



**PARKSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2015**



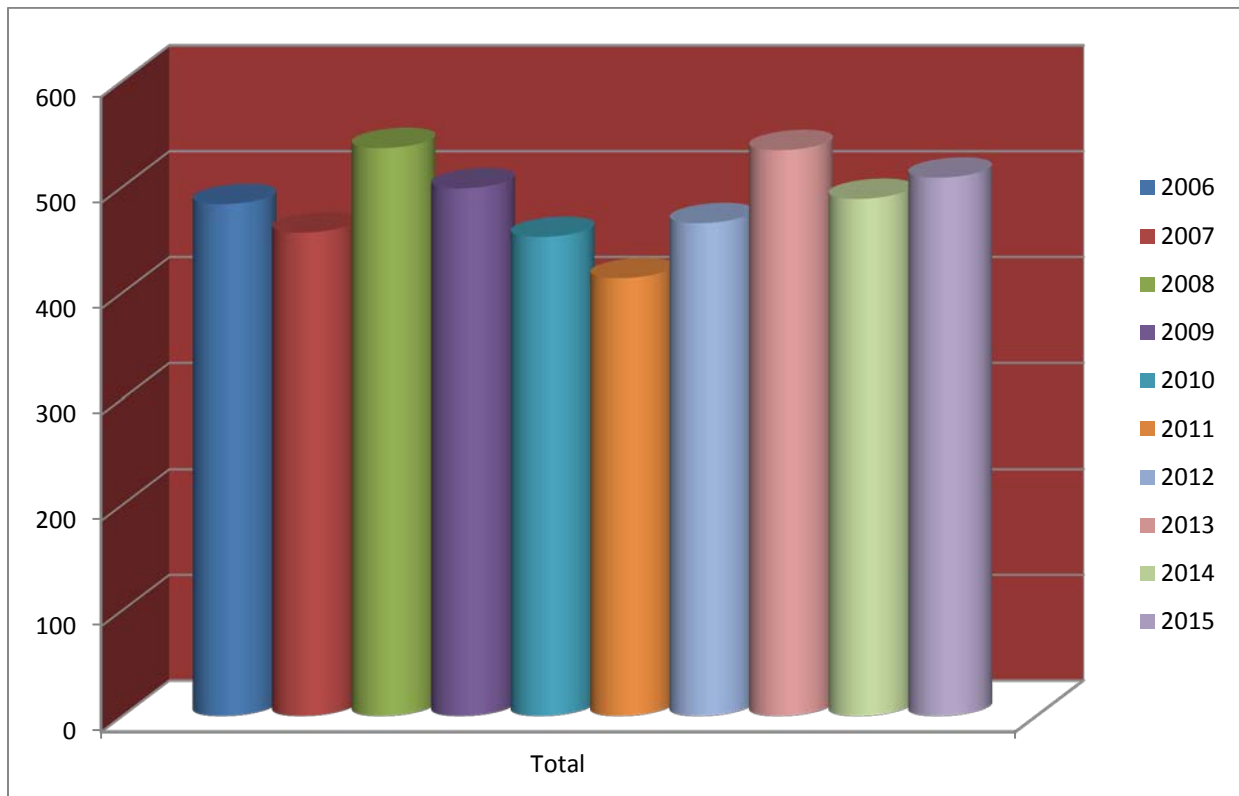
# 2015

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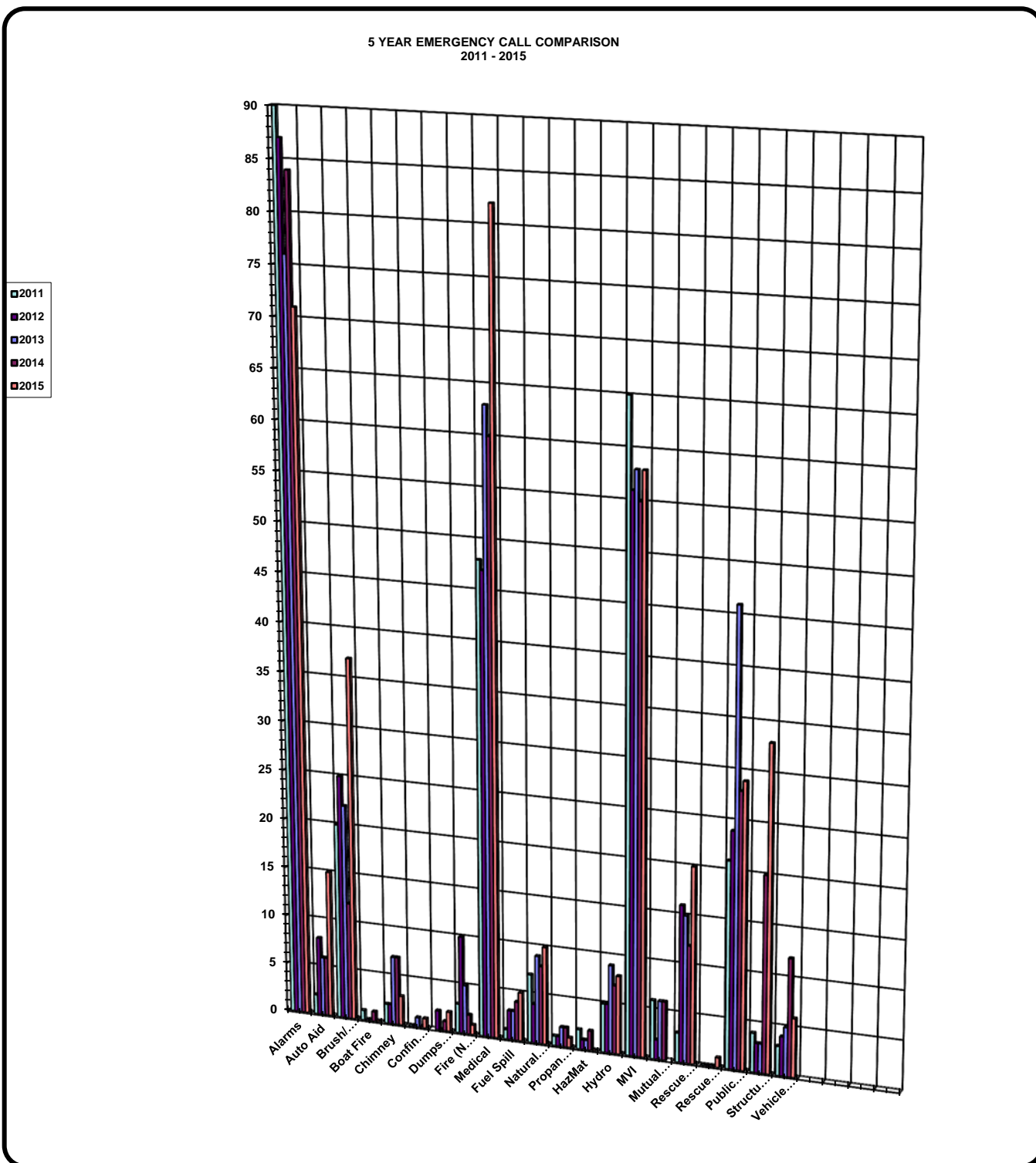
## PARKSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015

This department responded to 377 emergency calls during 2015 with another 132 recorded incidents including public education events, burning complaints and equipment maintenance. The total number of recorded incidents increased marginally from the previous year (from 489 in 2014 to 509 in 2015). On average, duration of recorded incidents was 55 minutes and with the average turnout of 5.1 members for emergency calls.

The following chart shows the total incidents that the department has dealt with on an annual basis for the past 10 years.



The chart below is a comparison of the number and type of calls responded to for the period 2011 to 2015.



The following information is a brief description of the most common incidents that the department typically deals with on a day-to-day basis.

### **ALARMS (Accidental and Malicious)**

Calls for alarms ringing or false alarms continue to make up one of the largest portions of the department's emergency call volume at 16.28%. Calls for alarms decreased slightly from 84 in 2014 to 71 in 2015. Over the past 5 years, there continues to be a downward trend for this call type. It is difficult to say why this trend is occurring but it can only be assumed that it is a result of improved technology or the fact that users are more knowledgeable on the use of their systems. Although calls for alarms ringing may be considered “nuisance” calls, it is important that this department still responds as it does to any other type of call. While the vast majority of these calls are confirmed to be the result of cooking or other minor causes of smoke or dust, past history has shown that responding efficiently to this type of call has helped to reduce the damage from an actual fire due to the early alert to the fire department.

