



## THE CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT MODEL

A fire and ambulance special district is ideal for areas that face challenges in staffing or funding emergency services. It also benefits regions with overlapping services, equipment, and processes, which can be consolidated for greater efficiency. Fire departments and ambulance services typically operate in a defined area and plan and equip their organizations without regard to their neighboring agency's resources.

There is significant redundancy, not just in fire and ambulance vehicles but also in hoses, tools, and gear. In Minnesota, neighboring communities can each have millions of dollars invested in large apparatus and ambulances. Many redundancies can be identified by removing municipal boundaries and planning emergency services across a larger region. This allows for the consolidation or reduction of apparatus, equipment, programs, protocols, and sometimes even fire stations, leading to a more efficient and effective emergency response system.

## CLOQUET AREA FIRE DISTRICT

The Cloquet Area Fire District is the result of 4 different fire departments consolidating into one combined fire, rescue, and ambulance service organization. Created in 2009, the consolidated district model has allowed the CAFD to eliminate one entire fire station, along with 5 large firefighting and 2 mid-sized vehicles, with a replacement cost exceeding \$4 million today. We have improved our insurance services organization (ISO) rating to a 3 for our entire fire response area and have developed a rapid, capable, and effective response to all areas served. Legislation establishing special districts allows for an equitable distribution of the cost of services provided across the entire service area.

### Eliminates

- Duplicative apparatus (expensive- hundreds of thousands to a million plus)
- Duplicative administrations/department leadership
- Standardizes training to strengthen capability and effectiveness
- Individual department responses that can vary greatly due to a lack of coordinated protocols.

### Creates

- An equitable response to all areas within the district rather than a different level of capability within neighboring municipalities.
- A better Insurance services organization rating (likely reduces property insurance costs)
- A system that distributes the cost of providing the service equitably amongst all who receive it.
- A pathway to collaboration that will sustain emergency fire, rescue, and EMS response in areas struggling to staff and/or fund their service.
- Standardized responses to provide a more comprehensive, coordinated, and efficient response to a larger geographical area.
- The strength to adapt to increasing service demands and community needs.
- Growth potential for services such as risk reduction, fire prevention, and education that cannot be accomplished with a smaller, separate department.

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