

Best Practice

Joint Rescue Unit

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

The Town of Rosthern operates an emergency rescue unit to the community and surrounding area, most years at a deficit to the towns' taxpayers. When 911 emergency services became available province-wide, the service area for the Rosthern rescue unit increased without additional funding provided by those communities affected. Rosthern town council felt that the cost of this service should not be borne by the town alone.

THE PROCESS

In 2003, the rescue committee chairman, mayor of Rosthern and the rescue squad leader took the initiative to meet with every municipality and First Nation within the rescue service area. These individuals visited each community and provided statistics of accidents which occurred within each municipality during the previous five year period to which the Rosthern rescue unit was responsible for. At this time, financial statements were also presented to show the cost of providing this service.

The Town of Rosthern wrote a letter to each municipality asking them if they would send a representative to meet and discuss the operation of the rescue unit as a joint venture between all municipalities and First Nations. The municipalities that attended this meeting decided that the rescue unit should be a joint venture and steps to organize a joint rescue committee were taken. It was determined that one member from each municipality, the rescue squad leader and the administrator from the Town of Rosthern would be part of the committee. All municipalities involved decided they would split the cost of operating the service on a per capita basis and a set amount for capital purchases was also established.

THE RESULTS

The biggest benefit is that the Town of Rosthern can continue to provide a much needed service to residents and people traveling through our municipalities. The burden of one municipality picking up all the costs for this service is now spread among many municipalities. This venture has opened the doors for future joint projects and a positive working relationship with our neighbouring municipalities and First Nations.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Town of Rosthern learned that approaching each municipality individually and proposing a solution to the challenge was essential to ensuring each community realized the importance of the rescue services to their residents. This identified the importance that the service provided by the Town of Rosthern had on the surrounding community and resulted in each municipality getting on board instead of having to ask for one large sum of money to help fund the service.