The vast majority of the calls for alarms ringing are to residential occupancies. In most cases, the homeowner is unaware of steps to prevent these types of calls; in most cases the fire department does not have to respond to the same residence more than once. In these cases, the department provides the homeowner with some tips on how to prevent the false alarms from occurring in the future. Some new commercial buildings tend to have a brief period of alarm calls as they sort out some technical issues when the building is first commissioned. This results in a number of calls initially, especially when the building is in the final stages of construction and partially occupied.

### **MOTOR VEHICLE INCIDENTS**

Response to motor vehicle incidents (MVIs) accounts for 13.49% of the department's call volume. The number of motor vehicle incidents requiring response by the department in 2015 was consistent with 2014 levels. In most cases, the Duty Officer responded to the incidents and was able to deal with the situation without calling out a crew for further assistance. The fire department is requested to attend these types of incidents to provide scene safety for other responding emergency agencies.



## RESCUE/EXTRICATION CALLS

The number of rescue/extrication calls increased from 12 in 2014 to 20 in 2015. This represents 4.65% of the total call volume for the department. Many of the incidents were outside of our fire protection area (FPA), mainly on Highway 19. PVFD provides rescue/extrication services outside of our fire protection area, typically on the inland highway and throughout the Errington FPA, and has done so since the mid-1970s. The department does recover costs outside of our fire protection area from Emergency Management BC. In 2015 the department recovered \$7,247.50 in costs incurred from responding to extrication calls.



