



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Township of Esquimalt Fire Department



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# TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT MISSION STATEMENT

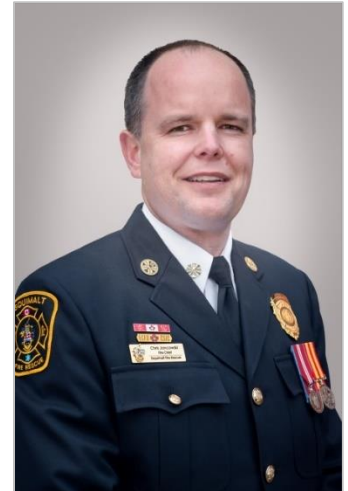
Focusing on community priorities, the Township of Esquimalt works to make our community and environment a better place for today and the future.

# FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT—YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 was a year of significant challenges for the Esquimalt Fire Department due to the global COVID pandemic.

Early in the year, the department participated in the Moose Hide campaign along with many other community groups within the township. We led and completed regional mapping for all FDM Mobile Data System users within the CRD, with a special thanks to Alex Tang from Development Services for assisting us in this project. During this year we also worked with several other fire departments in the region to share pre-incident planning and mapping best practices. My thanks to the members of the department for several years of hard work that has led to the substantial completion of our pre-incident planning program for the township.

In early spring, the department participated in a Victoria and Esquimalt emergency evacuation exercise led by Community Safety Services. Many local stakeholders and fire departments participated and assisted in testing the new draft evacuation plan.



*Fire Chief Jancowski*

In March, the department faced the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic. My appreciation to all our members who worked together to maintain our safety while continuing core services to the citizens we serve. Many changes occurred in our department early in the pandemic, such as temporarily suspending company inspections and a reduction to medical emergency calls as per the Provincial Health Order. The department also experienced longer term service impacts that included the suspension of face-to-face public education and reduced emergency medical calls. Members supported this change by conserving our medical PPE where appropriate and ensuring daily health checks. These challenges of the pandemic led to opportunities for members to engage with the community in different ways, such as participating in the creation of a smoke alarm and carbon monoxide public education video. In the summer of 2020, we achieved the full integration of our historical oil tank records into our FDM software. This integration speeds up record searches that are commonly requested during the selling of properties within the township.

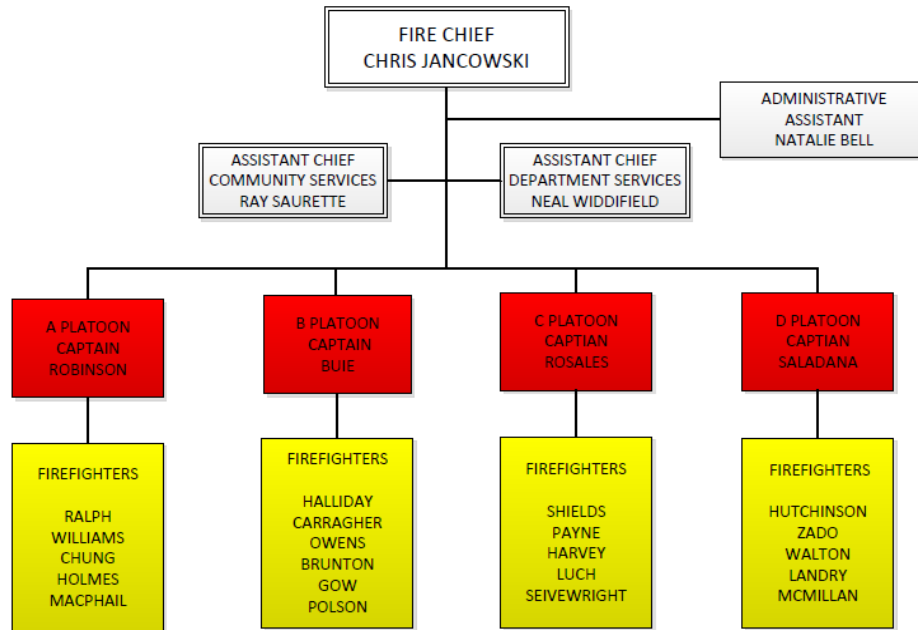
In the early fall, the department submitted an update to Fire Underwriters, the organization responsible for determining the insurance grades in our province. This submission captured the organizational changes and reflected the work done by the members to improve the delivery of services to the community. Several areas of improvements include operations, fire dispatch and fire prevention activities. Our expectation is that in early 2021 we will receive an improved grade that will potentially reduce fire insurance costs for multi-residential, commercial, and light industrial buildings.

