

New agreement with Blackfalds Fire Department looks to decrease response times

A new group of firefighters will begin responding to emergency situations in the areas of Lacombe County surrounding the Town of Blackfalds between Highway 2 and RR 27-1 on the east and west, and the Blindman River and Highway 597 beginning January 9, 2007.

“Currently, the Lacombe Fire Department is responsible for providing fire protection and emergency response service in this area,” said Tim Timmons, Corporate Services Manager for Lacombe County. “And while the level of service has been excellent, given the closer proximity of the Blackfalds Fire Hall to the response area, response times to incidents will likely decrease.”

The agreement is a win-win situation for both parties. Steve Woodrow, Fire Chief for the Blackfalds volunteer Fire Department stated that the additional response areas will provide more activity for the Blackfalds Fire Department.

With 25 volunteer firefighters as of January 1, 2007, the department currently responds to approximately 33 calls per year. “I don’t expect the number to increase a lot with the new service area, but it’s hard to say because it’s an expansion in more than one direction. I wouldn’t be surprised to see an additional five to seven calls.”

The agreement has been in the works for quite some time. At a joint meeting between the Town of Blackfalds and Lacombe County in November 2005, both parties stated their consensus to enter into an agreement for the Blackfalds Fire Department to provide fire protection and emergency response service for the County in an area near the Town.

Based on the meetings and discussions with officials from the Town of Blackfalds over the past several months, County Administration developed a draft agreement, which was recently approved by both Councils.

Anyone requiring emergency response services should continue to call 9-1-1.