## MEDICAL AID/FIRST RESPONSE/AMBULANCE ASSIST CALLS

In 2009, the City of Parksville signed an agreement with the Emergency Health Service Commission to provide both the authority and indemnification for the department to respond to these types of calls. The number of requests for medical/first response/assist calls increased significantly in 2015. The department was requested by BCEHS to respond to 82 medical/first response/assist or 19.07% of total call volume. This is the first year that medical calls have surpassed all other call types to be the leading call type for the department.

Presently, the fire department only responds to these calls under the following criteria: Echo type calls (cardiac arrest mainly), when BCEHS is delayed more than 15 minutes or upon request by on-scene crew for additional support. According to a report provided by North Island 9-1-1, Parksville received 978 calls for medical related calls that did not meet the criteria to page out a response by fire department members. Of these 978 calls, an estimated 488 were Delta type. At this time, to include Delta type first responder (FR) calls to the list of FR calls currently provided would not be sustainable for the volunteer members of the department to handle. Any further involvement in the first responder program should be carefully considered as the demands on the current resources of the department would be unreasonable. Based on the demographics of the community, it is likely that medical calls will continue to be a big part of our call volume.



**DOLLAR LOSS FIRES/STRUCTURE FIRES**

The department responded to 33 structure related calls. The department recently changed how emergency calls are categorized and have broken down the “Structure” category to include the following categories:

|                           | 2015 calls |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Structure – Commercial    | 5          |
| Structure – Electrical    | 6          |
| Structure – Hotel/Motel   | 0          |
| Structure – Industrial    | 2          |
| Structure – Multi-family  | 0          |
| Structure – Single Family | 8          |
| Structure – Smoke         | 12         |
| Total                     | 33         |

While it appears the number of structure related calls increased significantly, the number of actual “structure fires” did not increase as dramatically as the statistics show.

In 2015, the department responded to approximately 8 structure related incidents where hose lines were deployed to extinguish fires. These incidents resulted in \$1,066,500 in fire dollar loss. On the other side of the coin, actions by the fire department resulted in \$64,200,000 in property saved.

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

The public service category covers a wide variety of incidents. These would typically include Duty Officer responses to enquiries or concerns from the public such as problems with smoke detectors, smoke odors, etc. While the nature of these calls is typically minor in nature, the expectation from the public is that a representative of the department will be able to come out and assist them with their concern. These calls provide the department with an opportunity to educate the public on a particular issue. In 2015 the department responded to 29 calls of this type.

## **AUTOMATIC AID/MUTUAL AID**

The automatic aid agreement was reviewed in 2013 and changes made to the agreement. Dashwood Fire Rescue was added onto the agreement as a partner. The agreement now covers five fire departments including Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Errington, Coombs/Hilliers, and Dashwood. This agreement was established to ensure sufficient resources are initially dispatched to pre-determined buildings in each area. In particular, this agreement is used to ensure potentially necessary resources are sent to care facilities, high-rise buildings and other buildings considered to be high risk for any particular fire department. The agreement now includes an automatic response for structure fires in some of the areas. This was done to ensure sufficient manpower and water supplies are available at any incident. Previously this coverage was ensured using the mutual aid agreement. By employing the automatic aid agreement instead, it removes the need for the Duty Officer to request additional resources.

In 2015, PVFD responded to 15 incidents in Qualicum Beach, Coombs/Hilliers and Dashwood under the automatic aid agreement. The nature of these incidents were significant in nature and the use of the automatic aid resources was a benefit. In return, Errington and Qualicum Beach responded to 15 requests for automatic aid in Parksville.

## **DUTY OFFICER ONLY CALLS**

The department has a duty officer system established to ensure that there is 24/7/365 coverage by a member who is responsible for directing crews at any emergency or non-emergency event. In many cases, the duty officer is the first to respond and take control of the situation. For a number of the call types handled by the department on an annual basis, the duty officer is the only member to respond. In total, the duty officer responded to and handled 169 incidents as a single resource. This is a reduction of 30 incidents from 2014 to 2015 handled by the department's Duty Officers without assistance from other members. Depending on the situation, the duty officer may request additional resources to deal with the incident.

## **EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE**

Weekly equipment checks continued throughout the year in order to ensure that all equipment was checked on a regular basis. This requires extra effort and time by all the department members to ensure equipment is in good working order and is put away properly.

## **RESPONSE TIMES**

The average response time for an emergency call in the Fire Protection District was 7 minutes, 53 seconds. This is the time from the initial page until the arrival of the first unit, which is typically the Duty Officer in most cases. This time varies slightly depending on the location of the incidents. The muster time for a crew to respond to the fire hall, crew the apparatus and begin a response is an average of 6 minutes, 8 seconds. The driving time to an incident is totally dependent on its location.