Respectfully,

C.A. (Chris) Jancowski, M.A., CFO, C.Mgr, MIFireE



# 2020 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



*The Esquimalt Fire Department is organized under the leadership of one chief and two assistant fire chiefs. The department is one of seven departments in the Township all reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer.*



*Esquimalt Ladder 10*

# PERSONNEL

## NEW MEMBERS

### Firefighter Cameron Polson

Cam became our newest member when he joined the department in August 2020. He was raised in Victoria and attended UVIC (University of Victoria) where he obtained a BA in History. He has a passion for local sports, especially rugby, and has been a member of the Oak Bay Castaway Wanderers and the UVIC Vikes. Cam has also represented Canada as a member of the Canadian National Rugby Team as well as the Seattle Seawolves (a Major League Rugby franchise), with whom he won two consecutive North American Championships. From 2012-2016, Cam was a member of the BC Wildfire Service in Princeton, BC, which is where he discovered a passion for fire suppression as a career. He loves living on Vancouver Island and takes advantage of all the outdoor pursuits the area has to offer, from cycling and kayaking around greater Victoria, to camping and hunting.



# COVID-19

The department faced the challenge of COVID-19 in March. This worldwide pandemic affected all parts of our organization while still needing to maintain critical emergency services to our community.

The department like many other fire departments, responded by suspending low priority inspections and medical aid calls, and deferring other services until some of the impacts of COVID could be better understood.

The department suspended all face-to-face delivery of public education programs to reduce the transmission and spread within our community. Access to the public safety building was restricted and limited to appointments for services that cannot be done online.

The department connected with community members in the first few months with birthday drive by's and 7 p.m. shoutout to health care workers. The department endeavored to create several opportunities from the COVID pandemic. Many of the department's internal business processes changed from paper base to digital formats. In addition, the department refreshed fire department online materials and created digital media to connect with residents and businesses.

At the beginning of the pandemic the department was well stocked with the recommended medical PPE for COVID responses, although as the months continued the supply was being challenged. The Department Services Assistant Chief continued to work with suppliers and health services to ensure the safety of our members while continuing emergency service delivery.



*Firefighter Andrew Luch wearing Personal Protective Equipment*

As part of the commitment to ensure the safety of our members, the department built a COVID safety plan for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the provincial restart program. In mid-2020 the Provincial Health Officer restricted the types of medical calls to which the fire department was dispatched. By the end of 2020 fire response to most of the restricted medical calls had resumed. This was a key factor in the reduced number of emergency responses in 2020 compared to other years.

The department deferred several joint and external training sessions. Many of these specialized courses required instructors from other health regions. These courses will resume as part of the 2021 training program.



*COVID-19 procedures poster*

# COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO

## Fire preplans

The department substantially completed our multi-year pre-incident planning program at the end of 2020. This commitment by our members over several years has resulted in nearly 500 pre-incident plans for multi-residential and commercial buildings within the township. The increased number of pre-incident plans will also assist in improving our Fire Underwriters Public Fire Protection Classification.

Fire preplans assist department members in quickly locating units where people may be requiring immediate medical interventions or shutting down building systems to reduce property damage during fires. The department will be continuing to add preplans as new buildings are being constructed or renovated.

## Public education

2020 experienced a significant change in the delivery of public education. Early in the year the department continued with traditional public programs such as car seat installations, fire station tours and fire extinguisher demonstrations. In March, the department stopped all face-to-face delivery and changed to online and virtual education. The department improved website information links to access additional public education materials.



*Firefighter Andrew Zado filming a smoke alarm awareness video*

## Smoke / carbon monoxide campaigns

The department was unable to conduct our annual door-to-door smoke alarm campaign this year due to COVID. As a result, several of the department members along with a few township residents created a public education video on the importance of having working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

This video has been posted to the fire department webpage and promoted by the township's corporate communications department.



*Filming a smoke alarm awareness video*

## Fire inspections

The department was successful in completing annual inspections of all public buildings within the Township. In the first half of the year, inspections had been paused due to the early impacts to COVID.



