

Cold Lake Fire-Rescue



Firefighter Recruitment

Information and Application

Contents

Introduction	3
History of CLFR.....	3
Our Service.....	3
Our Firefighters	3
Our Response.....	3
The Nature of the Business.....	4
What are the benefits of being a volunteer firefighter?	4
What does CLFR provide in return for my volunteer time?	5
What will be expected of me as a volunteer firefighter?	5
Self-Evaluation Questionnaire.....	5
About the Job.....	6
What a Volunteer Firefighter Does	6
Always Improving.....	7
Drop In.....	7
Joining Cold Lake Fire-Rescue	7
Minimum Requirements for Application:	7
The process.....	8

Introduction

Participation as a member of Cold Lake Fire-Rescue (CLFR) brings personal rewards, satisfaction, raises self-esteem and provides a tremendous sense of accomplishment for a job well done. Your involvement will provide both your community and surrounding areas with a valuable service that positively influences the entire community.

Service with Cold Lake Fire-Rescue requires a serious commitment. Your decision to apply should not be taken lightly. This resource attempts to provide some background information to assist in making that decision.

Once you understand what is involved in being a member of a Fire Service, we hope you will find you are able to make the commitment that our community requires. The service provided by firefighters is truly valuable to the citizens of our municipalities and we hope that you are able to contribute to our public safety.

History of CLFR

Cold Lake Fire-Rescue was created via bylaw in 1998 by amalgamation of the former Grand Centre and Cold Lake fire departments that had served the communities for many years. Since this time, the service has continued to increase the level and quality of service to the community we serve.

Our Service

Cold Lake Fire-Rescue (CLFR) serves the City of Cold Lake, a large portion of the Municipal District of Bonnyville, Cold Lake First Nations, Elizabeth Metis Settlement, and a portion of the Rural Municipality of Beaver River (Saskatchewan).

Cold Lake Fire-Rescue has four fulltime personnel and sixty (63) paid on call officers and firefighters. The service operates from two fire stations; the Lake District Station and the Downtown District Station.

CLFR operates fourteen (14) pieces of emergency apparatus. This includes one (1) Aerial Ladder, five (5) Pumpers, one (1) Medium Rescue, one (1) Water Tender, two (2) Rescue Boats, one (1) HAZMAT trailer, two (2) Duty Officer's/Rapid Response vehicles, and one (1) command vehicle.

Our Firefighters

Our firefighters are comprehensively trained in fire and rescue techniques through in-house and extension course delivery and weekly skills maintenance training. Professional certification is achieved through the Alberta Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC).

Our many volunteers come from a diverse range of backgrounds. From mechanics to teachers, engineers to hockey moms and everything in between! Some of our former members have moved on and established full time fire service careers.

The Cold Lake Fire-Rescue Service is a community based organization. We promote and support our local community and the various groups within it. By participating in local events and partnering with other organizations we are provided the opportunity to thank the community for their strong support and commitment to our service.

Our Response

As with most paid on call fire services, CLFR employs a notification system. Our 911 Call Answer provider is located outside of our City limits. Emergency calls are received and processed there and emergency resources are dispatched accordingly.

CLFR Members are notified via audible pagers on a 24/7 basis with a text message backup. Each station is trained and equipped for response to many types of incidents, ranging from structure and wildland fires, motor vehicle collisions, ice and water rescues, farm and machinery incidents, aircraft crashes, and medical assists.

The responding resources are determined by the dispatch information and the type, severity, and location of the incident. CLFR provides coverage to approximately 2500 square kilometers and responds to approximately 330 incidents annually.

The Nature of the Business

Over the years, the fire service has evolved into a public safety agency providing highly technical and diverse services. The public has come to rely on the Fire Service as the “first responder” not only when life and property are threatened by fire, man-made and natural disasters, but for seemingly smaller problems as well.

Firefighting is a diverse and challenging profession. It is this diversity that inspires most men and women to enter the service, both as volunteers and career employees. Imagine having to train to prepare yourself to cope with situations, which range from structure fires, motor vehicle collisions, hazardous chemical spills, heart attacks, and almost any imaginable emergency situation in between.

This diversity coupled with the fact that your skills may be needed at any time of day, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances makes our contribution to the profession very personally rewarding.

This type of work is not for everyone. You need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. Our service is one which calls on its member to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments not to mention operate under stressful and emotional circumstances.

