

Firehouses to be located in all villages by fall

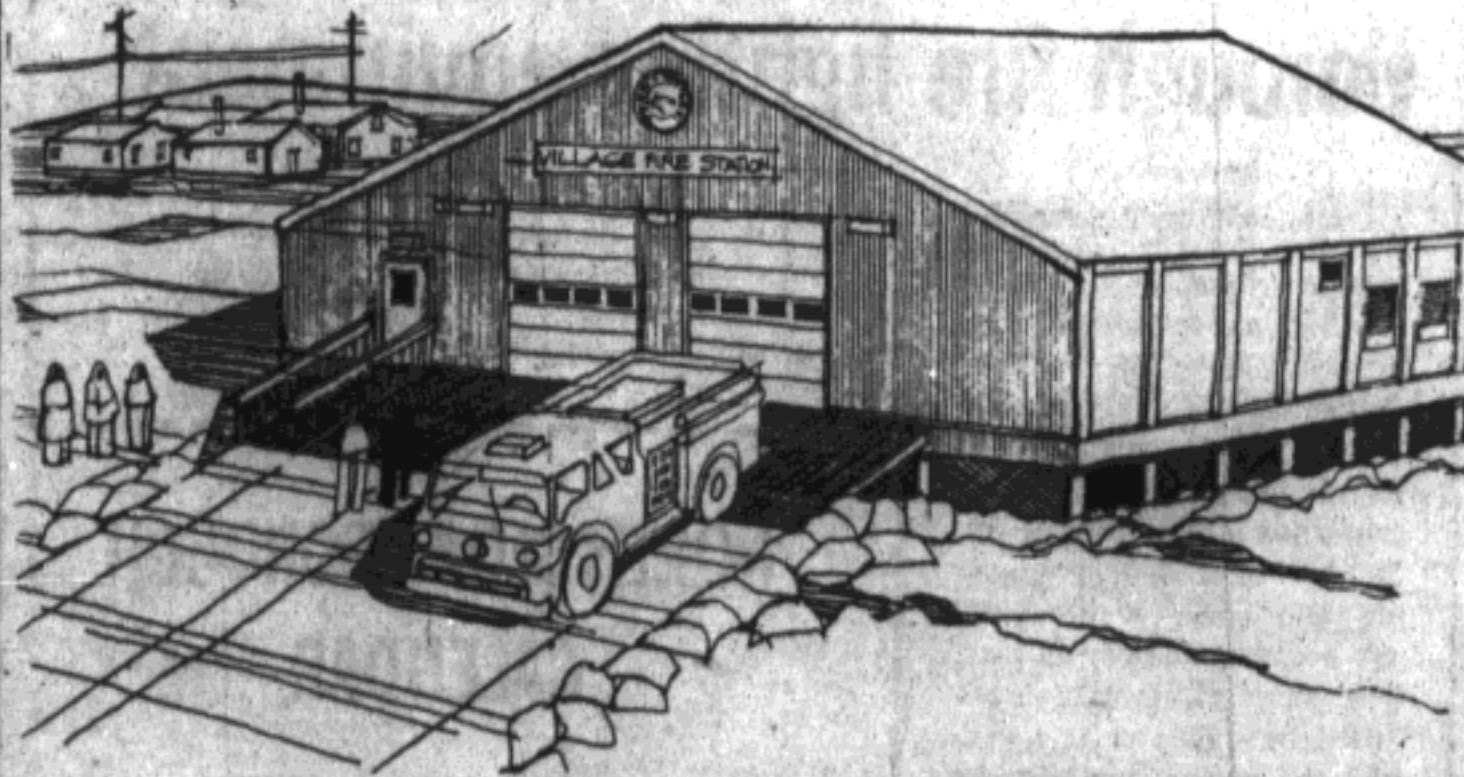


PHOTO BY ROBERT W. HARPER

An architect's sketch of the new firehouse that is scheduled to go up in each North Slope Borough village by this fall.

Each village will be getting a firehouse this fall with a double garage that can hold up to four firefighting vehicles. Specially designed for the Arctic, it will come with heavy insulation and features that will allow all training to be done indoors.

Among those features are a water recycling system that will allow firefighters to spray water from firetruck pumps inside the building. A storage tank will collect the spent water and pump it back into the firetruck's water tank. In a side room a smokemaker and a stairway have been installed to simulate conditions inside a burning building. In this smoke-room firefighters can learn to function while packing oxygen tanks.

In addition to these special features the firehouses will also have showers, dressing and sleeping quarters, a classroom training area and storage space.

Olympic Builders has been contracted to erect the firehouses this summer. New North Slope Borough Fire Chief Tom Opie says the builders claim they can construct the specially designed, prefabricated "folding buildings" in each village by September. Ceiling and wall sections of the folding buildings will arrive on site hinged together. A crane can then lift the ceiling and the walls will unfold beneath it. Workers will then secure the sections together and the structure will be in place.

"The contractor said they could get the firehouses up by September," says Opie. "That was our major concern." The quick construction will not mean any sacrifice in quality, according to Opie, "These will be nice stations."

Three firefighting vehicles are on order to go into each village firehouse. The three
(Continued on Page Thirteen)

Borough fire fighting equipment

(Continued from Page Eleven)

include a "pumper," a "tanker" and an ambulance. The pumper will be the frontline firefighting machine, equipped with a 2,000 gallon water-tank, a pump and nozzle that can douse a fire with up to 500 gallons of water per minute and room to stow all the necessary firefighting gear. The tanker will provide an extra 3,200 gallon water reserve for the pumper but will also have the same 500 gallon per minute pump and nozzle so that it can backup the pumper if needed. The ambulance will be a customized Chevrolet Suburban equipped with all the necessary emergency medical technology.

To make this firefighting equipment work, Opie says he will rely on volunteers. "The Borough will be providing the building and the equipment but it will be up to the villagers to supply the labor. It will be strictly volunteer .