

The District of Sudbury Mutual Aid Program and Plan

Purpose

This report describes the Mutual Aid Program and Plan for the District of Sudbury which was developed under the authority of the Fire Prevention and Protection Act (FPPA). The plan promotes adequate and coordinated efforts to minimize loss of life and property damage through the efficient utilization of fire department resources across the district when requested.

Executive Summary

In 1997, the Ontario government created the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA), setting out the framework to address fire risks and other public safety hazards across the Province. Under the authority of the FPPA and from the direction of the Ontario Fire Marshal, Provincial Mutual Aid Systems were put into place under which municipalities that serve a designated area would agree to assist each other in the event of an emergency. The Fire Marshal outlined that fire coordinators shall be appointed to establish and maintain the mutual aid plan of each district across the Province.

The Mutual Aid Plan, which must be approved by the Ontario Fire Marshal, allows a participating department to request assistance from a neighboring fire department, which was authorized to participate in their plan. The Mutual Aid Plan is also designed to work in cases where the emergency requirements of one municipality exceed the resources available and the fire coordinator must allocate fire resources to a location.

Requirements to Participate

In order for a municipal fire department to participate in a Mutual Aid Program and Plan, there are two key requirements that must be in place. First, the local Establishing and Regulating Bylaw must grant the Fire Chief or designate the ability to allocate resources outside the municipal boundary and the fire department must have adequate resources to meet their day-to-day fire protection obligations.

Second, responding fire departments must meet the regulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and must have a first obligation to emergencies in their own municipality or jurisdiction. The Fire Chief of the fire department in the municipality in which the emergency occurs has the ultimate responsibility for managing the incident.

The Mutual Aid Program and Plan is designed to be a mutual sharing of resources, work force or apparatus between both parties. It is not to be used as a one-way allocation of fire department resources from other municipalities to provide primary fire protection services. Fire departments that are unable to provide the 'mutual' portion of Mutual Aid may be removed from the program.

The District of Sudbury is a Provincial geographic area encompassing the municipalities of Baldwin Township, Birch Island, Cartier, Espanola, Estaire-Wanup, French River, Greater Sudbury, Killarney,

Markstay-Warren, Nairn-Hyman, Sables-Spanish River, Sagamok Anishnawbek, St. Charles, and Whitefish Falls-Willisville. These fire departments form the Mutual Aid Program and Plan for the District of Sudbury. Three fire coordinators maintain the plan: the Fire Chief of Espanola, the Fire Chief of Markstay-Warren, and the Deputy Fire Chief of Greater Sudbury.

Mutual Aid Program and Plan 2019

After completing a review and update in 2019, the District of Sudbury Mutual Aid Program and Plan was brought into compliance with the standards outlined by the Office of the Fire Marshal under the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The 14 member departments of the plan meet on a regular basis to ensure the proper application of the program and to share information. This collaboration is used to build better systems into the mutual aid program and plan that allow for more effective application of requested or required fire department resources. All member departments must maintain and share a list of fire resources and provide a "First Help Call" guide (a list of departments to contact first, second, third) that is used by the fire coordinators to allocate the proper resource as required.

In the District of Sudbury, local fire departments will initiate the request for assistance, under the Mutual Aid Program and Plan, by way of radio or phone contact to the respective dispatch centre or service. The requesting fire department will outline what resources are required (work force or apparatus), which location they must attend, and the expected duration they may be required to remain on scene.

