

Long-time Fire Chief Ian Laing dies



Central York Fire Services has announced the death of long-time Fire Chief Ian Laing.

In a statement issued by the Fire Service on Thursday morning, the CYFS said Laing died peacefully in his sleep overnight.

Laing had served as Chief of the CYFS, which serves Aurora and Newmarket, since 2010 and was instrumental in expanding the service to meet the needs of two rapidly-growing communities.

"It is with a heavy heart that I share the news of Fire Chief Ian Laing's passing," said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. "Chief Laing served our community with dedication and courage, leaving an indelible mark on our Town. We are forever grateful for his leadership and commitment to public safety and keeping our community safe. Our thoughts are with Chief Laing's family during this difficult time."

Newmarket Mayor John Taylor, in the same statement, said it was a "sad day" for the CYFS, both communities, and the entire firefighting community.

"The Fire Chief dedicated 48 years of his career to fire services, and 14 years as the Fire Chief for CYFS," said Mayor Taylor. "Beyond CYFS, Chief was a leader in his field, providing mentorship, guidance, strength, and support to many across fire services as the Regional Fire Coordinator for York Region. Most importantly, he was a dear colleague and friend who will be greatly missed. Chief Laing was and will always be an integral part of Central York Fire Services."

Flags in public spaces across Aurora and Newmarket were lowered Thursday morning in his honour and will remain so until after his funeral, which has not yet been announced.

Laing began his life of service when he joined Mississauga Fire in 1975, where, upon his departure in 2009, he had risen through the ranks to Assistant Deputy Chief.

"Chief Laing's fire services peers will remember him for his love of running rescues, being on the auto extrication team and participating in competitions," said the CYFS. "In his personal time, he enjoyed rides on his Harley motorcycle and going on road trips with his wife. Ian Laing truly loved the fire service."

?Among many of the Fire Chief's accomplishments, his greatest source of pride was the construction and opening of CYFS Station 4-5 ? the first jointly-build fire station in the Towns of Aurora and Newmarket, which opened in 2022. This state-of-the-art facility not only helped CYFS respond to emergencies faster but also provided enhanced training and opportunities for staff to strengthen their physical and mental health.?

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