

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the fire department have to purchase a new fire engine?

Each fire department within the RDCK is required to have a fire engine and water tender, with each apparatus being less than 25 years old and meeting specific National Fire Protection Association, Underwriters Laboratories of Canada and Fire Underwriters requirements. The fire engine for the West Creston Fire Department needs to be replaced in 2026.

Are there any other possible alternatives to purchasing the fire engines? Grants? Capital reserves?

No. Both capital reserves and grants have already been leveraged for the service where possible.

What happens if the referendum fails?

The fire department still needs a new fire engine, so therefore the RDCK will most likely utilize short-term borrowing, which doesn't need voter consent, but will be a significant tax increase for residents.

Why doesn't the fire department purchase a second hand fire engine?

RDCK Fire Service Staff have looked at the purchase price difference between new and second hand and, generally speaking, on a breakdown of costs over the useable life of a vehicle, there is almost no difference in total cost of ownership. Second hand vehicles come with limited warranty, so we are responsible for the cost of any issues not identified in a pre-purchase inspection. In Canada there is not a great availability of used fire trucks.

The United States has a larger supply of used fire trucks however acquisition will be challenging with additional charges and exchange rates. Transporting an apparatus to/across the border is expensive and it is harder to verify apparatus history and undertake pre-purchase inspections. Vehicles purchased in the United States need to come into Canada for a commercial vehicle inspection, certification, and sometimes retrofit to meet Canadian vehicle standards, adding both time and cost. RDCK Fire Services follows BC standards for fittings, and many second hand apparatus are plumbed in different standards. The cost and time to change these is substantial.

A perceived up front cost saving has almost never been realized over the life of a second hand apparatus. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, staff continue to recommend new apparatus.

Why does the RDCK need to have so many fire departments? Could departments not share fire engines?

RDCK Fire Departments are established under bylaw within fire protection area boundaries, allowing for a reasonable response to a fire as set out by National Fire Protection Association Standards. Each Fire Department needs a frontline engine for response to meet these standards.

Where can I vote and on what day?

West Creston Electoral Area C eligible electors will have the following opportunities to participate in an assent vote at the below locations from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.: