



# News Release

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May 9, 2018

## Firefighters' Donations for Fire Truck

It's not often people put their money up to support what they believe in, but firefighters in Joe Rich have done just that.

Members of the paid-on-call department have voted in favour of donating funds to the Regional District to purchase a 1996 fire engine that was being sold by the City of Kelowna.

[Joe Rich fire department](#) members contribute three per cent of their wages to a special fund which is used for equipment and other purchases determined by a majority vote of the members. Recently, the membership voted to donate some of this money towards the purchase of the Kelowna fire truck.

The Chief of the Joe Rich department says "We have a small tax base, and large purchases like trucks put a strain on the department budget and ultimately the taxpayer. It's not uncommon for smaller fire departments to seek value in purchasing used vehicles."

Ben Wasyliuk adds "We have an aging fleet and while we still budget and set aside reserves to purchase newer trucks to meet our insurance rating obligations, this truck provides us with some valuable flexibility and redundancy in our fleet if we were to face any unforeseen mechanical or service-related downtime on other trucks."

Regional District of Central Okanagan Fire Services Manager Ross Kotscherofski says "The Joe Rich Fire Department has experienced significant growth in the last few years, almost doubling in membership since 2015. As a result, it can be challenging with its current fleet to transport firefighters to incidents. This truck will add six more seats to get responders to emergencies."

The Regional District of Central Okanagan has worked with Joe Rich Fire Rescue to come up with creative solutions and the department appreciates its support. In addition, the paid-on-call department is extremely grateful for the excellent working relationship with the regional district and the City of Kelowna. The truck is now part of the fleet owned and maintained by the Regional District.

This engine is expected to be in service shortly and will be stationed at Hall 51 (11481 Highway 33 East).

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RDCO Chair Gail Given thanks Joe Rich Fire Chief Ben Wasyliuk for the generous donation from fire department members to the Regional District for the purchase of the engine.



Chief Wasyliuk and Chair Given in the cab of the former Kelowna engine.