



TOWN OF MINTO

MEETING DATE: October 1, 2024
REPORT TO: Mayor and Council
SERVICE AREA: Fire
SUBJECT: FIRE 2024-006 Open Air Burning By-Law Update

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council of the Town of Minto hereby receives report FIRE 2024-006 regarding the Open-Air Burning By-Law Update, prepared by the Fire Services Management Team, for information purposes;

AND FURTHER THAT the Council of the Town of Minto pass a by-law in open session adopting the new Open Air Burning By-Law effective January 1, 2025 and repeals by-law 2015-54 as of January 1, 2025.

BACKGROUND

The open-air burning by-law was last updated in 2015. Many things have changed in ten years and the by-law required some updating. As well, the Fire Services Management Team is working to standardize the three by-laws between the three municipalities for a more uniformed approach.

COMMENTS:

Changes in the new by-law are minor in nature. Permits are now going to be valid for 1 month as opposed to one week. After the month, you will need to reapply if necessary for another permit. The distances between the burns and structures have been slightly changed to match the other municipalities. As well, some definitions were added and others changed to reflect the current times. The major change will be the implementation of the new software which will alleviate some of the work off of the front counter staff.

Fire management staff are proceeding with implementing a new software that has been used by other municipalities for a few years. This specialized software called burnpermits.com allows for residents to go online and fill out the proper sections to obtain their own permit with no staff time needed. It will allow a more convenient method for residents to complete the process. For fire department staff, it will allow us a more efficient method to track the permits and keep data on open air burning. The new software will also be on the tablets in each of our fire trucks allowing staff to look for permits when called to an area for an incident. Currently, we have pieces of paper that are faxed to each station and don't always reach responding personnel.

Fire Management staff through the Joint Fire Services Advisory Committee had considered charging a small fee for each permit but decided to take the next year or two to educate the public about the new by-law and the new software process. Once both are implemented and understood, we can reevaluate the fee in the future.

The cost of the software will be shared across the three municipalities, saving each some funds. It is another example of joint purchasing to realize savings.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

Cost of the software is approximately \$500 per department annually.

STRATEGIC PLAN

N/A

PREPARED BY: Chris Harrow, Director of Fire Services

RECOMMENDED BY: Gregg Furtney, Chief Administrative Officer