The following table shows the average responses for each of the apparatus.

| Unit      | # Responses | # Times On Scene | Avg. Muster Time | Avg. Response Time | Total Time |
|-----------|-------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Engine 41 | 89          | 73               | 6.25             | 10.38              | 91H 42M    |
| Engine 42 | 71          | 55               | 5.52             | 10.44              | 67H 37M    |
| Ladder 49 | 78          | 58               | 7.79             | 13.60              | 103H 29M   |
| Rescue 45 | 59          | 40               | 5.93             | 10.58              | 68H 9M     |
| Tender 47 | 12          | 9                | 4.42             | 10.44              | 16H 46M    |

## MEMBERSHIP/STAFFING

Once again, the department needed to conduct a recruiting program to bring in new members. The department partnered with three other fire departments that were recruiting at the same time (Errington, Qualicum Beach, and Dashwood). In May 2015, the department brought in seven new recruit members to fill vacancies within the department as a number of members stepped down from the department during 2014.

The evidence of the success of the department's aggressive training program is demonstrated both at emergency calls as well as when members attend training with members of other departments. The department consistently receives excellent reviews from session instructors on the professionalism and skills of the members from Parksville attending the training event.

The following chart gives a breakdown of the current experience level of the department:

|      | Less than 1 year | 1 – 5 Years | 5 – 10 Years | 10 – 20 Years | 20 Years + |
|------|------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| 2015 | 5                | 18          | 5            | 9             | 2          |
| 2014 | 1                | 23          | 3            | 9             | 4          |
| 2013 | 6                | 19          | 6            | 7             | 4          |
| 2012 | 5                | 19          | 5            | 7             | 3          |
| 2011 | 8                | 14          | 7            | 7             | 2          |
| 2010 | 6                | 12          | 10           | 5             | 2          |
| 2009 | 6                | 13          | 11           | 5             | 1          |
| 2008 | 6                | 16          | 10           | 5             | 1          |
| 2007 | 8                | 12          | 7            | 5             | 1          |
| 2006 | 5                | 14          | 5            | 4             | 4          |



## **APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT**

2015 did not see any changes to our fleet of apparatus. Preliminary plans/discussions have been conducted on a replacement of our aerial apparatus in 2017. At the time of this report, the hope is to order a new aerial in 2016 for delivery in 2017.

During 2015 the department continued to work in conjunction with other local departments on the joint purchase of equipment. The program has started with the joint purchase of turnout gear and hose. This has resulted in some small cost savings but has taken a great deal of effort to coordinate with the other departments. It is anticipated that all the departments in the area will continue to work together to achieve cost savings on equipment purchases in 2016.

## **EXTREME WEATHER HAZARD DUTY CREW**

2015 saw the driest summer in recent history. There was the potential for a fast spreading wildfire given the right conditions. There were several wildfires on the island and two locally that raised to level of concern for a similar event in the Parksville area. A fire in Dashwood on July 4 and another on July 9 in Coombs demonstrated how dry it was in the area. Staff brought forward a report to Council and was authorized to establish a Duty Crew to be on duty between 10:00 and 18:00 after the third day of extreme weather conditions and remain on duty until the third day after the extreme rating has been reduced. August 2 was the first day this new system was put into effect. Crews remained on duty for 28 days straight and finished on August 30. The community and the department were fortunate not to have any significant fires in the area during this time. It could be attributed to a heightened awareness of the public as they followed a region-wide fire ban. Should a similar circumstance occur in 2016, it is anticipated this program would be reinstated and a stand-by crew would be established to provide a quicker initial response.

## **DEPUTY CHIEF ACTIVITIES**

The following report outlines activities and achievements for the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department in the calendar year 2015 falling under the significant areas of responsibility for the Deputy Fire Chief.

