

# Five full-time firefighters hired to boost protection

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Staff Writer

You will be better protected during fires or emergencies with the arrival of five new firefighters April 3.

Better fire coverage can also translate to better fire insurance rates.

Until now, there was only

enough staff in Whichchurch-Stouffville fire and emergency services to have full-time firefighters available about 30 per cent of the time.

After that, volunteer firefighters, working on an on-call basis took over. But it was often difficult to have enough volunteers on hand to cover the municipality during

weekends and summer.

Now there will be full-time coverage from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week, Fire Chief Chris Powers explained.

About \$245,000 was earmarked in the 2006 budget for extra staff.

Firefighters work out of stations in downtown Stouffville, on Main

Street and Ballantrae on Hwy. 48. A search is underway for land to build a third station.

The Vandorf area in the north-western part of the municipality should see better coverage as well. Negotiations are underway with Central York Fire Services of Newmarket and Aurora, which opened a

new station near Vandorf.

The five new firefighters are needed to cope with the dramatically rising number of calls in the past few years.

The department is looking for more volunteer firefighters. Applications are available at both stations and at the town offices.

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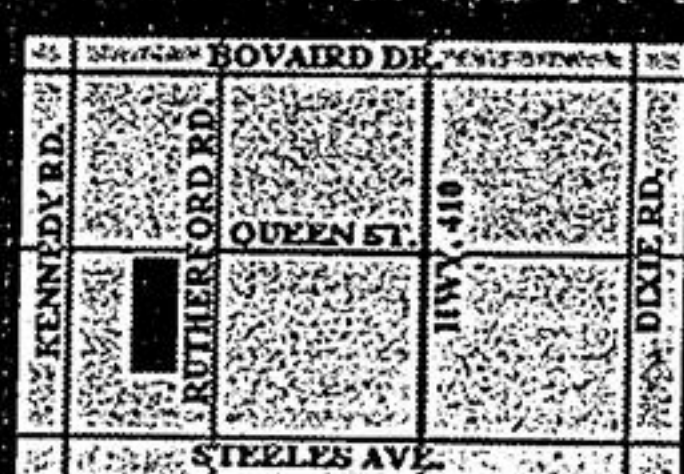
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