

NOTICE – DESERT COVE RESIDENTS RE: FIRE PROTECTION

The Okanagan Indian Band has been providing Fire and Emergency Medical service to Desert Cove residents for many years and on average their emergency vehicles respond to Desert Cove once per week. These services have been provided to Desert Cove residents at no charge for many years.

In other jurisdictions the Provincial Property Tax Authority contracts with the municipality to collect a fee for emergency fire services, and then adds an appropriate charge to the Property Tax bill for the residents receiving the benefit of the service. Municipalities in the North Okanagan Regional District charge an average of approximately \$40 per month to residents for fire service. However, since the Band's fire hall is on Band land the taxation authority is unable to enter into a contract with the Band for a taxable fee. The Band must therefore collect the fee directly from the residents receiving the service.

The Okanagan Indian Band has recently undertaken a program to upgrade their Volunteer Department that will require a significant financial outlay. The Band's fire hall can no longer continue to provide Desert Cove residents with emergency fire service without compensation. They will require Desert Cove to enter into a Fire Service Agreement that will require Desert Cove residents to pay for the fire coverage just as all residents in B.C. municipalities do.

We should know more details including the approximate cost to residents as we continue with the ongoing negotiations with the Okanagan Indian Band.

Thank you.

Desert Cove Management