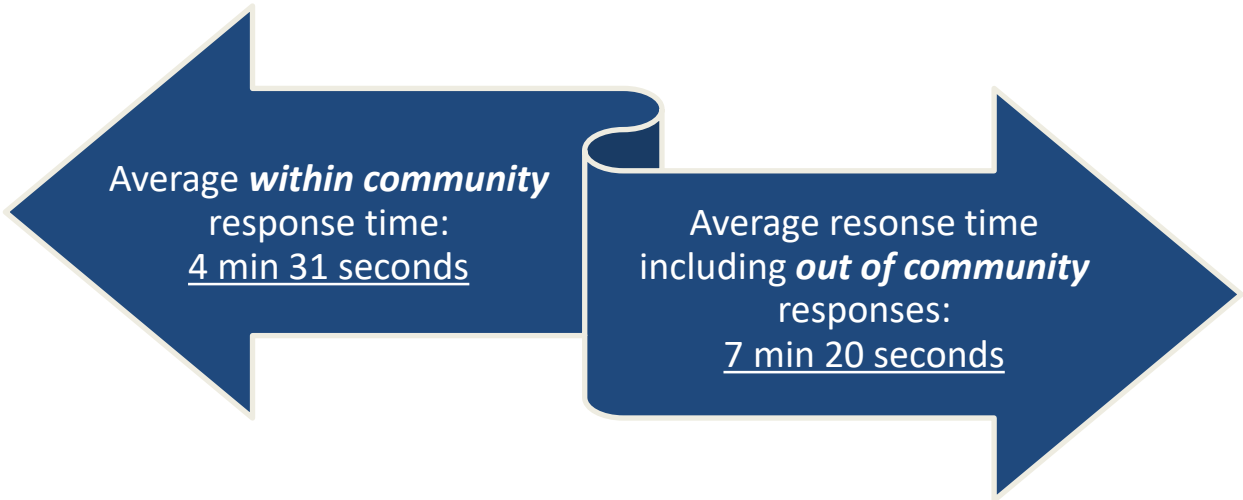
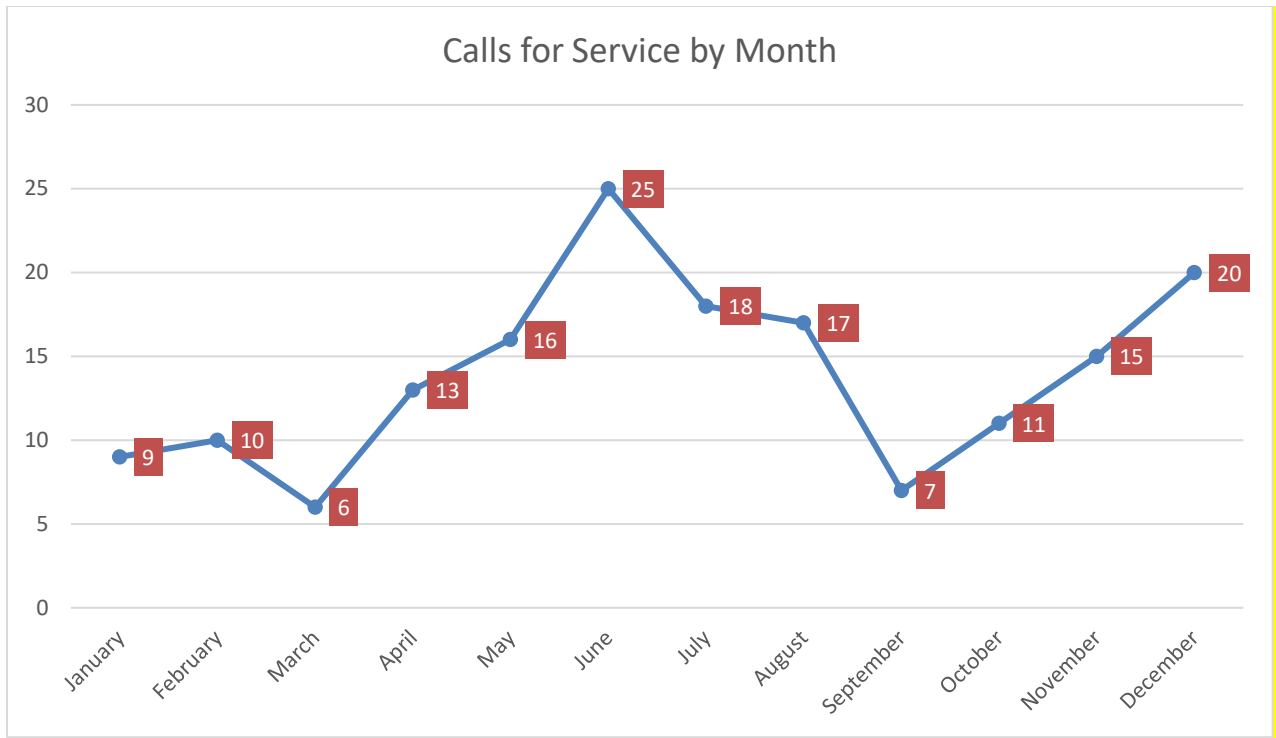
Statistics

