



**MCKENZIE  
CLEARWATER  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

# FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER

## FUNDRAISING & FIREHALL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

### Securing the future of fire protection in our community

This summer MCFD hosted its Annual Dinner with record attendance of 150 people. Auctioneer Gregg Maidment ran the exciting live auction resulting in record earnings of \$158,000 plus. We can't wait to do it again next year at Zigzag Yacht Club on July 4! So mark your calendars.

This year's dinner was also the launch of the **Firehall Development Capital Campaign**. Our goal is to raise \$2 million dollars for a much-needed firehall addition.

This expansion is vital in many ways.

MCFD firefighters cover the vast area from McKenzie Portage Rd to the Manitoba border. The variety and complexity of their calls are increasing, including medical calls, structure fires and motor vehicle collisions. With growing traffic along Hwy #1, the number of accidents is increasing.

When our current Firehall was built in 1993 we had 12-15 volunteer firefighters. We now have 22. More firefighters mean more life saving equipment, uniforms and gear. This means the need for more space with updated ventilation and washing facilities.

Another major issue with the current hall is the increase in the size and number of emergency vehicles. Cottages and homes have gotten larger and are made from materials which burn much faster. This means we need bigger trucks with larger pumps and greater water capacity. Our current hall is not deep enough to hold the newer, larger trucks required for these structure fires.

***Finally, the most important reason for a firehall addition can be pulled straight from the headlines of 2025: WILDFIRES***

We know this risk is real. It is top of mind for MCFD to be ready to respond should a fire ever threaten your home.

For information or to donate please contact Shannon Johnson at [fundraising@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca](mailto:fundraising@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca).



## Response report MCFD: January 1 – October 31, 2025

**7**

FIRE  
STRUCTURE

**14**

OUTDOOR  
FIRE

**17**

FALSE  
ALARMS

**19**

HWY/VEHICLE  
EXTRACTION

**23**

MEDICAL  
CALLS

**11**

DAY BURNING  
COMPLAINT

**1**

ASSIST OTHER  
DEPARTMENTS

## PART ONE – FORMAL TRAINING

# From rookie to rescue: firefighter training at MCFD

*Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you cannot get it wrong.*



Fire Departments in Ontario work with the Office of the Fire Marshal to meet the training and certification standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). NFPA requires every firefighter to hold a minimum of 3 specialized certifications.

At the MCFD, these standards are most importantly aimed at preparing firefighters for the high-stakes realities of emergency response.

Firefighter Tyler Martin stresses, "I have yet to find any amount of practice and training that is 'enough' for a job that can quickly kill you."

Here's a look at the formal training in 2025. Part Two, In-house Training will follow in Spring 2026 Newsletter.



*New recruit, Chase Leonard, said of FireCon, "I was Incident Command for many drills and am 100% hooked on being a firefighter!"*

This enthusiasm is a direct reflection of the investments the McKenzie-Clearwater community has made in their fire department.

Tyler Martin also attended formal training at the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs Annual Conference. He participated in a Peer Trauma Support course, by Project Resilience 911,

"This course taught me to be on the lookout for the signs of trauma in our team and techniques to unlock their pathway to healing."

In addition, Tyler achieved the designation Fire Officer II in Elora Ontario. Having multiple trained leaders is of great value to MCFD which supports the department's long-term sustainability.

Finally, in November a group of 6 firefighters participated in the Ontario Exterior Fire Attack course, gaining their AS&E certification. Firefighters mastered various exterior attack techniques, optimized water application and developed strategies for cohesive incident management.

**You too can become a MCFD Firefighter! All training and equipment will be provided. Email: [info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca](mailto:info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca).**

This September, several MCFD members attended FireCon in Thunder Bay. Fire Con provides critical training for firefighters in the unincorporated territories of NWO. Firefighters achieved:

**Trevor Belair:** NFPA Certification, Pumper Operation—mechanics & theory of water dynamics

**Chase Leonard:** Mobile Live Fire Training—techniques in a controlled live fire

**Bree Haney:** Mental Health Training—PTSD

**Dale Charbonneau:** NFPA Certification, Fire Investigation—origin and cause

**Wes Dutson:** NFPA Certification, Fire Instructor—teach and sign off on training

## MCKENZIE-CLEARWATER FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Committed to Protect. Ready to Respond.*

## Volunteer Firefighters and Board Members needed

No experience necessary—just a desire to make a positive impact in cottage country.

Email [info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca](mailto:info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca)



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## RENEWING OUR MARINE RESPONSE

### Fireboat Upgrades

This spring, MCFD completed a goal from its Ten-Year Capital Plan by equipping both fire boats with new motors and one with a new pump!

