



## **WATCH LAKE - NORTH GREEN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

5771 Green Lake North Road  
70 Mile House, BC, V0K 2K1

[www.wlmgfiredept.org](http://www.wlmgfiredept.org)

## *Newsletter - Summer 2014*



### **High Water**

Heavy rain in the late spring combined with a moderate winter snow pack and a slow melt has provided a good run-off and the lake is currently higher than it has been for several years. This is good news since we always worry about reasonably accessible sources of water to fill the tenders for training and firefighting. The slow start to spring also delayed the regional fire ban that was imposed last year on April 1<sup>st</sup>. This year we have not, as yet, had a total ban, but fire restrictions did come into effect on May 15<sup>th</sup>. (see website for restriction details)

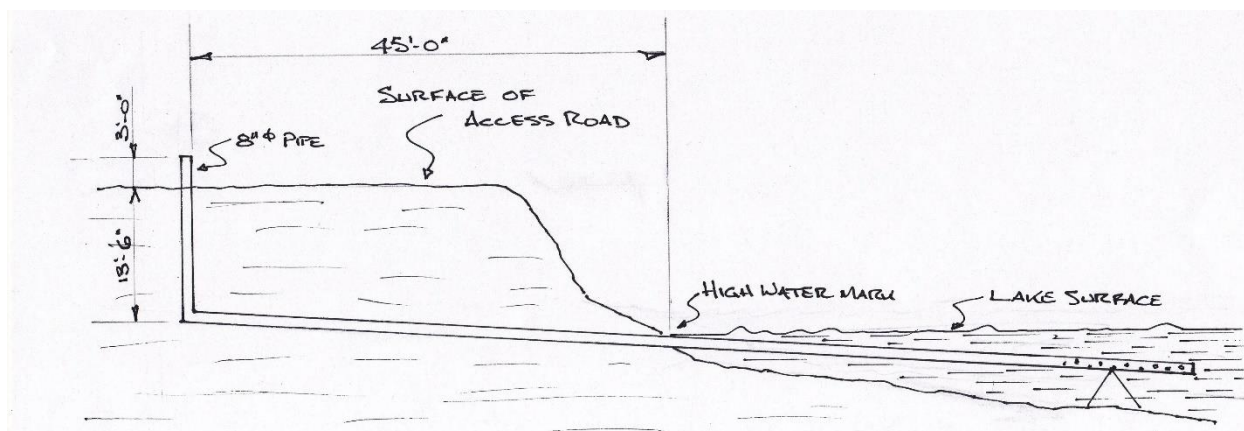


Difference in water level 2013 to 2014

Please be careful with all fires, from grass burning to slash piles or camp fires. Barbeques and portable, propane fire pits can also be extremely hazardous. We haven't experienced it yet, but a good many urban fires are caused by the careless use of outdoor cooking and heating devices. See the campfire advice in the Chief's comments on page 4.

Further news on the topic of water concerns the construction of two dry hydrants to take place this summer. It may seem strange for there to be a continuing concern for a water supply when we live on the shores of two lakes and the total combined water capacity of our vehicles is just over 6,000 gallons with an additional 8,000 gallons stored in the underground tank at Hall #1. In the event of a major fire this amount of water would not last long and there are periods of time in the early spring and late fall when thin ice conditions make it impossible to access either lake. Upcoming WorkSafeBC regulations will prohibit our firefighters from entering the water or going out on the ice to suction water at any time. Thus the need has arisen to construct reliable, year-round sources of water. Permits have been obtained to make small excavations at Green Lake Access #14, just east of the wye, and at Access #20, near 83 Mile Road, in which a vertical pipe will be inserted to a level that is in a horizontal line below the ice depth in winter. From this point a horizontal pipe will be run out into the lake. The end will be capped and the extreme length of the pipe will be perforated to keep fish from entering the line. The end of the pipe will be supported by a tripod arrangement to keep from sucking-up sand and gravel.