The department provides a wide range of emergency and non-emergency services to the citizens of Tumbler Ridge. The following data provides a brief overview of these activities. In 2021, the department experienced a 42 % increase to the overall calls of service from 2020. This increase is due largely in part to a return to a pre-pandemic British Columbia Emergency Health Service medical priority dispatch system and clinical response model.



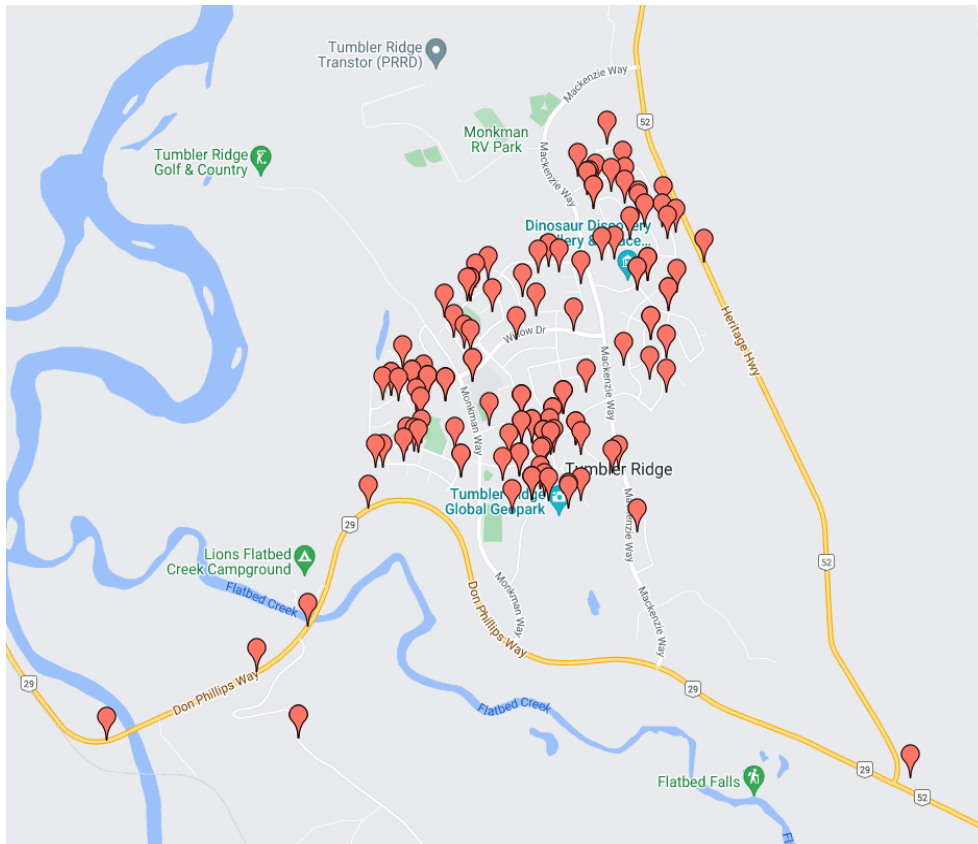
Calls for service can happen at any time of the day, and any day of the week. The Tumbler Ridge Fire Department retains statistical data for every call for service, emergency or non-emergent, as a means to establish trend data for the community and the services provided by the Fire Department.





