

Overview: Our current open-air burn permit system is designed for the users to come into the office or library to acquire a permit. With the library and office not being open to the public, this has been a challenge and takes much more administration time to issue permits. The current bylaw also allows for small recreational type of fires to not obtain a permit, only follow the guidelines. This causes a challenge for engaging the public for fire risk or a burn ban.

We have explored a new permitting system that can be used online by the customer or we still have the option to create a permit for someone that would rather come into the office to retrieve. Payments can be made in the office or online through an easy secure format. The County of Peterborough is using this same online payment format at Lang and are happy with it. This permit system ties into our Who's Responding App that we use, so it adds another feature to a system we already have in place.

We have taken the opportunity to redo the open-air burning bylaw to work with the new permitting system and to overcome some of the issues that have been a challenge to deal with over the years.

Conclusion: This new open-air burn bylaw will address items that we have had challenges with, it will ensure that all open-air fires have permits and this will allow the user to know the fire risk or burn ban when they activate their permit. This is a great educational tool that we simply do not have in our current system. The convenience of not coming into the office to obtain a permit is beneficial for the customer and the administration. This efficiency does come at a cost, but we would recover through the selling of permits. Any surplus at the end of the year should be moved into our existing fire reserve for wildland firefighting to help fund equipment or third-party response, such as MNRF.

Recommendation:

That the Fire Chief-2020-08 report, dated June 25, 2020, regarding Open-Air Burning be received and the following be approved:

- That the attached open-air burning bylaw be approved at the appropriate time during the meeting;
- That the Township switch our burn permits to an online system;
- That the fire section of the user fee by-law be updated as attached;
- That the surplus revenue will be moved to the established wildfire reserve.

Financial Impact: The new permitting system uses credits that the Municipality purchases, but costs will be recovered through the selling of permits. Applying the updated user fees, should see a revenue generated each year. Transaction fees are 2.9% per transaction plus \$0.30. For example, on a \$20 permit, the fees to the Municipality are \$0.88 to issue the permit, then one credit or \$0.10 per permit activation or message sent by us, i.e. burn ban in effect.

Strategic Plan Applicability: This would be applicable for efficient administration

Sustainability Plan Applicability: The system should generate revenue each year that exceeds the cost of the credits purchased.