



MEDIA RELEASE

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RE: Amherst Firefighter Ladies Auxiliary provide fire department with rehab tent

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – It looks like any other tent, but this red one only gets set up when things get serious.

“We call it the Rehab Tent,” Fire Chief Greg Jones said. “Some firefighters want to go, go, go when we’re out on a call. The tent provides all of us with a safe environment to get properly hydrated and rested, and ready to safely get back on the job.”

The tent was donated to the department by the Amherst Firefighter Ladies Auxiliary in January.

“The auxiliary approached me in 2017 asking what item we’d like to have that would support the department. I suggested a rehab tent,” Jones said. “This isn’t the first time they’ve helped us get a piece of equipment we needed. Previous to this, the most recent help came through the purchase of a trauma kit that we use for



Amherst firefighters Chris Clark and Vern Megeney erect the rehab tent the Amherst Firefighters Ladies Auxiliary recently donated to the department. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)



rehab while on scene.”

“The Ladies Auxiliary is proud and honoured to be able to provide our department with this piece of equipment,” Tammy Megeney, auxiliary president, said. “Our main function is to support and give aid to the Amherst Firefighter’s Association when requested, but we also keep in close contact with Chief Jones on what kind of equipment they may need that would not be covered in their budget.”

The auxiliary raised funds for the \$1,800 tent through 50-50 ticket sales at its weekly bingo, monthly bake sales and its annual toy bingo, Megeney said.

When it’s not in use, the tent, which can hold about 15 people, sits in the back of Truck 5. It is under the control of Rescue 5 and Accountability 6, two companies consisting of 15 firefighters that make up the safety and support division within the department.

“We can’t function without those two companies,” Jones said.

Rescue 5 takes care of all the support activities, including providing specialized equipment that is on the rescue unit and the rehabilitation of members on site, the chief said.

As an example, the members of this company ensure the air tanks are filled and ready for use. They also ensure that during a call, firefighters take proper rests periods, as required by department procedures.

Members of Accountability 6 do what the name implies, keep things accountable while on a call. They keep track of who is on scene and where they are. For example, if a fighter enters a burning structure, they record when they went into the building and how long they have been in there. In addition, they take care of incident safety on a scene.

“When my members go into a burning structure, they have an air pack that will last 20 minutes to half an hour,” Jones said. “When they are down to five minutes of air left, they have to exit the building and report to safety and support. Then they go to the rehab staging area where they get a chance to take their gear off, get their vitals taken and rest. As they rest, the support team



Firefighter Vern Megeney attaches a side panel to the Rehab Tent the Amherst Fire Fighters Ladies Auxiliary recently donated to the department. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)



refills their bottles.

“Basically, the two companies help our members get ready to go again.”

Prior to the arrival of the tent, which can be set up in about five minutes, firefighters recuperated in full view of the public.

“Firefighters would jump in the back of the trucks while recovering or they’d sit in chairs that were set up around the rescue truck,” the chief said. “The tent gives them a little more privacy as they get ready to go again.”

The tent will also give firefighters a place to get out of the elements.

“If we were out in the snow, wind and freezing cold, the tent would give them an opportunity to get out of the wind and away from the falling snow,” Jones said. “In the summer, when the inside of your bunker gear can be 10 degrees warmer than the ambient temperature, it will give them a place to recuperate out of the sun, and to sit in our rehab chairs that have special spots for ice that will help cool them down.”

In the event of an injury to a firefighter or a citizen, the tent can also provide a private spot away from prying eyes to conduct first aid until the paramedics arrive and take over the care of the injured person, he added.

“All the department’s firefighters are grateful for the support we get from the Ladies Auxiliary, and we can’t thank them enough for this latest donation,” Jones said. “The rehab tent goes a long way to ensure the safety and privacy of our members.”



Firefighter Chris Clark attaches a side panel to the rehab tent the Amherst Firefighters Ladies Auxiliary donated to the department. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)

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