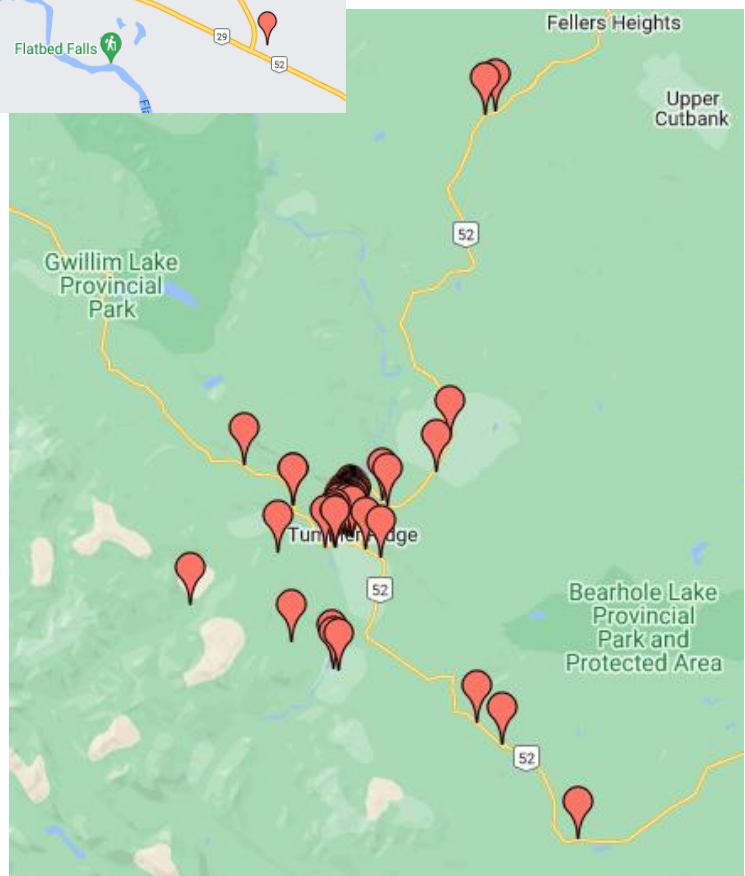
Response Locations

As previously described, the fire department responds to a variety of events that range from alarms, fires/smoke, medical first response, motor vehicle incidents, public assists and assisting other agencies. The following two maps depict both in community and out of community response locations.



Areas where Tumbler Ridge Fire Rescue services have been delivered within our community.

The department also partners with other agencies such as Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and the BC Wildfire Service for the provision of services outside the municipal boundaries. These services include Road Rescue and Initial Response to some reports of brush fires or smoke. Cost recovery through EMBC for road rescues outside of the municipal boundary in 2021 was \$2,561.00.



Areas showing out of town responses in 2021

FIRE APPARATUS



Engine 5

2003 Hub Triple Combination Pumper
Chassis: American LaFrance Metropolitan

1750 LPM Pump

Water Capacity: 3000 Litre



Rescue 6

2008 Hub Rescue Truck
Chassis : GMC C5500 Top-kick

18 hp CET Pump

Water Capacity: 900 Litres (Mixed water/foam)



Ladder 7

2016 Smeal UT 100 Aerial
Chassis: Spartan Metro Star

2450 LPM Pump

Water Capacity: 1500 Litres



Squad 4

1997 Chevrolet Cheyenne Crew Cab 4X4
ITB Wildland box/skid unit

18 hp Darley Pump

Water Capacity: 600 Litres



Command 1

2013 Chevrolet 2500HD 4X4 (replaced Fall 2021)

2021 Ford F150 4X4



2022 GOALS

The fire department administration has developed several goals for the 2022 calendar year:

1. Present Council with a Fire Department Level of Service Policy for their consideration.
2. Complete the Fire Hall/Training Facility Assessment Study and present options to Council for their consideration.
3. Continue with Fire Prevention initiatives with a focus on expanding the program to including the topic of FireSmart and other potential risks to the community.
4. Focus on recruitment and retention of Paid-on Call Firefighters including the formation of a volunteer sector working group.

The Tumbler Ridge Fire Department needs people just like you to help keep our community safe - no experience necessary!

If you are interested in serving your community in a way like no other, please contact the fire hall to arrange a tour today!



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