



qathet REGIONAL DISTRICT

SECTION 4 **INDIVIDUAL SERVICE POLICIES**

POLICY **5.3.6**

SUBJECT **ALCOHOL AT FIRE SERVICES SOCIAL EVENTS**

ADOPTED **June 26, 2024**

POLICY STATEMENT:

WorkSafeBC requires qathet Regional District (qRD) to have a policy in place to responsibly manage the consumption of alcohol at social events in qRD fire halls.

PURPOSE:

The *Workers Compensation Act* provides at Section 22 that every worker must ensure that their ability to work is not impaired by alcohol, drugs or other causes. While the *Act* provides obligations in relation to alcohol and drug use during the course of the worker's duties, it does not prohibit alcohol from being served at the workplace and workplace events, so long as it does not affect the worker's ability to work. Also, the employer has a responsibility to maintain a reasonably safe workplace, and this Policy serves as a way for the qRD to ensure that a safe workplace is maintained while alcohol is consumed at work-related social functions.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all qRD fire department members, their guests, and qRD employees. All qRD fire department members are to ensure that their guests are made aware of and understand the policies and guidelines for alcohol consumption in fire halls.

POLICY/GUIDELINES:

Time/Activity

Alcohol consumption on qathet Regional District Fire Department property may be consumed during non-duty hours and social events, subject to the discretion of the Fire Chief.

Alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited during duty hours, including but not limited to practice and training sessions, and emergency responses.

Fire Department members are prohibited from reporting for duty, attending training or practices, or performing any operational activities while impaired.

The qRD Fire Department Occupational Health & Safety Program Manual and the Available for Duty Acknowledgement form (that must be signed by every member) clearly states the WorkSafeBC regulatory requirements which strictly prohibit the impairment by alcohol, drugs, or other substances while engaged in work activities.

Location

Consumption of, and the presence of alcohol, is only permitted in the fire hall's designated social area following practice, following emergency responses, and during special events.

Quantity

Consumption of alcohol must be moderate and responsible.

No alcohol shall be consumed by any person who is intoxicated.

Your Role, Play Your Part

Do not drive impaired or ride with an impaired driver. Plan ahead and use a designated driver or call a friend.

Be a strong leader and implement intervention when necessary.

Designated Duty Crew

During social events, a Duty Crew will be assigned to respond to emergencies. The duty crew will be assigned by the Fire Chief. The duty crew will refrain from consuming alcohol and will be available to respond to emergencies that may occur during the social event.

Insurance

The qRD will purchase an annual commercial general liability policy with host liquor liability that will be applicable to all the fire departments' social events. The qRD will be listed as an additional insured.

Alcohol Sales

The sale of alcohol is prohibited, except for special events for which the necessary liquor license and/or permit has been obtained.

Permits

Liquor licenses and/or permits are not required, at staff parties and private parties at places of business.

A permit may be required for special events that are open to the public, and when there is a charge for attendance or charge for liquor.

Other

Members and guests are responsible to ensure that they do not drive while impaired when leaving the fire hall.

Alcoholic beverages are not to be readily accessible by or consumed by minors (such as children or family members of members) who may be attending the fire hall at the designated social area, or at social events.

Consumption and possession of illegal drugs is not permitted about the fire hall.

RESPONSIBILITY/AUTHORITY TO ACT:

It is the responsibility of all members to adhere to this policy and promote a culture of safety and professionalism within the fire hall premises.

Each member is responsible to advise a supervisor of suspected violations of the Department's alcohol policy.

The qRD takes the health and safety of its members seriously, and requires all members and their guests to abide by this policy. If the qRD becomes aware of any contraventions of this policy by members or their guests, the qRD will investigate the circumstances surrounding these contraventions. Contravention of this policy may, at the discretion of the Fire Chief, result in, up to and including the revocation of certain privileges, suspension, and dismissal.

REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- Occupational Health & Safety Regulation Section 4.19 Physical or mental impairment and 4.20 Impairment by alcohol, drug or other substance
- qRD Fire Department Occupational Health & Safety Program Manual
- Available for Duty Acknowledgement Form
- BC Liquor Control and Licensing Act