

North

# Whitehorse's new fire hall is officially up and running

\$3.8 million building is already in use, location will facilitate faster response times

[Philippe Morin](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jun 17, 2021 1:42 PM CT | Last Updated: June 17



It wasn't a ribbon that was cut on Thursday as dignitaries officially opened Fire Hall #1. Instead Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis decoupled a fire hose. (Philippe Morin/CBC)

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comments

The new fire hall in Whitehorse, which has a \$3.8 million price tag, officially opened on Thursday.

Fire Hall #1, which firefighters had already settled into, is a two-storey building with three vehicle bays and room for equipment and firefighting gear. It also includes living space with three dorm rooms and some amenities like a shower and exercise equipment.

"It's hard to believe the old fire hall lasted 53 years," said Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis.



Clean machine: A fire truck and the opening ceremony is reflected in the wheel of another gleaming fire truck. (Philippe Morin/CBC)

## Recycled steel

Some of the building is recycled.

The City of Whitehorse purchased the downtown lot and an old garage in 1994.

The original steel structure from the Motorways garage and some concrete was retained for the new project which was entirely funded by the City of Whitehorse.

## Architect was longtime fire chief

The building's designer architect was Yukoner Charles McLaren who died in June 2020.

A volunteer firefighter for more than 25 years, McLaren was also a longtime fire chief of Golden Horn's volunteer fire department.



Whitehorse Fire Chief Jason Everitt said the facility 'allow us to do what we do best.' (Philippe Morin/CBC)

## Quicker response time

The new building is near the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre and allows quick access to Second Avenue by a nearby intersection.

The nearby traffic light has a device which is supposed to recognize siren sounds and give firefighters a green light, and speed up response times.

This system is still being tested.

Whitehorse's old fire hall saw trucks merge directly onto a busier section of Second Avenue which sometimes proved awkward or time-consuming.

As per modern conventions on safety, the fire hall does not have a pole for firefighters to slide down.

Instead gear is kept on the first floor metres away from the trucks.

The fire hall is designed to have people on site 24 hours a day all year, serving as a "quasi-home to the men and women who wear the uniform. They'll likely spend more time within these walls than they do in their own homes," said Whitehorse Fire Chief Jason Everitt.

Whitehorse's old fire hall [will be replaced and possibly demolished as part of a plan to renew city hall.](#)