The firefighter’s working life and training is geared to responding safely and effectively to emergency calls, regardless of weather conditions or the time of day or night. Every time firefighters are called to the scene of an emergency they must be prepared to deploy each and every skill in which they have been trained. When they arrive at an incident as part of a team under command, they may individually have to absorb a great deal of information rapidly and apply the skills they have learned in conditions which will often be extremely dangerous and confusing.

What are the benefits of being a volunteer firefighter?

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from being involved in a Fire Service are often beyond description. There is a sense of accomplishment after controlling a structure fire, extricating a patient, compassion for loss, and fulfillment in teaching fire safety. The list could go on.

A common image of the Fire Service is naturally one of firefighters turning out in fire apparatus and fighting fires. It is true, of course, that some of the work involves work at fires, but the role of the Service is much wider and the needs of the community, for an emergency service, much more varied.

The service responds to all emergency calls from the public for assistance, primarily to protect life and save injury to individuals, but also to prevent and restrict damage to property. Many emergency calls, however, are not to fires, but to incidents where members of the community are trapped in vehicles following motor vehicle collisions, trapped in machinery, or trapped in less life threatening circumstances, as well as being called to deal with medical emergencies and toxic spills.

What does CLFR provide in return for my time?

- Being on a team, esprit du corp.
- Personal reward, excitement, fun
- Serving your community
- Developmental opportunities
- Free NFPA structured training leading to international certification
- Free medical first responder training

What will be expected of me as a firefighter?

To ensure that all members of the Fire Service are prepared to deliver the best level of services required, training standards have been developed to provide each member with the needed skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to deliver fire and emergency services to the citizens of the municipality.

- On average, 15-20 hours per **month** of training, emergency responses, meetings
- New recruits successfully complete Entry Level Firefighting Course or equivalent to position
- Volunteer firefighters work in stressful and emotional circumstances and conditions.

Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

Use these questions to help decide if firefighting is a choice for you.

Ask yourself:

- ✓ Does my lifestyle support ethical and responsible choices and actions?
- ✓ Does my lifestyle align itself with the Fire Services values of pride, professionalism, teamwork, and respect?
- ✓ Am I prepared to maintain professionalism in my behaviour (both online and in person) on and off duty?
- ✓ Do I treat all people with respect, dignity and professionalism regardless of race, creed, gender or beliefs?
- ✓ Do I have a strong commitment to customer service and a motivation to serve the public?
- ✓ Am I actively supporting my community for the benefit of others?
- ✓ Do I actively engage myself in a problem solving capacity? Do I make sound judgments and decisions?
- ✓ Have I adopted and do I maintain physical fitness as a way of life?
- ✓ Am I physically able to perform firefighter job tasks?
- ✓ Can I work for extended periods of time under difficult and strenuous conditions?
- ✓ Am I free of phobias relating to height, confined spaces and able to maneuver with limited or no visibility?
- ✓ Am I comfortable using different hand/power tools and technical equipment?
- ✓ Can I disengage from emotional suffering, tragedy or loss of life in order to complete essential job tasks?
- ✓ Do I have a support system in place for debriefing and stress relief?
- ✓ Have I considered the impact random emergency work and training may have on my family environment?
- ✓ Is my family aware of the time demands that I would be under during recruit training?
- ✓ Am I able to and do I take steps to maintain a positive attitude?
- ✓ Am I able to follow and carry out complex oral and written instructions?
- ✓ Do I have a thirst for life-long learning?
- ✓ Do I meet and am I prepared to maintain the minimum qualifications?

About the Job

The two basic purposes of a public fire service are, firstly to prevent fire or emergencies from occurring. This is done through fire prevention inspections, fire safety education, and code enforcement programs. Secondly, we are here to prepare ourselves to control fire or emergencies should prevention not prevail. This is done through education, training, pre-incident planning, more training, state of the art equipment and even more training.

The first few years of your time as a firefighter will be demanding both physically and mentally. Initially, you will be on probation and be expected to absorb a wide range of information and to demonstrate your technical and practical skills.