Dry hydrant designs such as this have proven to be quite successful in other local areas and we hope to have ours in operation by early fall.



Proposed Dry Hydrant Sketch (not to scale)

### Two Items of Good News

Last year at this time we were approaching the member shortage that has plagued fire departments all over the province. A local advertising and reach-out campaign was slow to start, but ultimately brought in some new members and we are now in good shape with a roster of 30 members. This certainly compares well with other areas and combined with a continuous training program we have a fire department of which the community should be very proud. We are an aging community and so too are our members so we continue to search for new people as some of us look forward to retiring. As mentioned in previous newsletters, we encourage any residents, either full or part-time, to drop by a Tuesday practice or give a call to Chief, Andy Palaniak at 250-456-7460 (e-mail: [wnglvfd@gmail.com](mailto:wnglvfd@gmail.com)) and see how you can donate just a few hours of your time to the protection of your community. Anyone with carpentry, mechanical or first aid skills would be particularly welcome. The firefighters meet every Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. to practice their fire fighting skills and to perform maintenance on the equipment. Practice scenarios are set up so that members get as much live-fire experience as possible.

The Auxiliary too can always use people who can spare a bit of their time to assist at special events. If you can help out here please contact Joici Smeltzer at 250-644-2040 (e-mail: [sandhillcranejoici@gmail.com](mailto:sandhillcranejoici@gmail.com)).

The second item of good news concerns the acquisition of a new (to us) pumper. Just over a year ago it became apparent that Engine 11, which came to us as a donation from the City of Coquitlam in 2007 had seen better days, and it was time to look for a replacement that was within our budget. Chief Palaniak sent out a letter via the Provincial Fire Chiefs Association requesting their consideration if they happened to be upgrading their vehicles in the near future. We received nothing positive for a while and began a search of the sources listing used emergency vehicles. Just when it appeared there was nothing of value within our limited means,

we received a response from the Oyster River Fire Department in the Comox Valley Regional District. They had exactly what we were looking for!



Engine 11 – 1993 Volvo Pumper

Funds set aside from our BC Lottery grants just covered the cost and we have now welcomed the new Engine 11 to our fleet. This vehicle is in excellent condition and will help us meet the insurance underwriters standards for several years.

### **The cost of providing community protection**

With every edition of the newsletter we send out we try to give a good picture of how your annual fire dues are being used to provide the emergency services for our community. Property owner's dues cover only our operating expenses, and even then just barely. Rising costs of fuel, power and heating are continuing to increase and insurance alone takes a big bite out of our budget. In our Fall and Winter Newsletter, Director Lee Granberg discussed our insurance burden as follows:

*The nature of our activities requires coverage for just about everything. The department has insurance covering its assets, as well as personal liability coverage for fire fighters, first responders and directors. The assets include two fire halls, trucks and equipment with ongoing updates. Total cost for insuring our trucks alone is \$9,300. The two fire halls, along with equipment and liability insurance costs \$12,456. WorkSafeBC coverage for on-the-job injury costs another \$940.50.*

At the Annual General Meeting in February the membership passed a motion to allow a modest increase in the annual dues if necessary. The last increase was seven years ago and we have been barely getting by since. We were able to forestall an increase for this year since we have the financial benefit of having those people who paid for five years in advance to contribute to the reconstruction of both halls back to paying annually. We have the lowest annual rate for emergency services in the Cariboo Regional District yet only eighty percent of our property owners chose to pay their dues. About fifteen percent of the property owners take advantage of the responsibility of their neighbours and take their chances. We send a list of all paid memberships to the insurance brokers who in turn will ask everyone renewing their fire insurance if they have a responding fire department.

Later in this newsletter you will see a possible resolution to this inequity and ask that you respond to the questionnaire.

Please enjoy all of the summer activities that our lakes have to offer. Our fire fighters and first responders are there to assist in any emergency, but your safety starts with you.