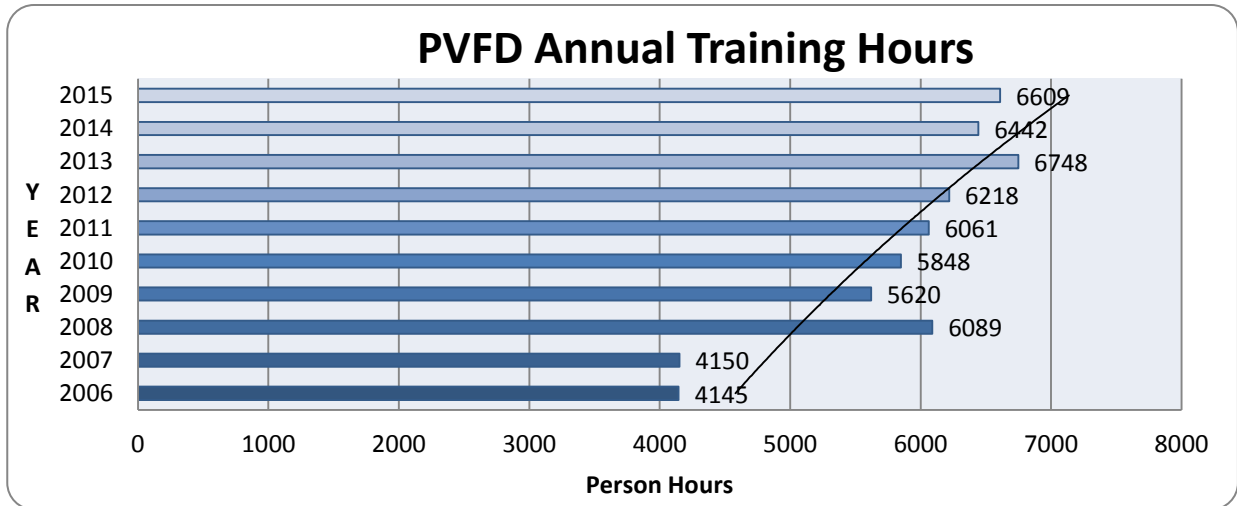
## **OPERATIONS**

The Deputy Fire Chief's responsibilities include organizing continuity of response operations for the Parksville Fire Department. Included in this is the review, writing and updating of departmental operational guidelines, liaising with operational committees (i.e. Vehicle and Equipment; SCBA; and, Occupational Health and Safety.) Additionally, the deputy performs reviews (critiques) of responses to ensure that the quality of service remains highly effective.

In 2015, the department totalled approximately **308** hours of time attending to public service and emergency incidents, equalling approximately **1748** person-hours for responders; the Deputy Chief attended **129** incidents for a total of **96** person-hours (excludes public education and equipment maintenance). The Deputy Chief was the Officer in Charge / Incident Commander at **79** Incidents.

## TRAINING

The Deputy Fire Chief creates and administers the training program with strategic input from the Fire Chief and input from all members of the fire department. The Parksville Fire Department continues to be a leader in the development and delivery of training. In 2015, department members participated in more than **6609** person-hours of training over **268** recorded training sessions. This constitutes a slight increase in overall hours from the prior year.


















The Parksville Volunteer Fire Department has an intensive training program, which is comprised of a comprehensive mix of emergency service delivery related subjects based on the service delivery needs and projections for the Parksville Fire Protection Area.

There are multiple levels of fire, medical and specialized training delivered and/or attended throughout the year. Training includes items such as education to obtain or maintain a license or credential, recruit training, new response concepts, skills maintenance, special technical rescue training and other training as necessary.






Training occurs at regular weekly practices held each Monday night and at extra training sessions offered on weekdays/weekends, both locally and non-locally, throughout the year. The focus of training continues to be firefighter and public safety which in turn provides for a professional and effective fire service for the citizens and visitors served by the Parksville Fire Department.

**2015 Training Highlights include:**

-  Able to utilize the old Post and Lantern Motel and Restaurant building located at 272 Island Hwy West for training throughout several months.
-  Transitioned to a new training provider for Confined Space / Technical Rope Rescue. **Eight (8)** members certified (60 hours per person).
-  Started **six (6)** new recruits, 5 of whom had no previous firefighting experience.
-  **Five (5)** members completed the Hazardous Materials Operations course over 4 days. Hosted a Hazmat Operations Level course in which two of the five members in attended
-  No members completed initial First Responder Emergency Medical Attendant training. (40 hours per member). No recruit class in 2014 and so no FR Initial Certification in February 2015.
-  **Eight (8)** members recertified as First Responder Emergency Medical Attendants. (24 hours per member)
-  **Twelve (12)** Chief and Company Officers attended a Strategies & Tactics program hosted here in Parksville (16 hours per person).
-  **Three (3)** Automatic/Mutual Aid practices were held with neighboring departments.
-  **Three (3)** Officer Training Days were attended by PVFD Company Officers and Senior Firefighters.
-  **Four (4)** members completed their Emergency Vehicle Driver Operator evaluations.
-  **Four (4)** members completed Fire Service Instructor Level 1. (2.5 days)
-  **One (1)** member completed their NFPA 1001, FFII, certification for Firefighter Professional Qualifications. (Approximately 550 hours, over 2 to 3 years)
-  **One (1)** member completed the Fire Officer Level 1 Program.
-  **Two (2)** members completed the Fire Officer Level 2 Program.
-  In the fall of 2015, the PVFD implemented a second weekly training session as a 'make-up' session. This session is currently schedule on Thursday mornings and is intended as a way for those members working shiftwork to meet minimum requirements or as an asset for those who'd like additional training. This session has been well received.

Parksville Fire Department members have a demonstrated a tremendous continuing commitment to training. 2015 was yet another successful training year and this was reinforced through members' professional conduct, technical proficiency and effective action at emergency incidents.

