



Report to Council

Department: Community Services
Division: Fire and Rescue Services
Date: May 2, 2022
Prepared by: Richard J Arnel, Fire Chief
Report Number: Fire and Rescue Services-2022-03
Subject: Firefighter Provincial Certification
Number of Pages: 13 Pages

Recommendation(s)

That Fire and Rescue Services-2022-02 entitled Firefighter Provincial Certification prepared by Richard Arnel dated May 2, be received for Council information.

Purpose

To provide council an update on the new regulations under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA) related to new requirements for mandatory training and certification for firefighters

Background and Discussion

In April 2013, the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) announced that Ontario would adopt the National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualifications (NFPA Pro-Qual) Standards. In January 2017 the Ministry established a Provincial Fire Safety Technical Table to examine current and emerging fire safety challenges and opportunities, identify priorities for action and support the development of evidence-based

recommendations that will enhance fire safety in Ontario. Its goals were to review new and emerging challenges in fire safety, with a view to identify opportunities to enhance delivery in Ontario, such as:

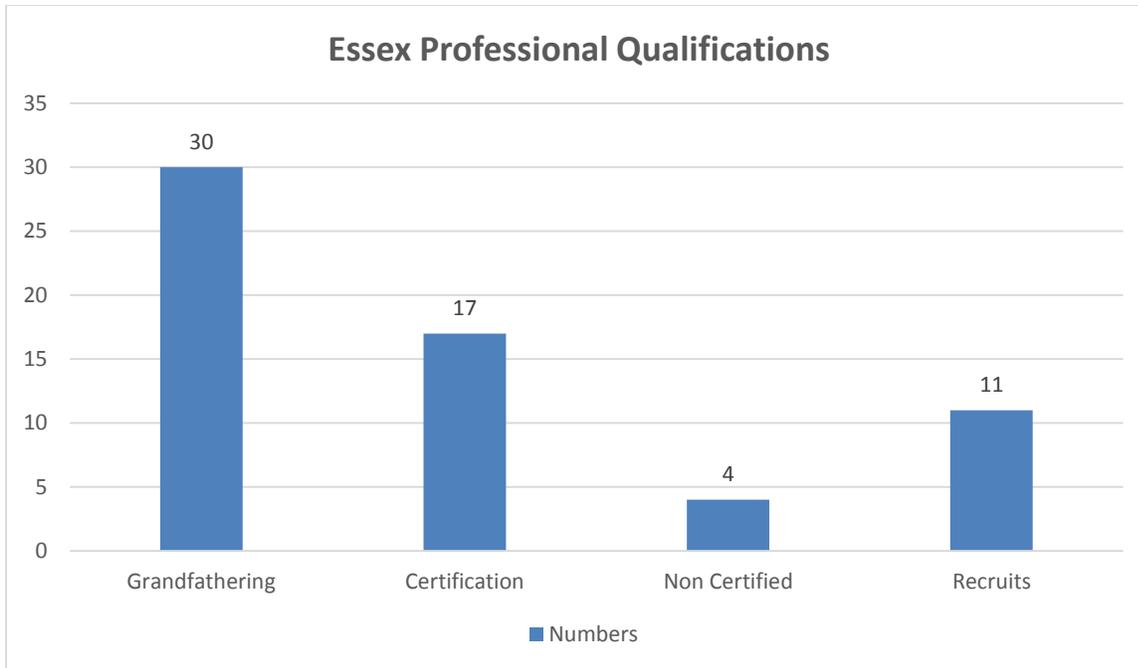
- Firefighter training and professionalism (e.g. identification of specialized knowledge requirements and core competencies);
- Public education and prevention measures, including community risk assessments;
- Provincial standards for fire services, such as fire dispatch.

Ontario regulation 379/18 came into effect May 8th, 2018 and was revoked on October 5th, 2018 with the intent to upgrade the regulation and return with a new model and revised regulation.

The revision of O. Reg 379/18 has now been updated to *O. Reg. 343/22: Firefighter Certification* was signed into legislation on April 11, 2022 and filed on April 14, 2022.

The new legislation identifies the fire protection service that the municipality is providing, and sets out the minimum training certification standard that the fire service needs to provide that service. This legislation is providing municipalities until July 01, 2026 to determine the level of service provided by the municipality and train firefighters to that appropriate level of service. Municipalities that offer technical rescue operations are to be certified by July 01, 2028; this would include EFRS Ice/Water Rescue team.

Essex Fire administration has put together the following chart to provide an overview of the status of training of Essex Fire and Rescue. Currently, there are sixty-two (62) suppression personnel and the breakdown of how Essex Fire and Rescue firefighters meet this legislation.



The above chart shows our current firefighters NFPA 1001 Levels I & II compliance, with 17 Firefighters certified (including 30 who are grandfathered, and four that are not certified). 11 new recruits will be writing their exams and doing practical testing on April 30, 2022, and May 1, 2022, with the anticipation of these firefighters becoming certified upon completion of the provincial testing, pending all recruits pass their exams, Essex Fire and Rescue firefighters will be 94% certified/grandfathered to NFPA 1001 II standard.

In February of 2020 the municipality updated the Establishing and Regulating (E & R) By-Law #2012 and this document sets out Council's approved services provided by Essex Fire and Rescue. The services outlined in the E & R By-Law has established that Essex Fire and Rescue Services would provide Firefighter suppression operations that enter the interior of the building and can perform rescue, automobile extrication rescue and operations-level hazardous materials response.

Essex Fire and Rescue Services will be considered a full-service fire department under the new legislation, and all firefighters excluding four are certified to this standard and able to perform

these duties. The four firefighters will be provided an opportunity to complete this training if they choose to do so by July 1st, 2026 to be able to obtain certification.

In this regulation, all Team Lead's (Captain, District Chief positions), must be certified to NFPA 1021 I – Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications. By the end of 2022 Captain's will be certified to NFPA 1021 I – the Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications. The District Chiefs will be attending a NFPA 1021 II (Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications) course in November of 2022 which means that our staff will exceed the current standard required.

EFRS Ice-Water rescue team has been training to NFPA 1006 standard and are all currently trained to Technician Level in several disciplines, such as Ice Water Rescue and Surface Water Rescue. In addition, the Deputy Chief is trained for Swift Water Rescue. This training will continue with the entire team to be certified under NFPA 1006 "Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Qualification" by the July 1st, 2028, date to comply with the legislation.

The EFRS current training program has provided the Town of Essex with firefighters that meet the legislated requirements, and any new candidates will be obtaining their certification as a condition of their employment.

The risk associated with proposed regulatory amendments is low. Anecdotally, the implantation of standard certification should reduce the liability risks. EFRS has been committed to training programs in preparation for this new legislation which means minimal impact to current training and operations.

Financial Impact

Fire Administration has reviewed the new legislation and there are sufficient funds in the current operating training budget to continue to train and certify firefighters to meet the

necessary requirements as set out in our Establishing and Regulating By-Law and the new legislation.

Consultations

Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs

Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.
- Improve the Town's capacity to meet the ongoing and future service needs of its citizens while ensuring the corporation is resilient in the face of unanticipated changes or disruptions.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Firefighter Provincial Certification - Fire and Rescue Services-2022-03.docx
Attachments:	- O.Reg. 343-22.doc
Final Approval Date:	Apr 25, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services - Apr 25, 2022 - 5:25 PM



Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer - Apr 25, 2022 - 5:26 PM