Roy Allan  
President WL-N.GL VFD

### **Legacy Funding**

This is a topic that we will discuss more in future newsletters and at general meetings, but for now we would like to introduce the following thought. Many residents of the Watch Lake-North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Dept. coverage area are retirees who will either gift or sell their properties to the next generation of their families. Everyone would certainly like to ensure the protection of their families and homes with the continuation of the firefighter and first response services. Our annual fire dues are the lowest in the Cariboo and only cover a portion of the fire department's operating costs. Leaving a bequest or gift from your estate will ensure the continuation of this service far into the future. Please consider. Feel free to contact Roy Allan at [250-456-2438](tel:250-456-2438) or Bob Nathane at [250-456-6043](tel:250-456-6043) for more information.

## The Chief's Corner - Summer Fire Safety

Spring has been wet to say the least, but the summer forecast is predicting hotter and dryer weather. All this nice green grass will soon be fuel for wildland fires. We all need to be extra careful when burning – including campfires. Campfire regulations changed significantly in 2010 and you may not be aware of the new information. Violations can result in a \$345 ticket or if convicted, fines up to \$100,000 and 1 year in jail. There is no campfire ban as of June 1 in our area, but one could be implemented later in the season. In this case portable campfires may be allowed. They may also be prohibited in some situations. They must be CSA or ULC approved and the flame length must not exceed 15cm (6"). All other campfire rules also apply to these devices.

Check to see if there are any burning prohibitions by Wildfire Management Branch at [www.bcwildfire.ca](http://www.bcwildfire.ca). Click the prohibitions section on the right and check for the cariboo area.

1. You must have a shovel or 8 L of water nearby to extinguish your fire.
2. A campfire cannot be larger than 0.5m (20") diameter and 0.5m high.
3. No campfires in windy conditions.
4. There must be a 1 m fireguard (fuel free area) around the campfire.
5. Never leave the fire unattended.
6. Extinguish the fire ensuring the ashes are cold to touch before leaving the campfire.
7. You could be held accountable by Dept. of Forestry for damages plus fire suppression costs if your campfire results in a wildfire.

Your fire department has no jurisdiction over open burning and campfires. If you see a wildfire, or an unattended or illegal campfire, you can report it to 1-800-663-5555. Record the date, time and address. A picture can be helpful for Forestry investigators issuing tickets after the fact.