## Oil tanks

Oil tank search requests continued to be steady for most of 2020. The integration of historic records into our FDM software significantly reduced the time needed to provide information of members of the public.

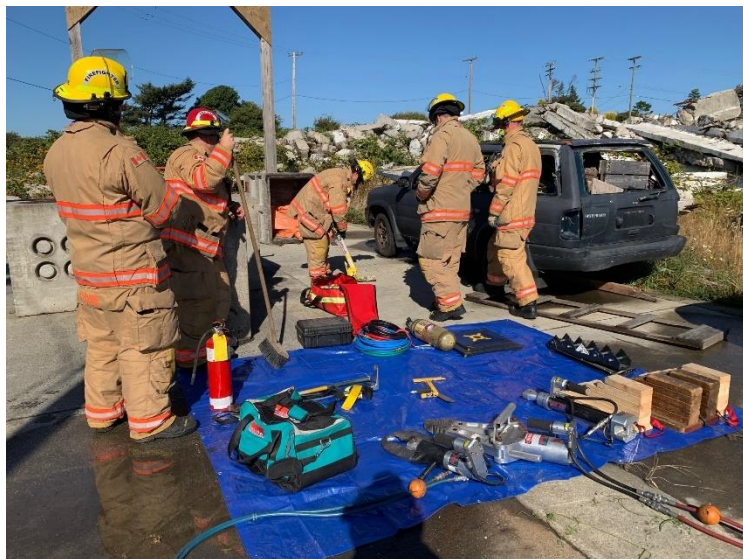
In the last half of the year the department worked with the township's development services department to provide additional public information in respect to the potential environmental impacts of leaking underground oil tanks. This public information message was also used as an opportunity in asking members of the public to update the township of any changes to the use of oil on their property. The reduction of oil usage as a heating supply reduces the environmental impacts within the township.