In order to function effectively in emergencies every firefighter's pre-eminent characteristics should be:

- empathy and sympathy towards victims of emergencies
- ability to carry on in what may occasionally be emotionally harrowing circumstances
- courage,
- physical strength,
- the capacity for rapid, intense and sustained effort,
- an unquestioning acceptance of orders at emergencies
- capacity to use initiative when alone,
- the skilled technician's complete and automatic familiarity with the equipment and tools of the profession
- a practical understanding of the basis of a wide range of subjects necessary to anticipate and overcome hazards

What a Volunteer Firefighter Does

The Volunteer firefighter performs firefighting duties and other related work as required. This is manual work of a hazardous nature involving the fighting of fires, salvage, rescue work, and first aid. Firefighters may be required to make decisions and work without supervision until an Officer arrives at the scene.

- Employs Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to enter and work in Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmospheres and situations
- Enters burning or contaminated buildings, structures, and other areas to perform rescues and/or fight fires while wearing required clothing and safety equipment.
- Handles fire hoses and directs fire streams.
- Operates a pressure pump as assigned.
- Drives fire apparatus as assigned.
- Carries, puts up and climbs ladder.
- Operates rescue equipment.
- Performs salvage work at fire and emergency scenes.
- Performs ventilation by making openings in buildings, using exhaust fans or fog streams.
- Provides first aid to the injured.

Always Improving

Technological developments in every dimension of our lives and new hazards have to be matched by improvements in firefighting techniques and equipment. In addition for Fire Officers, there are also continuing and important managerial developments and responsibilities. This is why the Fire Service needs people of ability to command the firefighters of the future.

A reasonable standard of education is desirable so that you can assimilate the technical work involved in today's service. The role of a modern firefighter is very challenging and rewarding and individuals are required to display determination, physical stamina and discipline in stressful situations.

Drop In

Drop by a station on a Tuesday night just before 7:00 p.m. CLFR firefighter's train every Tuesday evening, so this is the best time to be sure of finding a firefighter/officer to show you around and answer questions.

Joining Cold Lake Fire-Rescue

The bottom line in our business is measured by the prevention and reduction of loss of life, pain and suffering, and property damage that we have in our service. We are here and prepared for one reason and that is to provide service to the residents of our communities.

If you feel you have what it takes to meet the challenges of our business, we welcome to apply to join us.

Minimum Requirements for Application:

1. Valid Class 5 Driver's License – An Airbrake endorsement will be provided if needed.
2. Proficient in English.
3. Insurable – (under the City's fleet policy).
4. No Criminal Record (with occupational relevance) for which a pardon has not been granted.
5. Permanent Residency in the applicable station area.
6. A means of transportation to respond to alarms.
7. Employer Waiver (Permission from Employer to participate).

The process

Overall, Cold Lake Fire-Rescue has been fortunate to maintain a waiting list for many years. It is a good problem to have. The steps are outlined as follows.

1. **Application:** The first step is submitting a completed legible application. This application will be held on file. Recruit class intakes are made based on the needs of the fire service. The average intake is one recruit class (generally in the fall), and occasionally we have two intakes a year. Therefore the length of time on the waiting list is variable, depending mainly on the time of application in relation to the time of the next recruit class. Note: time on the list is not associated with quality of application, on time submitted.
2. **Preliminary Screening Assessment:** Candidates who successfully complete and file an application will be assessed against established criteria to evaluate their circumstances and potential knowledge, skills, and abilities to meeting the needs of Cold Lake Fire-Rescue. Some of the items assessed are residency, daytime response capability, work schedule, firefighter training, other safety training, and previous experience. Note: No previous training or experience is necessary however the application does have to meet the arbitrary minimum screening criteria.
3. **Interview:** Candidates who successfully pass the Preliminary Screening Assessment will be invited to attend an interview. The interview panel will consist of several CLFR Officers who will ask several behavioural and situational questions. This is a competency-based interview designed to allow you to draw on examples from your past work or volunteer experience to demonstrate that you possess the required skills to be a volunteer firefighter. Competencies measured through this process may include: communication; customer service; stress management; teamwork and cooperation; values and ethics; and valuing diversity.
4. **ELFF Training:** Candidates who successfully complete the interview will be extended an invitation to the Entry Level Firefighting Course and to complete the application documentation.
 - a. to provide a current driver's abstract,
 - b. a current Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check.
5. **Probationary Period:** Candidates who successfully complete the ELFF course are extended a conditional offer of employment and will be on probation nominally for 6 months.

Applicants who are found to be ineligible at any stage of the competition will not be further considered. Provision of inaccurate, untrue or misleading information will lead to disqualification from the competition, withdrawal of employment offer or dismissal.