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|  <p><b>DRYDEN</b></p> <p><b>The Corporation of<br/>The<br/>City of Dryden</b></p> | <p><b>STAFF<br/>REPORT</b></p>              | <p>For Administration Use Only:</p> <p>Meeting Date: April 12, 2021</p> <p>Open <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Approved for Agenda: [CAO]</p> <p>Report No. FIRE-2021-02</p> |
| <p>Date Submitted:</p>   | <p>April 6, 2021</p>                        |  |
| <p>Title:</p>  | <p>Open Air Burning and Campfire By-law</p> |  |
| <p>Prepared by:</p>  | <p>Fire Chief Kent Readman</p>              |  |
| <p>Department:</p>   | <p>Dryden Fire Service</p>                  |  |

**Recommendation:**

It is respectfully recommended

- 1.1 That Council receive this report;
- 1.2 That the attached by-law be enacted by Council;
- 1.3 That by-law 2572-98 be hereby repealed;

**Background:**

The purpose of this report is to approve an updated Open Air Burning and Campfire By-law that better reflects the fire safety goals of the city.

The *Ontario Fire Code* provides restrictions on Open-air burning and the *Municipal Act* grants municipalities the power to create and enforce by-laws that are deemed necessary to ensure the protection of persons and property.

**Discussion:**

In 2020 Dryden Fire Service staff identified a need to review and update the current Open-Air Burning and Campfire By-law. During the review inconsistencies were identified in multiple areas which makes the by-law difficult to interpret by both the public and fire service personnel that are responsible for enforcing the by-law. The need for a clear, easy to follow by-law has been identified and a draft submitted to council for review.

The review focused on 3 main areas.

1. Safety of residents and emergency responders.

The safety of the residents and emergency responders is paramount in the public safety sector. Outdoor fires can quickly spread and become out of control putting lives and property at risk. By implementing a clear and easy to follow by-law, the City of Dryden is taking steps to protect its residents, visitors and emergency responders. Some of the highlights of the proposed by-law are:

- Clearer Definitions within the by-law
- A restriction of Flying Lanterns
- Clearly defined General Provisions for both Open-Air Fires and Campfires
- Clearly defined terms for Fire Bans
- Clearly defined terms for Permits as well as a new, user friendly permitting process
- Clearly defined terms and regulations for "Open-Air Fires"
- Clearly defined terms and regulations for "Campfires"
- Clearly defined Exemptions for specific appliances
- Clearly defined Enforcement and Financial Responsibilities

2. Consistency and application of Provincial laws and standards.

This by-law was created by utilizing the most current laws including the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, *Ontario Fire Code*, *Forest Fire Prevention Act* and *Municipal Act*. The standards and requirements of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry were also utilized when determining safe and effective fire size, distances from other combustibles and ensuring there is a responsible person on site at all times.

3. Past trends of burning complaints and emergency response.

Over the past number of years, Canada has seen an increase of wildland fires and catastrophic events related to wildland fires. Many of these events have been highly publicized and have led to a growing concern from residents all over the country to see increased education and enforcement to prevent these large-scale events. Northwestern Ontario is not immune to these types of fires and as we saw last summer in Red Lake has the potential to experience large-scale events.

Although most people safely use fires for property maintenance and recreation, the potential for growth and spread of the fire increases with certain conditions including larger fire size, combustible materials too close to the fire, wind, temperature, humidity, precipitation, lack of supervision and others. In 2020 Dryden Fire Service responded to the following calls in relation to wildfires and burn complaints:

- Total outdoor burning calls: 29 (12% of total calls)
- Total burn complaint calls: 23
- Total illegal burn complaint calls: 15
- Total burning during a Restricted Fire Zone or Fire Ban calls: 3

- Total illegally intentionally set outdoor fires: 5

This new by-law simplifies the process and reduces the possibility of misinterpretation by breaking fire regulations down into 2 categories, Open-Air Fires and Campfires. By standardizing these categories and creating specific guidelines for each, the expectations are clear and achievable. It should be noted that all other previous categories have been removed in an effort to promote safe burning of natural wood products. This includes removing Incinerators.

### **Financial Implications:**

There are no immediate financial implications associated with adopting this by-law as presented, but there is a cost to operating the new fire permit system. A permit will be required for both Open-Air Fires and Campfires and the cost is on a per permit bases as well as additional charges for messaging. Messaging will consist of Dryden Fire Service notifying permit holders of Restricted Fire Zone or Fire Bans, residents notifying the fire department of burning, and/or other messaging relating to fire safety and permit information as required.

In an effort to gain compliance and education it is recommended that Campfire permits be available for no-charge and Open-Air Fire permits be charged the fee outlined in the fees and charges by-law. Since this is the first year of the new process it is difficult to estimate the costs and the revenue that will be generated but it is anticipated that the city will find this process cost neutral.

**Current Budget Allocation:** N/A

**Account #:** N/A

### **Attachments (Reference Material):**

Draft Open Air Burning and Campfire By-law