Chief Andy Palaniak

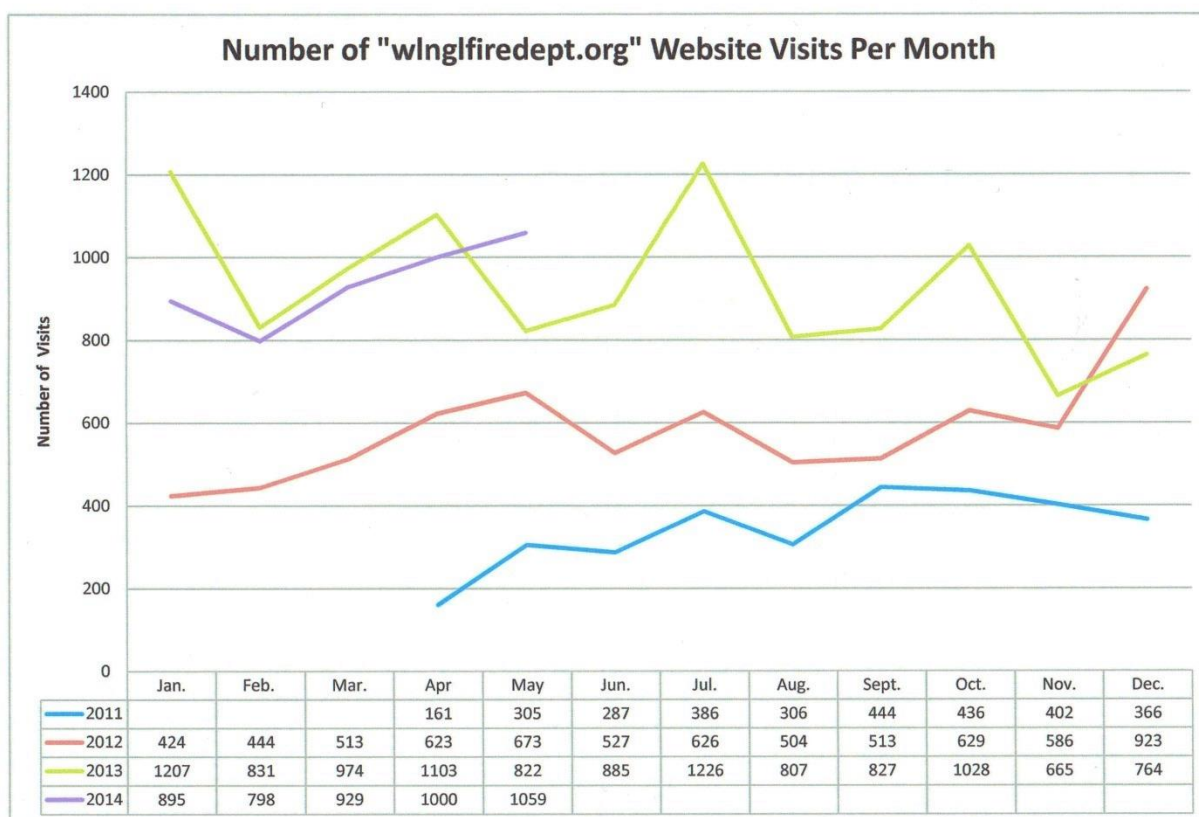
## Summer 2014 Website Review:

Visits to the Watch Lake-North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department website – [www.wlnglfiredept.org](http://www.wlnglfiredept.org) - continue to increase over time (see chart on next page). We've tried to make up-to-date fire information available to everyone through our "Events and News" tab.

Recent articles have included: summer fire restrictions for the Cariboo region; announcement of the annual fire dept. garage and bake sale; using caution when burning outside; Board President's report to fire dept. AGM; winter fire safety tips, congratulations from Donna Barnett MLA on the fire dept.'s good work; and how to become better aware of possible CO poisoning.

WLNLVFD Website Visits Since Origination				
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan.		424	1207	895
Feb.		444	831	798
Mar.		513	974	929
Apr.	161	623	1103	1000
May	305	673	822	1059
Jun.	287	527	885	
Jul.	386	626	1226	
Aug.	306	504	807	
Sept.	444	513	827	
Oct.	436	629	1028	
Nov.	402	586	665	
Dec.	366	923	764	





In addition, we have listed links to numerous other websites regarding fire and health issues. You will find these sites listed under "Additional Information", which you can find on each of our website pages. A recently added link of particular interest is the "Home Tragedy Protection Guide". It provides easy to digest bullet points on how to prevent such tragedies as home fires, poisoning, slipping and falling, burns and cuts, choking and suffocation, and drowning. Please take a look at this site. I was very impressed by it.

Newsletters will continue to be published electronically under the "Newsletters" tab on the website. This method saves the fire dept. substantial costs in paper, printing, and postage, and produces a nice looking color newsletter. For those of you who have new or changed e-mail addresses, please notify us through the "Contact Us" tab, so we can stay in touch. (Society members without e-mail addresses will continue to receive paper newsletters in black and white via regular mail.)

Our Facebook page, which can be accessed through the website, has proven to be very entertaining and informative about the world of firefighting outside of the Cariboo Region. If you are a member of Facebook, and enjoy the articles we post, please let us know by clicking on the "Like" button. This lets us know you appreciate the content we provide.