*Crews film with CTV at 1300 block of Esquimalt Rd - April 30th*

*Photo Credit: CTV News*

# DEPARTMENT SERVICES PORTFOLIO



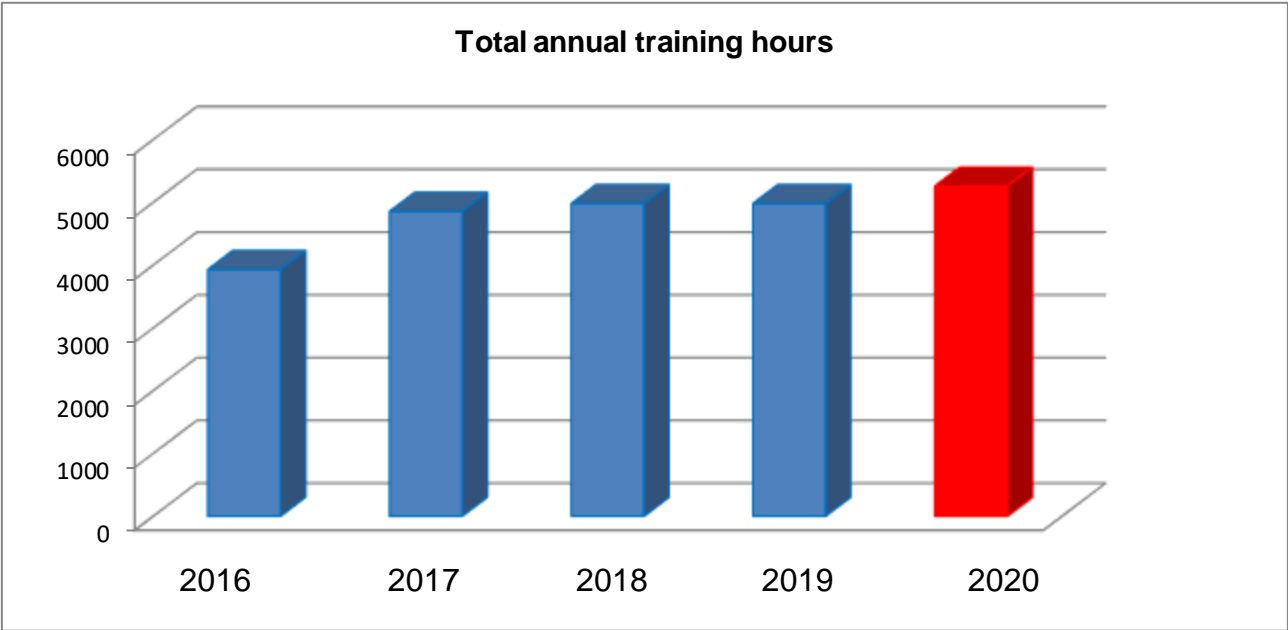
*Crews doing auto extrication training*

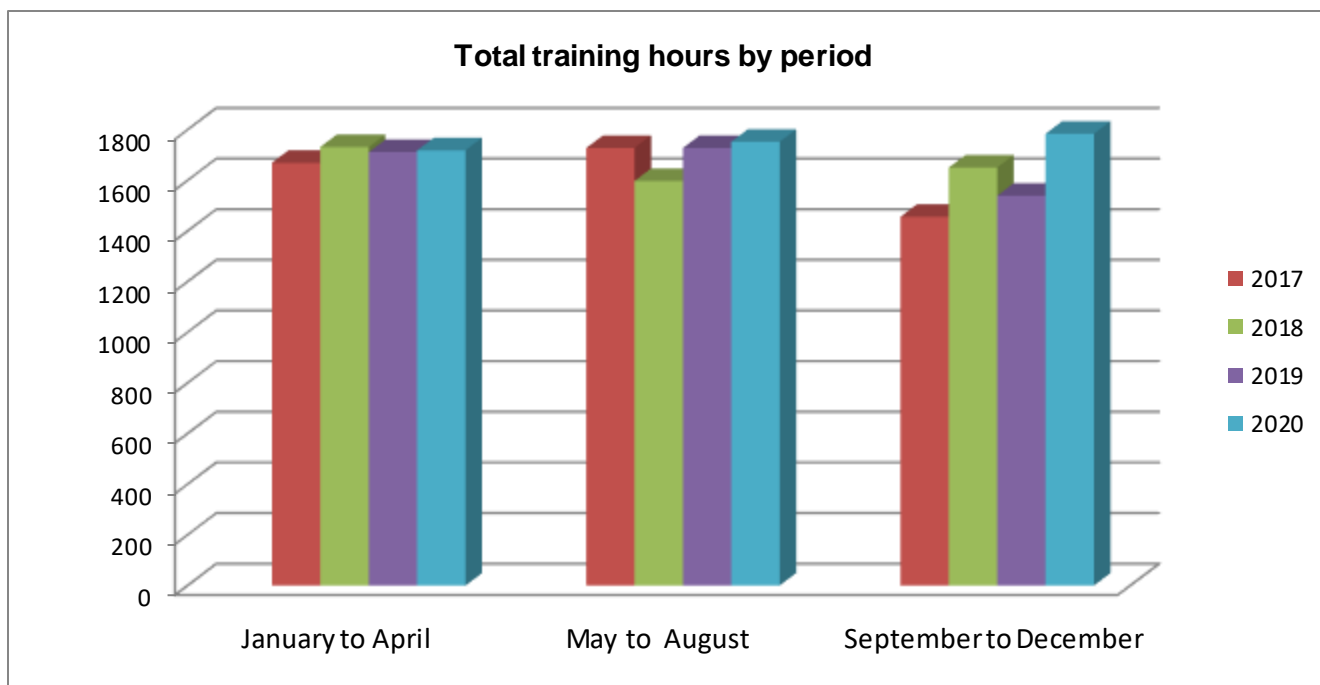


*Firefighter Cam Polson training*

## Company level training hours

Fire department members train daily to learn new skills and maintain existing disciplines. These internal training sessions typically range from one to two hours per shift. In 2020, the department participated in 5,255 hours of internal training compared to 2019 with 4,980 hours.





## External training courses

Firefighters and fire officers also participate in external training courses. These courses can range from several hours to several days. In 2020, members of the department attended several external training courses. These courses included learning new skills, promotional development and best practices.