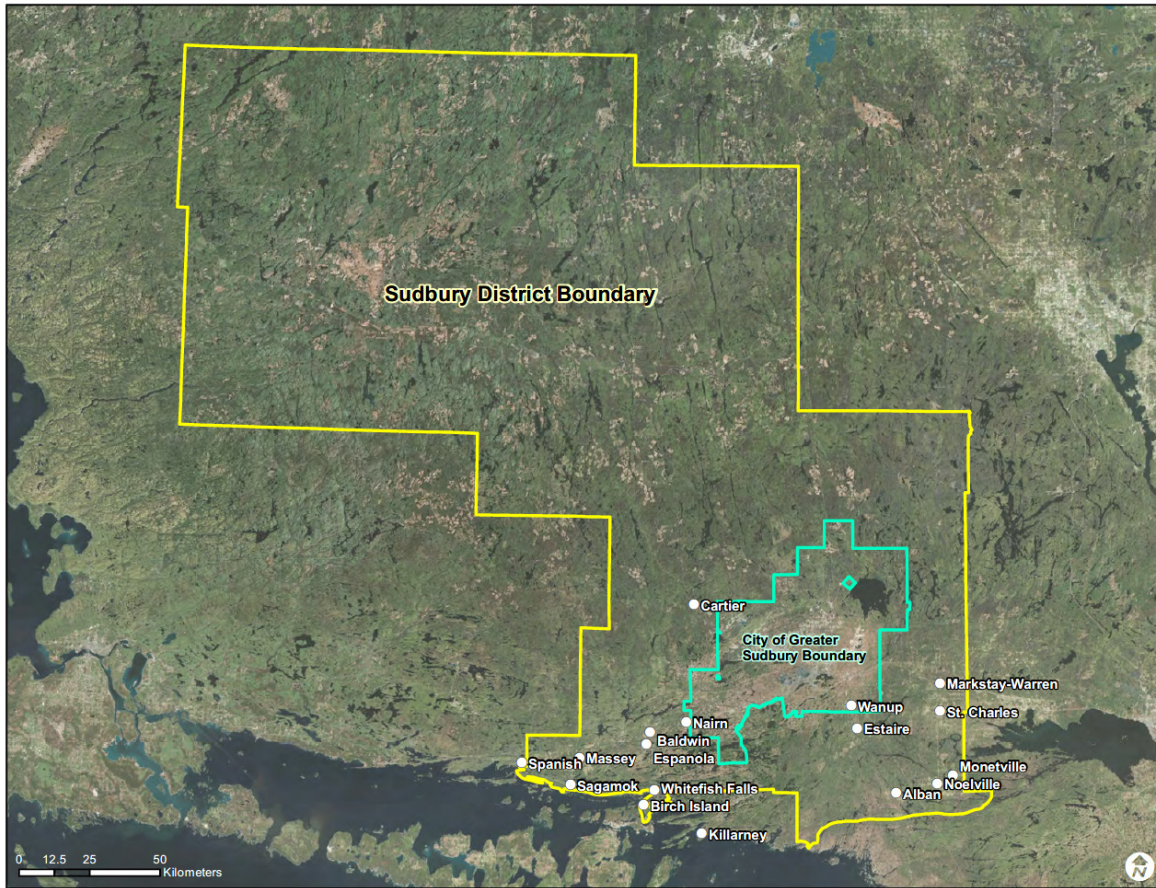
There are no costs to participate in the Mutual Aid Program and Plan, assistance is reciprocal in both work force and apparatus. All activations of mutual aid are reported in a prescribed manner through the City of Greater Sudbury 911 Communications Centre and documented by the fire coordinators who inform the Office of the Fire Marshal.

Automatic Aid

Automatic Aid agreements outline the terms a municipality agrees to provide an initial response to fires, rescues, and emergencies that may occur in part of another municipality. These responses are where the responding department is more capable of arriving quickly as they are situated in a more suitable location relative to the local fire department. These agreements are done in advance of any emergency response and are designed to provide the most effective response to the municipality by using resources of another municipality.

Automatic Aid agreements are negotiated between municipalities and are not mandatory or required under the Mutual Aid Plan. There may be a chosen cost for services delivered under an Automatic Aid agreement.

The District of Sudbury Mutual Aid Program and Plan Boundary



Conclusion

The District of Sudbury Mutual Aid Program and Plan is a working document that assists the participating fire departments and their respective municipalities in understanding the repository of resources available to them in their designated area. In the event of an emergency, under the authority of the FPPA and the Ontario Fire Marshal, fire coordinators may assist municipalities with additional resources in order to provide fire protection services. Local Fire Chiefs may also call upon their Mutual Aid partners directly when planning or responding to an emergency in order to mount an effective fire fighting force. Mutual Aid is an excellent tool and resource for the fire departments in the District of Sudbury.