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## Fire away

Minden Hills firefighter Michael Xerri helps Tasha Reid, 6, use a fire hose during a demonstration to mark First Responders Day on Monday, May 1. The open house was a part of a county-wide initiative to celebrate first responders. See more photos on pages 12 and 13. /ADAM FRISK special to the Times

# ER closure benefits Haliburton facility

by JAMES MATTHEWS  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The shortage of medical staff is at the root of the decision to close the Minden Hills Emergency Department.

Haliburton Highlands Health Services recently announced the facility would close June 1. The Haliburton Emergency Department will continue to accept patients.

Carolyn Plummer, the CEO and president at HHHS, and David O'Brien, chairperson of the health service's board of directors,

explained the reasons for the decision when Minden council met April 27.

The Zoom online broadcast of the meeting drew 165 viewers before the HHHS delegation. Soon after Plummer and O'Brien assumed their hot seats, viewership shot up to 214 people.

"It was one of those days in your life that you never want to come across," O'Brien said of when the decision was made to close a facility.

"In order to maintain our health service provision here in the county, we need to have

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