



Taber Dispatch Supervisor - Dana Bel

SouthGrown Success

Excellence in Innovation 2nd - Town of Taber Emergency Vehicle Response

Taber-area 911 service fastest on four wheels

Should they ever have to dial 911, residents of the MD of Taber have the assurance their Emergency Vehicle Response System (EVRS) will soon be at the door.

Since mid-2009, this state-of-the-art system has been deploying emergency services for some 16,000 residents through the Taber Dispatch Centre, thanks to the co-operation of the MD, Taber, Vauxhall and Barnwell.

When a 911 call is received, the call-response and vehicle-locating system sends maps to laptops in all emergency vehicles, showing the call's location and the best route based on database information on road closures, events, construction, and weather.

The dispatch center sees the location of every vehicle on its master-computer map display, which receives the GPS co-ordinates over a cellphone data network. The EVRS can also respond to other types of calls for service that come into the dispatch center.

"Receiving and award of this nature is a real accomplishment for our team of municipal partners that are all fully committed to providing the highest level of emergency service possible," says Bryce Surina, the MD of Taber's director of GIS and Information Technology. "Being awarded the recognition by the SouthGrow Regional Initiative is a success story for our partnership. It confirms that we have reached our goals set out by the project: shorting response times, providing accurate and efficient emergency response mapping and routing, and standardizing key emergency caller information to reduce errors in caller locations such as addressing."

"Reaching these specific goals all tie into saving lives which leads us to our true accomplishment as stated in the Awards Criteria that we have successfully 'improved the quality of life' for the residents of our region."

In a dramatic, real-life example of the system's accuracy and efficiency, an EMS crew transporting a patient to Calgary had to pull over to begin CPR. The team required a second crew to provide transportation while it continued CPR. Although they didn't know their exact location, the system did. The EVRS enabled dispatchers to pinpoint their location to within two metres and send the closest available ambulance. The

patient made it to Calgary, received treatment, and was eventually released.

"We are especially appreciative of this award because it means we did a good job of meeting the criteria that were required to win it," says Tom Moffat, Information Technology manager for Taber. "We are continually striving to improve the quality of life for residents in our region and it is wonderful to know that the SouthGrow Regional Initiative feels that we have achieved this goal during the past year. This kind of feedback is very important to our staff, to give them the incentive to keep trying to improve our services and programs in the coming year, and to know that they have been recognized for their ongoing efforts."

"We are very proud of the lifesaving elements of the EVRS that have made the community of Taber and our local 911 calling region a safer, healthier place to live."

The EVRS is an innovative project created from scratch using some of the latest technologies in the fields of real-time global positioning systems, wireless communications, software development, mapping applications, and computer hardware and networking.

The partners consulted with experts on geographical information systems, IT and finance departments and emergency services. They procured funding and developed an RFP process based on identified needs. Staff were trained, software tested and problems overcome. The Taber Police Service and various emergency services staff were asked to parallel the new with existing procedures during a trial period.

Staff have been given the power to use their own judgment and common sense to override routing suggestions made by the software, and radios from the previous system provide backup.

The EVRS has met the partners' expectations by providing precise and rapid location data and information recording. Dispatchers from the Taber Police Service 911 Dispatch Center use the system to Taber, Vauxhall, Hays, Grassy Lake and Enchant.

Their initiative has been recognized as a best practice in municipal government by the province's Department of Municipal Affairs.

For more information contact:

Town of Taber Emergency Vehicle Response

Contact: Ray Bryant, Mayor

Town of Taber

4900A - 50 Street, Taber, AB

Email: mayor@taber.ca

Phone: 403-223-5519