**2016 Training Objectives:**

-  Transition to and implementation of the Jones and Bartlett 'Fundamentals of Firefighter Skills, 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian edition' curriculum for NFPA1001 Level 2.
-  Complete migration of Training Lessons to FirePro2 records management system.
-  Complete Training Tower Capital Project with newly allocated funding.
-  Focus on Company Officer Development.
-  Fire, Police and Ambulance Interagency Training.




**RECRUITMENT PROGRAM**

Recruitment is an ongoing process in the volunteer fire service. The recruitment program is in place to ensure that we maintain the appropriate human resources required to meet fire department service delivery objectives. The Parksville Fire Department recruitment program focuses on seeking out individuals that have diverse backgrounds and experiences along with the availability to take on the responsibility and commitment required to be a member of the volunteer fire service.

After not requiring a recruit class in 2014, a recruiting campaign was once again required in 2015. The PVFD recruited 6 new members in 2015 and, at the time of writing this report five (5) recruit members remain.

The fire department uses a variety of recruiting methods including 'word of mouth', local newspaper ads, flyers delivered in newspapers (fire protection area only), and local radio ads. The City of Parksville Communications Officer assists the fire department with the preparation of the advertising materials and offers input regarding the best way to disseminate the recruiting message.





**2016 Recruitment Objectives:**

-  Fill all vacant volunteer membership positions, estimated at 7 positions at the time of this report.
-  Bring in 3 to 4 Junior Members (16-19 years of age) and consider expanding this component of the membership.
-  Monitor membership commitment levels and stressors. I.E. call volumes, turnouts to calls, turnouts to training; collection of feedback re: time commitment.


## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION & BUILDING REVIEW

Each year several development permit, rezoning and subdivision applications are reviewed by the fire department. Applications are reviewed to look at access, civic addressing, fire hydrant locations and fire safety system components such as fire alarm annunciator and fire department connection locations along with other technical components. The fire department works collaboratively with the planning, building and engineering departments in order to assess development applications. The fire department is also able to use this process to assist with determining the overall impacts on the department as a result of a development or a trend in developments.

In 2015, the Deputy Chief completed the following application reviews:

-  14 Development Permit and/or Development Variance Permit application reviews as referred by the planning department.
-  0 zoning amendment applications as referred by the planning department.
-  2 zoning variance applications.
-  7 subdivision applications (PLA)

The Deputy Fire Chief reviews building permit applications referred to the fire department by the building department. There are two primary reasons for this process. Firstly, the building permit stage is often the best time for the fire department to contact the owner/developer to verify the layout of fire protection systems in the building and to ensure they meet the needs of the fire department; secondly, this is an opportunity to address any code issues with the building department.

-  In 2015, 8 building permit application reviews were completed as referred by the building department for comment.

## PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING





Pre-incident planning is the assessment of a facility or location made before an emergency occurs to prepare for an appropriate emergency response. The Parkville Volunteer Fire Department pre-plans properties thought to pose significant challenges and or safety hazards to firefighters.

To date, the Parkville Fire Department has 248 pre-planned properties. These include properties that fall into the categories of multi-unit residential (which is anything over a duplex), resort/hotel/motel, care facilities, light industrial/commercial, mercantile, services and offices. As new occupancies are added, pre-plans are created and added to the pre-plan books carried in the fire apparatus and duty vehicles.

It has been identified that there is a need to update the current pre-plans as well as alter the current style/layout/content of the pre-plans in order to make them more usable and effective for fire crews. Additionally, with the addition of CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) systems in the trucks, there is a need to standardize and digitize the pre-plans. This will allow the pre-plans to be linked to properties via the North Island 911 Corporation CAD system and then accessed by fire crews through the CAD units in the fire apparatus.

Little progress was made on pre-planning in 2015 due to a lack of time with which to organize implementation of the program.

2016 Pre-Incident Planning Objectives remain unchanged and include the following:



-  Revise pre-plan layout/style/content
-  Initiate revision of current pre-plans
-  Upload pre-plans / property information to the mobile CAD units and to Fire Dispatch.
-  Add additional pre-plans as required

## CIVIC ADDRESSING

The Deputy Fire Chief is the civic addressing officer for the City of Parksville. The civic addressing officer coordinates the issuance of civic addresses for new developments, address change requests and where existing addressing issues are identified. The civic addressing officer liaises with other agencies such as the North Island 911 Corporation, utility providers (gas & hydro), Canada Post and other interested parties in order to ensure that civic addresses meet recognized standard convention and make sense.

In 2015, seventeen (17) civic addressing memos were issued advising of change of address or new addresses.

2015 goals in this area remain unchanged and hence 2016 Civic Addressing Objectives are:

-  Create civic addressing bylaw.
-  Transition the addressing function to the GIS department.