We appear to have a good history of the "Shorty Horn Memorial Fire Hall" thanks to Dimps Horn on the website, but would appreciate any historical information you might have on the "Sonny Johnson Memorial Fire Hall". If so, you can reach us through the "Contact Us" tab on the website. Thanks again for your great support of the website and Facebook page. Any suggestions you may have are always greatly appreciated.

Bob Nathane  
Director/ Web Manager

## Auxiliary News

The 18th annual Bake and Garage Sale:

Thanks to an amazing team of ladies the Bake and Garage Sale held at Hall # 2 was a great success. Prior to this event I got to experience for the first time the team work of a great crew of ladies who made the best apple pies from scratch since my mother's day. Pastry by Gladys was fantastic. Thanks to Helen Eagle again for another year having opened her home so we could make the usual big supply of pies for the sale.



The ladies and of course our helpful men folk came out to set up the day before and Sat. morning started off with an early number of people hoping for a bargain but the BBQ team was ready to serve up the numerous breakfast sandwiches and coffee to be followed by hot dogs for lunch. Our deepest appreciation is for the cooking crew Vito Burtini, Alan Watrich and Allan Boyd who cooked up a storm all with Donna Grimshaw close at hand to make sure all the orders were handled with care.



We especially wish to thank Giselle Polisenio for ordering the food to have on hand for this fun day. Our many thanks for all those who helped and those who donated to make this a very successful day. Our final tally is yet to be calculated at this time.



A great display of prizes were on the bucket table. It was a big challenge keeping up with the people wanting to get their chance to win the bucket of their choice.

The winner of the Moose Poop count was Kathleen Thomas. Total for this year was 654. Next year a new jar so no point keeping this count folks. We added the Llama poop count jar this year with a prize of yummy fruit juice jelly beans. Kids and kids at heart need a treat too. This treat was won by Rebeka.

Our next event will be the August long weekend Bake sale and BBQ from 10:00 am-1:00 pm. We hope you will join us then for a fun time with your children, grandchildren, families and friends.

We will also be holding another fire fighters/first responders appreciation dinner on Oct.18th, 2014. Hope you will come and share and evening of fellowship with those who have worked so hard to keep our community safe for another year.

I wish to thank everyone who assisted me with my first event as your president of the Auxiliary. Thanks for making this experience a very enjoyable one.

Joyce Smeltzer  
President of the WL-NGL Auxiliary

### **Financial Report:**

Please take a look at the mid-year financial statements attached to this newsletter. We have again reached that time of year when we hope no unforeseen expenses arise to upset the delicate balance of our finances. Year after year the operational costs of running our Fire Department continue to rise. We have again gone through considerable "belt tightening" and we must ask the community to look at an equitable solution to dues collection. We can continue to make ends meet if all property owners pay their share through the annual dues. There is still about 15% of the community that expects a free service. The annual dues paid by property owners just cover the general operations of the department. Due to the effects of inflation our fire dues rates in the future will have to be addressed. Fortunately, training, health and safety equipment (including first responder supplies), electronics, vehicle upgrades, construction and renovations are covered by grants, donations and fund raising.

Guy Aggiss  
Director / Treasurer

**WATCH LAKE NORTH GREEN LAKE VFD**  
**Balance Sheet As at 06/06/2014**

**ASSET**

**Current Assets**

Petty Cash	300.00	
Gaming Bank Account	48,017.34	
General Bank Account	45,363.54	
Total Cash		93,680.88
GIC Hall 2		3,373.33
GIC Truck		0.00
Accounts Receivable	0.00	
Total Receivable		0.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>97,054.21</b>

**Capital Assets**

Fire Fighting Equipment	67,317.59	
Net Fire Fighting Equipment		67,317.59
Vehicle	452,500.00	
Net - Vehicle		452,500.00
Building	335,400.00	
Net - Building		335,400.00
Land		22,100.00
<b>Total Capital Assets</b>		<b>877,317.59</b>

