



# Okanagan Indian Band

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January 10, 2023

To whom it may concern:

**RE: Fire Protection Services Update**

To the Residents of Desert Cove,

I am writing to you today to provide you with an overview of the Okanagan Indian Band Fire Department activities in 2021/2022.

As you are well aware, 2021 was a challenging year for the OKIB Fire Department, and the community as a whole, when the White Rock Lake Fire roared into our community, our team worked tirelessly to fight the fire back, saving hundreds of structures in the process. However, several homes and a well-established business were lost to the fire. The Fire Department had also lost several pieces of instrumental equipment during the fight. We are grateful that ISC (Indigenous Services Canada) had replaced the equipment we lost during the fire.

The OKIB Fire Department has come a long way since our one bay, one truck hall. Over the last two years we have improved substantially. The majority of our team are NFPA 1001 trained (Professional Firefighter Standard) They have all completed and are trained to an Emergency Medical Assistant level, formally known as "First Responder 3". Much of the equipment in the Fire Department has been replaced and upgraded and is in compliance with the Fire Underwriters requirements. We currently have five apparatus ready to respond in the event of a fire or medical emergency and twenty-five active members.

Recently OKIB has approved and is implementing the Fire Services Bylaw and in that Bylaw, all non-member residents of OKIB will be paying for Fire Protection starting in 2023.

Although we receive monies from a few of the developments at the OKIB, the Band still subsidizes the Fire Department. As you are aware, the cost of running and maintaining a fire department can become quite high.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for supporting our team over the years. They work very hard and all hours of the day to ensure you receive the best quality of service.

Sincerely,

Garett Lawrence  
Fire Department Operations Manager