## FIRE PROTECTION AREA MAPPING

Accurate mapping is of key importance in the delivery of emergency services. The Deputy Fire Chief communicates with the City of Parksville GIS technician in order maintain accurate mapping of the fire protection area. Additionally, the Deputy Chief liaises with the GIS departments of the Regional District of Nanaimo and North Island 911 Corporation. When errors or other issues are identified on existing mapping, the map page is copied and corrections are noted. This is then sent to the GIS technician for correction.





In 2015, numerous requests for mapping updates were submitted to the GIS technician. While this process has been problematic in the past, in 2015 new fire area maps were established. Along with implementation of the new GIS software, the fire area map is a better product. Updates are now processed in a more timely way and there is more consistent mapping availability.

## PERMITS

The Parksville Fire Department issues permits for fireworks and burning in accordance with the requirements laid out in both City of Parksville and Regional District of Nanaimo Bylaws. Of significance in this regard is the change to the City of Parksville Outdoor Burning Bylaw in August of 2015 which eliminated piled clearing waste fires for agricultural purposes.

The following are the burning permit totals issued in 2015:

-  7 Agricultural Burning Permits
  - 3 within City of Parksville
  - 1 within the Regional District of Nanaimo, Parksville-Local Area, Fire Protection Area.
  - 9 within the Regional District of Nanaimo, Parksville-French Creek, Fire Protection Area.
-  2 Fireworks Permits for events within the City of Parksville, including Canada Day and Kids Fest.






## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



In order to maintain a safe work environment and in conformance with Work Safe BC regulation, the fire department has a health and safety program and occupational health and safety committee, as well as participates in the City of Parksville joint health and safety committee and city safety programs.

The Deputy Fire Chief is a participating member of the fire department OHS Committee and serves as an alternate member on the City of Parksville JOHS committee.

## DEPUTY CHIEF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to obtain and maintain knowledge skills and abilities the Deputy Fire Chief engages in ongoing training. In 2015 the Deputy Fire Chief attended and or undertook several training sessions, participated on various committees, with highlights as follows:

-  101 hours of regular training and committee meetings
-  80 hours of instructional time
-  168 Hours of Continuing Education (online self- study):
  - Emergency Planning for the Fire Service (42 hours)
  - Managing Service Delivery ( 42 hours)
  - Public Sector Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement (42 hours)
  - Ethical Issues in Public Safety (42 hours)
-  Technical Rescue Team practices
-  Parksville Fire Department Officer Training Days

-  Regular attendance at equipment maintenance sessions on Sunday mornings while on stand-by as the Duty Chief.
-  Regular attendance at 'Training Tuesdays', HR focused training, organized by the City of Parksville HR staff.

## FIRE INSPECTION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Assistant Chief's role within the department is to conduct fire and life safety inspections as outlined in the *Fire Services Act* and in accordance with the City of Parksville bylaws and policies and to coordinate and administer the department's public education program. The Assistant Chief is also responsible for Fire Cause Determination and Investigation as outlined in the *Fire Services Act* and is also responsible for duty on a rotational basis and performs the Incident Command Role during incidents.

### 2015 FIRE INSPECTION AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM

| Inspection Program                | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Inspectable Occupancies (Approx.) | 812  | 806  | 808  | 795  | 787  | 769  |
| Inspections Due (Approx.)         | 525  | 487  | 389  | 496  | 483  | 458  |
| Inspections Completed             | 287  | 329  | 279  | 353  | 500  | 369  |

The number of inspectable properties is continuing to grow combined with the number of inspections being conducted at the business licence level; it is placing a greater demand on the time allotted for conducting annual inspections. Over the past year, the department has also been requested to conduct more inspections during the construction of building projects as well as consultations in renovation projects and systems upgrades. Conducting these types of inspections allows for a greater amount of compliance and assists with the pre-planning of buildings. Public consultation and service requests for fire prevention are also increasing.

The number of commercial kitchen installations has increased over the last couple of years. Commercial kitchen installations as well as building renovations and upgrades are increasing due to the aging building stock in the fire protection area. Mobile cooking operations are also required to meet the NFPA 96 standard and have become a focus for the fire inspection program. These inspections are now being tracked as an inspection on a consistent basis. As these new types of inspections are now being tracked as an actual inspection, a more consistent statistic is available on the types of inspections being performed.

## COMPLIANCE / NON-COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Fire Safety Plans (in accordance with the *BC Fire Code*) and their maintenance are still a problem that many building / business owners are struggling to keep current. To this end, we have currently implemented a fire safety plan template that is available online at [www.pvfd.ca/fire\\_prevention](http://www.pvfd.ca/fire_prevention). This has allowed for a fillable form that is helping owners comply with provincial regulations and assist the department with incident pre-planning. The letter outlines the requirements for fire safety planning and seeks to gain compliance in a timely fashion for the occupancies.

Unsatisfactory inspections have dropped due to a more consistent and regular inspection frequency. Damaged fire separations, improper door lock hardware and extinguishers that are either missing or are past due for servicing as well as electrical overloading and storage are still the most common problems found during unsatisfactory inspections.