*Crews partake in High Angle Rope Rescue Training*



*Crews partake in Urban Search and Rescue training*



2020 TRAINING COURSES	
COURSE	TYPE / SUBJECT
Urban Search and Rescue - Structural Collapse Awareness and Operations	Technical Rescue
Crowd Management Training - Public Safety Unit	Technical Rescue
Rope Rescue and Confined Space Technician - ROCO	Technical Skills
FDM Training	Administration
BC Professional Firefighters Safety Conference	Health and Safety
Apparatus Driver Evaluation - Road Masters	Fire Suppression
Traffic Control Refresher	Fire Suppression
Sports Cardio BC	Health and Wellness
Resilient Minds	Health and Wellness
Fire Service Administration Level 1 - JIBC	Fire Suppression
Fire Service Administration Level 2 - JIBC	Fire Suppression
Frontline Leadership Level 1 - JIBC	Fire Officer
Company Inspections - JIBC	Fire Prevention
First Responder Instructor Re-certification - VIERA	Medical Aid
Fire Service Administration Level 2 - JIBC	Fire Officer



# ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

In 2020, the department continued with the wellness program for all members. Due to the COVID pandemic, the department experienced a slow start with several sessions online. Topics ranged from sleep hygiene, body movement and stretching to digestive health.

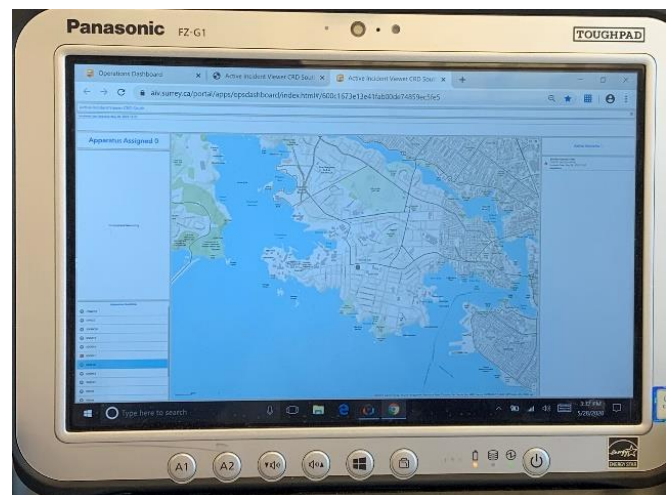
In the spring, our department along with the Oak Bay Fire Department completed the joint firefighter hiring process. This process combined both departments' resources to streamline the process for creating an eligibility pool of new firefighters. The list of potential new firefighters will be maintained for a period of two years. This hiring process is another example of joint efforts of regional fire service co-operation.

The department led the co-ordination of regional emergency services mapping for Fire Department Management Software users in the region. This regional project brought municipal GIS mapping staff along with fire service member together for a joint project. The result was a seamless map provided to the fire departments that outlines streets, hydrants and property addresses.

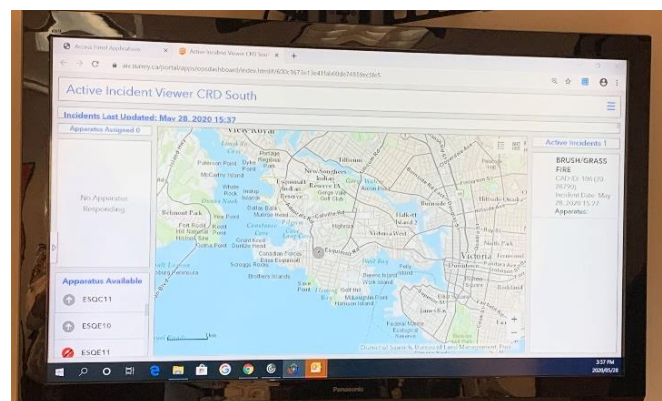
In the summer, the department continued to expand the use of our digital alerting software, Connect Rocket. This software is currently being used by other township departments and has been used by the fire department for department wide emergency callouts. This system reduces the time required to contact members to fill overtime shifts and streamlines the process for activating members on a platoon level for station backfilling.

The department began working with the City of Surrey on the development of new situational awareness software called Active Incident Viewer. This software enables departments to gain a visual awareness of emergency calls and apparatus locations during large scale events.

In late summer, the department submitted a request for a Fire Underwriter's update. The Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) is a national organization that represents more than 85 per cent of the private sector property insurer in Canada. FUS provides data to its subscribers regarding fire protection for fire insurance statistical and underwriting evaluation. FUS also provides municipalities and regional districts with a review of the current levels of fire protection within the community and provides recommendations where possible.



