

ムトゼ ハマトットコイ Cree Nation Government Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

Whapmagoostui ·Á∧Ld°⊃∆

Chisasibi Cらさん

Wemindji ·∆Г° ̀Г̀

Eastmain ∆\7°

Waskaganish Þ'∆boo″

Nemaska ¬Γ'b° Waswanipi

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Ouje-Bougoumou ▷1>dJ

Mistissini 「いっと Washaw Sibi

べら マネネ MoCreebec Jb☆V⁵

## About the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government

Our land—Eeyou Istchee—which means the People's Land, comprises over three hundred "traplines," or traditional family hunting and trapping grounds. Our traditional territory, an area of over 400,000 square kilometres, or two-thirds the size of France, is located primarily in northern Quebec and includes the lands on the eastern shore of James Bay and southeastern Hudson Bay, as well as the lakes and rivers that drain into them.

In addition, our traditional territory includes lands which we have historically occupied in Ontario, across the Ontario-Quebec border. Each of our Cree First Nation community is administered independently through their local governments, and at the same time, each elected Chief sits on the Board of Directors of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Council of the Cree Nation Government to address common Cree Nation issues.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) is the political body that represents the over 20,000 Crees or Eeyouch/Eenouch. The Board/Council is constituted of twenty (20) members including: the Grand Chief and Deputy-Grand Chief elected at large by the Eeyouch, the Chiefs elected by each of the nine (9) communities incorporated into our Treaty—the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, and one (1) other representative elected by each community.

The Cree Nation Government exercises governmental and administrative functions on behalf of the Cree Nation. Both have identical membership, board of directors, governing structures and are managed and operated as one. The tenth Cree First Nation, Washaw Sibi, is in the process of establishing its own community and will eventually become part of the Treaty. The eleventh Cree First Nation is MoCreebec, whose members reside on the Ontario side of James Bay and maintain a unique affiliation with the other Eeyou First Nations.

## Fire Protection in Eeyou Istchee

Fire protection is an assumed federal obligation pursuant to both the New Relationship Agreement with Canada and the Paix des Braves with Quebec. As a result, community fire protection initiatives are supported by financial allocations from both the federal and provincial governments. Funding from all sources is required annually to meet new and evolving operational needs.

The Cree Nation Government's Department of Capital Works and Services (CWS) oversees community fire protection in Eeyou Istchee. The Fire Protection team is comprised of the Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention Officer and Fire Protection Administrator. The CWS Fire Protection and Prevention Unit is responsible for the following:

- firefighters' training, equipment purchases, assistance to local fire departments
- fire prevention training, fire inspections, fire investigations, and public education programs

- development of standard operating guidelines with local fire departments
- elaboration of Emergency Measures Plan with local administration officials

Our communities employ full-time firefighters and firehalls equipped with current and up to date firefighting/search and rescue vehicles and equipment.

## Portrait of Residential Fires in Cree First Nation Communities

Despite significant progress in self-government for the Cree Nation in Eeyou Istchee, including control over education and health care systems, issues such as inadequate housing, overcrowding and diminished living conditions persist. These factors contribute to heightened fire risks in residential settings.

In 2017, incident reports revealed that the most common causes of residential fires reported among the Cree First Nation communities included:

- **Lit smoking materials**: Fires ignited by unattended or improperly extinguished cigarettes or similar items.
- Children or youth playing with lighters or matches: Unsupervised access to firestarting tools resulting in accidental fires.
- Kitchen/grease fires: Accidents occurring during cooking, often from unattended or overheated stovetops.
- Electrical fires: Faulty wiring, overloaded circuits, or malfunctioning appliances.
- Combustibles near heating sources: Items like clothing or furniture placed too close to stoves, heaters, or fireplaces.

Tragically, in many cases injuries have occurred as a result of residential fires and, in some cases, death. Addressing these challenges requires continued efforts in fire protection education and training, fire prevention initiatives, and improvements in housing infrastructure to reduce fire risks and enhance community safety at large by the Eeyouch.