

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS  
JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION: Fire Chief EXEMPT: Yes  
LOCATION: Columbia Falls Fire Station SHIFT: Salaried  
REPORTS TO: City Manager TYPE: Full Time

**SUMMARY:** Directs the services of two fire departments, a city department and a rural district; both served by the same volunteer firefighters. Job includes a variety of technical, administrative, and supervisory work in planning, organizing, directing and implementing, fire prevention, suppression and rescue services to prevent or minimize loss of life and property by fire or disaster conditions. Job includes building inspection and fire scene investigation associated with responsibility of Fire Marshall. Regularly, first on scene to fire or accident during shift and available for call-out to major emergencies. Frequently performs the duties of personnel supervised.

**NATURE OF WORK:** Success of the work is dependent upon a good working relationship with a volunteer work force that fosters well-trained, motivated and committed volunteer firemen.

This position performs administrative, professional and technical duties requiring ability to budget, do long range planning, solve problems, ensure adherence to proper procedures and supervise others. Work is often performed in emergency and stressful situations. While performing the duties of this job, the employee occasionally works near moving parts and in highly variable outside weather conditions and is exposed to fumes, toxic or caustic chemicals, airborne particles, vibration and risk of electrical shock. The employee occasionally works in precarious places including elevated surfaces and confining spaces that are very close to the body with restricted movement. The employee regularly is in an office or vehicle environment. The noise level in the work environment can be very loud. Demands for intense involvement with this environment can continue in excess of two hours.

**PERSONAL CONTACTS:** Frequent contact with the public through the office, meetings, functions, and other governmental agencies and departments. Regular contact with City Manager, City Council and Rural Fire Board. Daily contact with firemen.

**SUPERVISION EXERCISED:** Directs and administers the department operations and personnel.

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:** Ability to motivate a volunteer work force to train, seek leadership opportunities, respond to call-out, and maintain department vehicles, equipment and buildings.

Position requires ability to: plan and direct activities; communicate orally and in writing; operate radios and phone systems; perform limited medical procedures; operate fire equipment; operate computer and office machines. Must possess a valid Montana drivers license appropriate for operation of department vehicles and Fire Code Inspectors certification from ICBO. **Physical Requirements:** Ability to sit, talk or hear; stand; walk; use hands to finger, handle, or operate

objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands and arms. Occasionally required to climb or balance, stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl; and taste or smell. Must frequently lift and/or moves up to 50 pounds and more with assistance. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus. Demands for a high level of physical activity can have a duration period in excess of two hours. Hazards of position include dealing with dangerous situations, including exposure to body fluids, communicable diseases, smoke, fumes, fire, toxic or caustic chemicals/hazardous wastes, airborne particles, vibration and risk of electrical shock.

**AREAS OF JOB ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE:**

- a. Plans, coordinates, supervises, and evaluates departmental operations.
- b. Establishes policies and procedures for the department staff in accordance with city policy.
- c. Plans and implements department programs to implement policies and achieve department goals.
- d. Prepares and submits an annual budget for department services and directs the implementation of the department budget.
- e. Establishes a capital replacement plan and assembles specifications for new equipment.
- f. Responds to alarms and directs activities at the emergency scene.
- g. Administers and enforces the Uniform Fire Code as amended. Inspect buildings and premises in accordance with policy and Code.
- h. Coordinates fire prevention programs, and public education.
- i. Conducts fire investigations, interviews witnesses, photographs fire scenes, examines fire scene to establish origin and cause of fire, issues reports, and provides testimony.
- j. Prepares, submits and maintains a variety of records and reports related to fire inspections, code enforcement, permits, training and investigations.
- k. Directs, coordinates and conducts in-service operations and safety training activities.
- l. Conducts departmental discipline and grievances procedures.
- m. Conducts personnel evaluation to determine competence and staffing needs.
- n. Assigns personnel and equipment to such duties and uses as the service requires.
- o. Recruits, orients and retains volunteer fire personnel.
- p. Performs minor repairs and maintenance on department equipment and facilities.

The list is not a ranking of importance. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. The term “department” infers like or identical responsibility to both the City Fire Department and the Rural Fire District.

**PERIPHERAL DUTIES:** Attends conferences and meetings to keep abreast of current trends in the field; represents the City Fire Department in a variety of local, county, state and other meetings.

**NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:**

- A. Knowledge of the methods and techniques that motivates, recruits and retains a volunteer fire fighting work force.
- B. Knowledge of modern fire suppression, prevention, rescue, emergency medical, and disaster principles, procedures, techniques, and equipment; working knowledge of first aid and resuscitation techniques and their application.
- C. Knowledge of applicable law, ordinances, departmental standard operating procedures, and regulations.
- D. Skill in the operation of the departments tools and equipment.

- E. Ability to train and supervise subordinate personnel; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; ability to exercise sound judgment in evaluating situations and in making decisions; ability to effectively give and receive verbal written instructions; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other employees, supervisors, and the public.
- F. Ability to administer, make sound management decisions, and initiate work without direct supervision.

**EDUCATION / EXPERIENCE:** A combination of education and experience that demonstrates considerable knowledge of the following: high skill in recruiting, retaining and managing volunteer firemen; methods and procedures for fire control and prevention involving building and wild lands.

**LANGUAGE SKILLS:** Ability to comprehend detailed and complex standards, procedures, policies, issues, programs and projects. Skill in translating technical concepts to inform members of the general public, officials, employees and contractors in one-on-one and small group situations. Skill in efficiently communicating directives to general public, officials, employees and contractors, whom may occasionally be uncooperative, in terms that assure performance that reasonably reflects department procedures and city policy.

**REASONING ABILITY:** Ability to identify and discern interrelationships among multiple variables which may consist of extensive details, figures, concepts or principles, which may occasionally be conflicting, or obscure. Ability to interpret multiple variables to formulate application to practical problems.

**CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS:** Must possess and maintain the following: a current State of Montana Drivers license for any period after the first month of employment; a current certification for hazardous material response for any period after the first 12 months of employment; a certification for Fire Code Inspectors for the Uniform Fire Code under the International Certified Building Official for any period after the first 12 months of employment; and a medical license for a minimum first responder ambulance for any period after the first 12 months of employment.

**EQUIPMENT OPERATING SKILLS.** Skill in performing operations using apparatus, pumps, hoses, other standard fire fighting and rescue equipment. Skill in driving heavy and light duty trucks. Skill in performing minor maintenance on vehicles, equipment and facilities. Skill in performing operations using office equipment common to this department, to include: telephone, mobile radio, pager, computer keyboard, word processing or data entry software, copier and printer.