Throughout the cottage season, fireboats are utilized for emergency response on the water. This year they were also used for delivery of new address signage at water-access properties.

Fireboat 62 is a 2011 twenty-foot Thunderjet. This landing craft vessel, moored at Keewatin Bridge Landing, is now powered by a 300hp Mercury. The increased horsepower enables consistent speeds regardless of load: a huge advantage when carrying multiple people or heavy equipment.

Fireboat 68, a 22' aluminum deep-V hull vessel, is based at our Pye's Landing boathouse. It was upgraded with a 300 hp inboard Mercury. In addition, the boat's 25-year-old pump was replaced with a new 500 gallon/minute pump, far more effective at getting lake water uphill.

Operators report a great improvement in safety and efficiency. The new motors allow vessels to transport a full crew of twelve and all necessary equipment.

Tyler Martin commented, *"We have more confidence that we will reach our destination faster and perform more effectively."*



## FIREFIGHTER PROFILE

### Chief Dale Charbonneau

For over half the life of the MCFD, Dale Charbonneau has been one of its best known and reliable leaders. This third-generation Granite Lake resident has served as volunteer Fire Chief for thirteen years.

In that role Dale attends regional conferences such as FireCon and meets with other departments regarding mutual aid. His ongoing training has led him to a particular interest in fire investigation, the origin and cause of fires.

Originally from Winnipeg, Dale earned a U of W Computer Science Degree before moving to NWO over 20 years ago. His first ten years were owning the busy West Hawk Inn. Following the Inn's demise, Dale started a second career in 2020 as a licensed paramedic. He found the transition to a full-time paramedic to be smooth, noting that training for firefighters and first responders have similarities including problem solving, confidence in yourself and calmness.

Dale is proud of MCFD's firefighter retention record. In most departments volunteers leave within their first five years. In contrast, MCFD has only 2 firefighters with less than 5 years. Dale believes that if he can support a member advance their career as a firefighter, or in any career, the team can develop a volunteer for life.

An avid outdoorsman, Dale enjoys angling, hunting, snowmobiling and driving boats. As part of an airline family, he developed a passion for travel from an early age. Favourites include Czechia, Thailand and the polar bears of Churchill. Nowadays his winter getaways take him to southern locales like Vegas or Arizona.

THANK YOU TO THE AMAZING VOLUNTEERS OF THE MCKENZIE-CLEARWATER FIRE TEAM!

## Amazing Response Time – Forever Grateful



On Feb 12, 2025 my phone rang, the voice on the other end asking me with adrenaline and concern, “Where are you?!?”

“I’m in Little Echo Bay drilling,” I answered.

“I’ve called 911, you have a truck on fire at your shop!” he replied.

The time was 12:23 PM.

By 12:57 PM the McKenzie-Clearwater fire team arrived with a pumper truck & crew. They had the fire under control within minutes.

Their response time is **absolutely amazing** knowing these members are all volunteers. The pager goes off; they stop and drop whatever they are doing and respond to an emergency call for help.

My house, office, property and all the staff vehicles were saved because of the McKenzie-Clearwater team’s ability to professionally extinguish the out-of-control fire.

I have been donating to the fire hall for around 14 years, never once thinking I would require their services. I am forever grateful for the time & effort each member gives to the McKenzie-Clearwater Fire Department: administrators, board members, fundraisers and the on-site responders that jump into action the moment a call for help comes in.

THANK YOU!

*Doug LeBlanc Owner of DTL Carpentry / Extremely proud supporter of McKenzie-Clearwater Fire Team*

### 2025–26 Board of Directors

Rick Suche, Chairperson  
David Reid, Vice-Chairperson  
Ted Sherritt, Treasurer  
Dorothy Chase, Secretary  
Jason Cousin, Director

Ailbe Prendiville, Director  
Dale Charbonneau, Director  
Keith Dixon, Director  
Shannon Johnson, Director

Join our volunteer Board of Directors:  
Serve and protect cottage country  
by bringing your leadership skills  
and passion for public safety. Email  
[info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca](mailto:info@mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca)

### Donation Form

The **majority of MCFD funds are provided by donations and fundraising.** Please give generously.

Name of Donor(s):

Name for Official Donation Receipt:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Cottage Location:

Donation Amount: \$

Mail to: MCFD, Box 20, Clearwater Bay, ON P0X 1S0 or make an online donation at [mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca](http://mckenzieclearwaterfire.ca). Thank you!



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