



Staff Report CL2021-040

Title of Report: CL2021-040-Support Simcoe County Resolution re:
Annual Emergency Exercise Requirement
Department: Clerks
Branch: Legislative and Council Services
Council Date: December 15, 2021

Recommendation:

Whereas *Ontario Regulation 380/04: Standards* under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* sets the municipal standards for emergency management programs in Ontario and requires municipalities to conduct an annual exercise with their Emergency Control Group in order to evaluate the municipality's emergency response plan and procedures, O. Reg. 380/04, s. 12 (6);

Whereas Emergency Management Ontario previously granted municipalities exemption for the annual exercise requirement when the municipality experienced an actual emergency with documented proof of the municipality actively engaging their emergency management procedures and plan in response to the emergency;

Whereas on August 5, 2021 the Chief, Emergency Management Ontario issued a memo to Community Emergency Management Coordinators stating that effective immediately, the Chief, EMO would no longer be issuing exemptions to the O. Reg. 380/04 requirement to conduct an annual exercise;

Whereas municipalities experience significant costs and burden to staff resources when faced with the response to an actual emergency and activation of their Emergency Control Group and/or Emergency Operations Centre;

Whereas a municipality's response to an actual emergency is more effective than an exercise in evaluating its emergency response plan and procedures as mandated by O. Reg. 380/04;

Whereas planning, conducting and evaluating an emergency exercise requires significant time and effort for the Community Emergency Management Coordinator and Municipal Emergency Control Group that is duplicated when the municipality experiences a real emergency;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That the Corporation of the Township of Southgate hereby requests the Province of Ontario to amend *Ontario Regulation 380/04* under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* to provide an exemption to the annual exercise requirement for municipalities that have activated their Emergency Control Group and/or Emergency Response Plan in response to an actual emergency that year in recognition of the significant resources used to respond to the emergency and the effectiveness of such response in evaluating the municipality's emergency response plan and procedures; and

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General, Grey-Bruce MPP Bill Walker, and all other municipalities in Ontario.

Background:

Staff received correspondence (Attachment 1) from the County of Simcoe through the County of Grey Emergency Management Department who explained that earlier this year, a group of Simcoe County CEMCs discussed the communication that we received from OFMEM in August, that there will no longer be any exceptions to the annual exercise requirement, even if the municipality experienced an actual emergency that year.

Feeling frustrated, they drafted a resolution for Simcoe County Council to send to the province to have this practice amended in 2022. Along with a report to council, the resolution was presented and approved. Simcoe County is looking for other municipalities to support their resolution and also appeal to the province.

Staff Comments:

Staff are very supportive of the resolution approved by Simcoe County and are looking for Council to support the motion. When a municipality is experiencing a declared emergency, staff resources are focussed on the emergency that is happening and do not feel it necessary to further exhaust efforts by conducting an exercise when members of the emergency control group have already experienced and learnt from the current emergency.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications to the Township as a result of this report.

Communications & Community Action Plan Impact:

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public.

Concluding Comments:

That Council consider supporting the motion regarding the annual emergency exercise requirement in accordance with the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dept. Head: Original Signed By
Lindsey Green, Clerk/Alternate CEMC

CAO Approval: Original Signed By
Dave Milliner, CAO

Attachments: Simcoe County Resolution re Annual Exercise Requirement