**TOTAL ASSET** **974,371.80**

**LIABILITY**

**Current Liabilities**

Accounts Payable		0.62
WCB Payable		0.00
GST/HST Paid on Purchases	-2,063.57	
GST/HST Owing (Refund)		-2,063.57
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>-2,062.95</b>

**TOTAL LIABILITY** **-2,062.95**

**EQUITY**

**Equity**

Retained Earnings - Previous Y...	982,629.29
Current Earnings	-6,194.54
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>976,434.75</b>

**TOTAL EQUITY** **976,434.75**

**LIABILITIES AND EQUITY** **974,371.80**



**WATCH LAKE NORTH GREEN LAKE VFD**  
**Income Statement 01/01/2014 to 06/06/2014**

**REVENUE**

<b>Revenue</b>	
Donations	541.30
Government Grants	0.00
Fire Suppresion Revenue	0.00
Fire Dues	38,003.00
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<u>38,544.30</u>

<b>Other Revenue</b>	
Interest Revenue	262.08
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,891.55
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<u>2,153.63</u>

<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<u>40,697.93</u>
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**EXPENSE**

<b>Vehicle Expenses</b>	
FR11 V. Expense	598.40
T 11 V. Expenses	880.04
E11 V. Expenses	0.00
FR 21 V. Expenses	619.98
E21 V. Expenses	22,846.57
T 21 V. Expenses	414.84
SHOP SUPPLIES	155.08
Vehicle Expense	<u>25,514.91</u>
<b>Vehicle Expense</b>	<u>25,514.91</u>

<b>Vehicle Fuel</b>	
FR 11 Fuel	234.19
T 11 Fuel	90.38
E 11 Fuel	297.16
FR 21 Fuel	121.87
T 21 Fuel	129.84
E 21 Fuel	257.15
Vehicle Fuel	<u>1,130.59</u>
Misc. Fuel	0.00
Vehicle Insurance	2,855.00
Freight Expense	40.78
<b>Total Vehicle Expenses</b>	<u>4,026.37</u>

<b>Payroll Expenses</b>	
WCB Expense	656.64
<b>Total Payroll Expense</b>	<u>656.64</u>

<b>General &amp; Administrative Expenses</b>	
Accounting & Legal	300.00
Advertising & Promotions	189.46

**WATCH LAKE NORTH GREEN LAKE VFD**  
**Income Statement 01/01/2014 to 06/06/2014**

Business Fees & Licenses		2,153.61
Courier & Postage		93.02
Insurance Building & Liability		0.00
Bank Charges		82.00
Fire Fighting Equipment		2,366.54
Office Supplies		817.92
Rent		643.89
Repairs & Maintenance (Buildings)		2,729.48
Telephone		0.00
Tools		0.00
Miscellaneous		1,404.25
Mileage		1,269.50
Meals & Accomodations		145.24
Utilities Hall 1		1,293.87
Utilities Hall 2		1,226.72
Training Expenses	1,348.90	
First Responder Expense	468.57	
Freight Expense	161.58	
Total Expenses		1,979.05
Total General & Admin. Expenses		16,694.55
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>46,892.47</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		<b>-6,194.54</b>

## **FIRE DUES / TAXATION – The Question**

To all property owners in the Watch Lake-North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department Fire Protection Area.

Ever since the Watch Lake-North Green Lake VFD was first organized as a non-profit Society in the 1970's, we have relied on residents and property owners in our coverage area to voluntarily participate in the Society through payment of annual Fire Dues.

Over the last few years, we have been reasonably successful building and maintaining a list of property owners and fire dues are billed each November for the coming year. Voluntary membership in the Society through payment of Fire dues has averaged between 75% and 80%. In conjunction with government grants from both the Provincial Gaming Branch and the Cariboo Regional District, we have been able to build, equip, man and maintain one of the finest Volunteer Fire Departments in southern British Columbia.

