



PEACE RIVER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Northern HEAT 2025 Fire Training Conference

September 4, 2025 – Firefighters from across Alberta will be heading to Peace River next week for the 2025 Northern HEAT Fire Training Conference. This annual conference, organized by the Peace Regional Fire Chiefs Association, brings together some of North America's leading fire service experts to provide training that is normally inaccessible to northern fire departments. H.E.A.T. stands for Hands on Education and Awareness Training and the 4-day conference has a mix of practical training as well as lecture style presentations. Also included is a Trade show featuring over 25 Fire industry suppliers and service providers. This is the 24th Annual Regional Fire Conference that has been held in Peace River, historically held in May, it was moved to September last year to avoid conflicts with wildfires that have affected the conference in previous years in May.

The conference kicks off on September 10th, with two days of Live Fire Training at the Peace River Fire Department's training site in the West Hill industrial area. 64 students from across Alberta will go through four different stations and experience training in Fire behavior and Flashover, advancing hose lines into buildings for interior fire attacks, forcible entry into buildings, escape from confined spaces, dumpster fires, and gas flange fires.

Then on September 12th and 13th, firefighters will experience presentations on Company Officer Leadership from Assistant Chief Nolan Jespersen of Fort Saskatchewan Fire Dept., Deputy Chief Aandrea Gardiner of Greenview Fire-Rescue, Captain Mike Shykora of the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Services, and Rodney Schmidt of High Level at the Chateau Nova Hotel in Peace River. There will also be more hands-on training at the training site and Fire Halls in town by renowned instructors including: Fire Dynamics from Assistant Chief Amy West of Taber Fire Dept., Captain Sean Gray of Cobb County Fire Dept., Georgia, USA, and Captain John Ceriello of New York Fire Dept., USA. District Chief Bryan Hall and Senior Firefighter Tracay Depew of the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Services along with Deputy Chief Chris Gullett of Smoky River Fire Rescue will instruct on Vehicle Extrication techniques. Entry Level Rope Rescue will be instructed by Chief Training Officer Phil Tufford of the Grande Prairie Fire Dept., Deputy Chief Julien Bergeron of Northern Sunrise County Protective Services, Senior Firefighter Travis Skrepnek and Firefighter Ivan Petersen of the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Services.

The Trade show at the Chateau Nova Hotel runs Friday September 12th from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm and Saturday September 13th from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

“So there will be quite a few firefighters in town during the conference” said Tim Harris, Peace River Fire Chief and Conference Organizing Committee member, “please welcome them to Peace River and thank them for the work they do in keeping all our communities safe”.