New FIPPI requirements will require some additional strategies in helping gain compliance in our local woodworking facilities. Information regarding the requirements is being put together and will be delivered to the shops requiring compliance with the standards.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

To date our enforcement procedures are still restricted to a provincial order through the Office of the Fire Commissioner. Corrective orders have not been a common occurrence in the past years, but there are businesses that are in violation of current codes and the need for corrective orders is needed. The process of writing provincial orders is time-consuming and can be prohibitive in the time it takes to gain compliance. A new system of municipal code enforcement is currently being explored in hope of gaining full compliance with local business and building owners. With the upcoming changes proposed to the *Fire Services Act*, the need for a municipal compliance program will be essential.

## CURRENT PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The programs that we have been running in the past are still proving to be effective in our goal of public fire safety. These programs are:

-  Preschool – Grade 3 Programs
-  Fire Prevention Week: this past year's theme was ***“Hear the Beep Where You Sleep”***
-  Youths and Explosives presentation
-  Smoke Detector and CO Alarm Program
-  BULLEX Fire Extinguisher training system

While the programs that are being delivered are consistent and applicable, the need for updated materials and new programs is becoming a priority. The Assistant Fire Chief as well as the Department's Public Education committee delivered 28 events over the past year totaling 200 person-hours of time dedicated to public education and reaching over 750 people. Training for committee members was conducted this past April and 4 members were certified for Fire and Life








Safety Educator. This past year the Assistant Chief was requested by the Provincial Probation Officer to be involved in a rehabilitation program for two young offenders. The result was a success.

## FIRE INVESTIGATION

Section 9 of the *Fire Services Act* requires that the fire department investigate and report on fire cause determination. On request of the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Assistant Chief investigated a total of 2 fires in the past year. One fire was determined to be suspicious fire and the other was determined to be accidental. We continue to be asked by other jurisdictions for assistance with investigation and are also working very closely with the RCMP fire investigators.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

In 2015 the Assistant Fire Chief attended several training sessions. Courses or training included:

-  Regular weekly training sessions with the fire department; Monday night 'fire practice'
-  Technical Rescue Team practices,
-  Parksville Fire Department Officer Training Days,
-  Regular attendance at 'Training Tuesdays' and at HR focused training, organized by the City,
-  Incident command level training as well as skills maintenance training organized by the Deputy Fire Chief,
-  Attendance at the Annual Fire Prevention Officer's Association seminar in North Vancouver, BC.
-  Continuing Education in Fire Officer IV and the Fire Prevention Officer's Certificate program through the Justice Institute of BC.

The Assistant Fire Chief continues to serve the BCFPOA as Zone 1 Director and helps coordinate and organize the Annual Conference as well as Zone 1 meetings.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Emergency Program continues to evolve and develop in response to the needs of the community and knowledge gained from emergency and disaster events around the world. Building volunteer capacity, training and infrastructure development were the main focus of the program in 2015.

The City and region have been fortunate to have Chris James join the program working in the contract position of Volunteer Coordinator. Chris has taken an Emergency Support Services (ESS) team which was under construction to a point where we have upwards of 40 volunteers, based in Parksville and ready to respond to the needs of the residents in District 69. In addition to the growing volunteer base, we now have a regional ESS trailer which, when the interior outfitting is complete, will serve as a mobile reception center responding to wherever it is needed.

In addition to ESS, the Emergency Communications Team (ECT) continues to develop and train, providing emergency communications to anywhere in the world should conventional communications be lost in an event. This group is also working on succession planning as they are a senior group realizing the need to bring in a younger generation to continue the craft of amateur radio operation.

In May of 2015, a very successful Emergency Preparedness Fair was held with our regional partners as part of Emergency Preparedness Week. This was a two day event put on in conjunction with the Town of Qualicum Beach, the Regional District of Nanaimo, and the City of Parksville. The first day was held at the PCCC in Parksville and the second day was held at the Civic Center in Qualicum Beach. Several displays were set up by various vendors, emergency services, and utility companies to provide the public with information to assist them in coping with a disaster. Approximately 1,000 members of the public attended the event over the two days.

A positive effect of the 2015 drought conditions was the opportunity to begin developing response plans for emergency water supplies and to learn which relationships required development to fight wildfire and interface fire situations. This was also an opportunity for the three emergency programs in the region to work together and develop how we would respond as a region to support emergency services on potentially larger events such as the wildfire in Coombs this past summer.



## CONCLUSION

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department as well as all of the dedicated volunteers associated with the Emergency Program for their continued support to myself and staff. Their dedication to ensuring the citizens of the City of Parksville are assisted in times of need, and the professionalism in which they carry out their duties, are qualities the community and they themselves can be proud of. Special thanks to the Officers of the PVFD who have worked tirelessly throughout the year. We are fortunate to have a core of officers whose commitment, skills and dedication are the cement of this department.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Doug Banks, Fire Chief