Our membership has, on several occasions, expressed their desire to remain independent of the Regional District due to very probable significant tax increases and the Board of Directors of the Fire Department has worked very hard to manage the Fire Department's affairs within the existing framework. However, like all Volunteer Fire Departments, our costs continue to increase. It is a continuing challenge to provide our community with the level of fire protection and first responder services we have been able to achieve and still remain within the current dues structure. As a result, the Board of Directors asked for and received permission from the membership at the 2013 Annual General Meeting, to increase Fire Dues for 2015 by up to \$20 per property if required.

At subsequent meetings of the Board of Directors, discussions were undertaken to explore other avenues for increasing our annual revenue without the need for a dues increase. One very obvious area discussed is the 20% to 25% of properties that enjoy the fire protection services, first responder services and lower property insurance premiums without any contribution to the Society. The additional revenue these properties would provide would allow the Fire Department to continue operating at the present very favourable dues rates for the foreseeable future.

The Board of Directors would like to pursue one possible avenue to access these additional funds by having the Cariboo Regional District act as the collection agency only, for a negotiated fee, by having Fire Dues added to the property taxes. We have never (and do not now) receive any funds through taxes. Our desire now is **not to have fire dues assessed based on property values or fixed to the mill rate**, but rather as a fixed fee per property as per the current rate structure. Fire dues would then be paid in conjunction with property taxes, eliminating the need for billing and follow up which in itself entails significant cost. The collected dues would then be remitted to the Fire Department directly from the Cariboo Regional District. Also, **any future proposed increase in the amount of Fire Dues would have to be approved by the Society Membership at an Annual General Meeting.**

To accomplish this goal, the Board of Directors would like to follow a process that was successful for local Search and Rescue in the South Cariboo and is currently being undertaken in 70 Mile House by holding a referendum or conducting a petition for property owners in the coverage area this year with the intent of having the new process in place for the 2015 Taxation Year. Undoubtedly, further discussion with the CRD will be required to determine feasibility and the format required for such a referendum.

We would ask that all property owners give this proposal consideration and indicate approval on the following page for us to proceed.

Board of Directors  
Watch Lake-North Green Lake VFD.



## IMPORTANT SURVEY FOR ALL PROPERTY OWNERS WITHIN THE WATCH LAKE – NORTH GREEN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE AREA

The Watch Lake – North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department has since its inception operated as an independent department (receiving no funding from the Cariboo Regional District Emergency Services). A Board of Directors elected by the contributing property owners of the community has determined the financial needs to operate said department, has set forth a budget and recommendations for the amount of annual dues necessary to be collected to meet that budget, and has presented all business and an audited report for approval by the membership at annual general meetings. Furthermore, only about 80% of the property owners contribute to the safety of the community by paying their dues, the resulting shortfall creates the need to increase the level of annual dues or find a more equitable means of collecting dues to continue to safely operate the fire and first responder service.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Watch Lake – North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department is asking all property owners within this service area to sign either for or against conducting a referendum or petition to ask the Cariboo Regional District to collect dues through taxation, a rate which will be determined necessary by a majority of property owners voting in person or by proxy at an annual general meeting. A fee for this service will be negotiated with the regional district.

Respectfully submitted,

Roy Allan,  
President, WL–N.GL VFD

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
(print name) (Watch Lake / N. Green Lake Property address)

cast my vote regarding the above described referendum:

for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

against: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

Indicate your preference regarding this issue by signing above and return form to:

WL – N.GL VFD  
5771 Green Lake North Road  
70 Mile House, BC, V0K 2K1  
V0K 2K1

or

Go to web site [www.wlmgfiredept.org](http://www.wlmgfiredept.org)  
click on “Contact Us”  
and cast your vote by email

**Please sign and return this form by July 30, 2014**

**Proposed Fire dues through taxation - Information Meeting at Hall #1 on Sunday, August 3rd at 11:00 a.m.** confirmation on web page in July.