

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	April 10, 2025
Subject / Report No:	CCR-CW-03-25
Title:	Dufferin and Grey Emergency Mutual Assistance Agreement
Prepared by:	Marlene McLevy, Emergency Systems Coordinator / Claims Supervisor
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	N/A

Recommendation

1. That Report CCR-CW-03-25 Dufferin and Grey Emergency Mutual Assistance Agreement, be received; and
2. That the Warden and the Clerk be authorized to enter into the attached draft agreement with the County of Dufferin.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek authorization for the County of Grey to enter into the attached draft Emergency Mutual Assistance Agreement between Grey and Dufferin Counties.

The report outlines the importance of having mutual assistance agreements in place prior to emergencies, as well as the highlights of what is covered under the draft Dufferin and Grey agreement.

This report recommends that the County of Grey be authorized to enter into the attached Dufferin and Grey Emergency Mutual Assistance Agreement.

Background and Discussion

It is considered a best practice for municipalities to have mutual assistance agreements in place in advance of emergency situations. These agreements allow municipalities to request various types of assistance from each other through a streamlined process,

helping to eliminate uncertainty and reducing the risk of misunderstandings when assistance is needed.

In 2016-17, Grey County and its nine member municipalities signed such an agreement to support each other during declared emergencies when needed.

The attached draft Mutual Assistance Agreement between Grey and Dufferin Counties allows each County to request help from the other. During a large-scale, widespread emergency, it can be especially helpful for either County to have potential access to resources outside of its own boundaries. If either County declares an emergency, the agreement ensures a clear and efficient process for requesting or providing assistance based on prearranged terms.

The draft agreement is included at the end of this report for review. On February 13, 2025, Dufferin County Council authorized its Warden and Clerk to enter into this agreement.

Key highlights of the agreement include:

What may be provided as assistance?

- Services, Equipment, Materials, Personnel (e.g. various specialized staff including Information Technology, Emergency Management and Communications professionals, Personal Support Workers, heavy equipment operators, staff to assist in operating an evacuation centre, etc.)

How is request for assistance made?

- CAO (requesting party) asks CAO (other party)
- Request can first be made verbally, followed up in writing up to three days later

What are the benefits of having such an agreement?

- Everyone knows what the process is, reducing confusion in the midst of chaos
- Each CAO is authorized to request and/or to agree to provide assistance;
- Speeds up the process as request doesn't need to go through either Council at the time of the emergency

How is the Assisting Municipality kept in the information loop about the emergency/progress, etc.?

- Assisting Municipality may appoint a representative to Emergency Control Group of the Assisted Municipality for the duration of the emergency

Who pays for assistance provided?

- Assisted Municipality

What if the Assisting Municipality wishes to donate some or all of its assistance?

- Nothing in the agreement prevents the council of the Assisting Municipality from passing a resolution to waive part/all of the fees associated with provision of the assistance if it so wishes

What is payable?

- Wages, salaries, expenses (i.e. reasonable costs incurred by the Assisting Municipality in providing the assistance), excluding employment benefits
- Food, lodging if necessary, etc.
- Operating costs of personnel, equipment, services, materials (e.g. fuel)

Estimates of cost to assist?

- Assisting Municipality will provide, if practical, estimate of cost to provide assistance
- Equipment will be charged out at current Ontario Provincial Standard Specification (OPSS) 127 rates

Who is considered the employer of staff sent from the Assisting Municipality to the Assisted Municipality in response to a request for additional staff?

- Assisting Municipality remains the employer

Who provides supervision of staff provided by the Assisting Municipality to the Assisted Municipality?

- Staff provided by the Assisting Municipality will take direction from the on-site supervisor where the assistance is being provided
- However, the Assisting Municipality remains responsible for supervising its personnel and equipment, and staff are expected to bring concerns to their manager as they would in any non-emergency situation
- Supervisors of the Assisting Municipality must be accessible both on-site and remotely, at all times for consultation with staff helping the Assisted Municipality.

Indemnity

- If either party fails to meet its responsibilities under the agreement, it promises to protect and cover any resulting losses or legal claims against the other party, whether it is in the position of receiving or providing assistance.

Limitations

- Neither party is obligated to provide assistance, with each retaining the right to refuse any request and to offer other options to what was originally requested
- There will be no liability where a party fails to respond to a request for assistance
- There shall be no obligation on the Assisting Municipality to provide further assistance/take action beyond which was specifically agreed upon
- The Assisting Municipality (through its CAO) may withdraw any/all assistance upon providing verbal/written notice

Standard Terms & Conditions

- Invoicing and Payment Terms
- Damages, Insurance
- Information Sharing, Confidentiality

Legislated Requirements

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E. 9 provides that the Council of a municipality may make an agreement with another municipality for the provision of any personnel, service, equipment or material during a declared emergency.

For clarity, such agreements do not override or apply to fire services already covered by mutual aid agreements under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (1997, S.O. 1997, c.4) or those directed by the Ontario Fire Marshal.

Financial and Resource Implications

None.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: CAO, Senior Management Team, Legal, this report's author
 - ☐ AODA Compliance (describe)
 - ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)
- ☒ External: Dufferin County Emergency Manager, Clerk's and Legal

Appendices and Attachments

Dufferin – Grey Mutual Assistance Agreement