*Mobile Data Terminal Mapping system*



*AIV2 Mapping system*

FUS survey results provide a grading in two areas. The first is the Dwelling Protection Grade (DPG), which is a numerical grading scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest grade. This grade represents the ability of a fire department to manage fires in a single-family dwelling.

The second is the Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC), which is a numerical grading scale ranging from 1 to 10, with 1 being the highest grade. The PFPC grade evaluates the ability of a fire department to manage fires within multi-residential, commercial, and light industrial structures.

The review covers four primary areas:

1. Fire Department (40%)—apparatus, equipment, staffing and training
2. Water Supply (30%)—source, hydrant location and reliability
3. Fire Safety Control (20%)—fire inspections and public education
4. Fire Service Communication (10%)—dispatch, radio and alarm systems

In 2017, the township improved its DPG from 2 to a 1 and our PFPC improved from 5 to 4. This is a good rating and is similar to other like-sized communities. We expect the review to be completed in early 2021.

The department completed the first step of the electronic records management changeover. This first step has been supported by online and printed resource materials for staff to use when navigating new file locations.

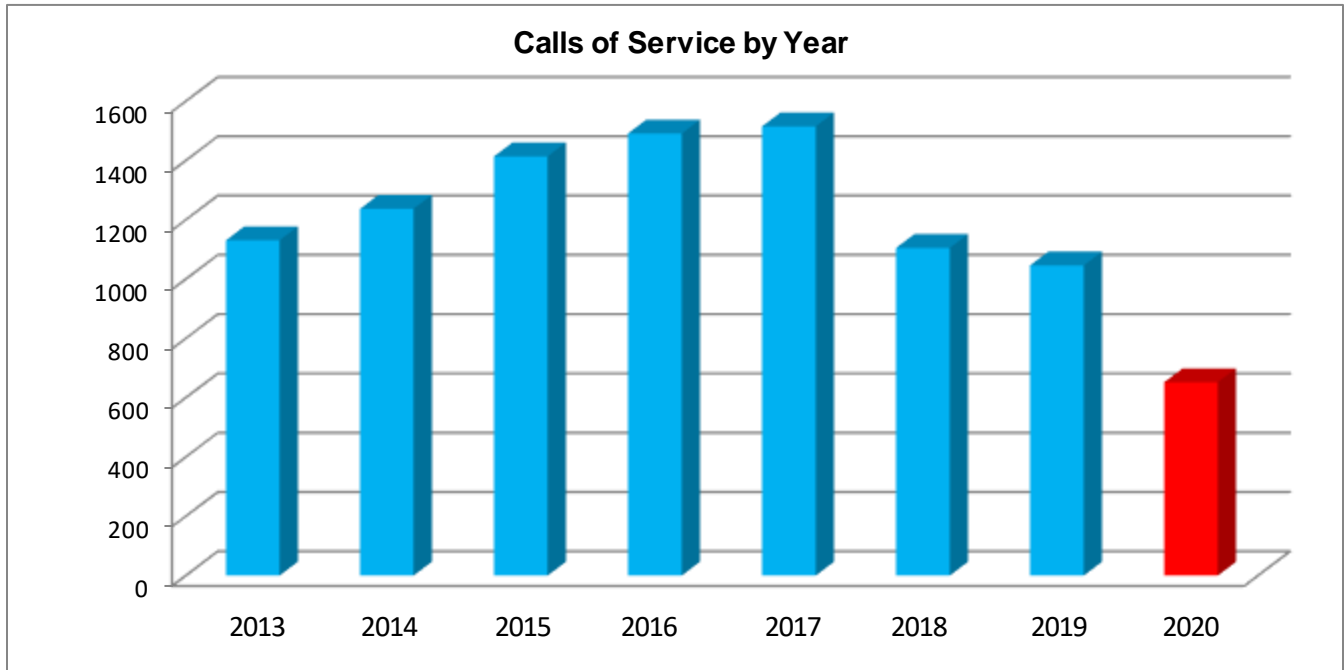
In November and December, staff engaged in conversations with the City of Victoria Fire Department staff to renew a mutual aid agreement. A new agreement will focus on mutual and automatic aid provisions for both departments and will replace the older agreement from 1980. It is expected that a new agreement could be approved in early 2021.



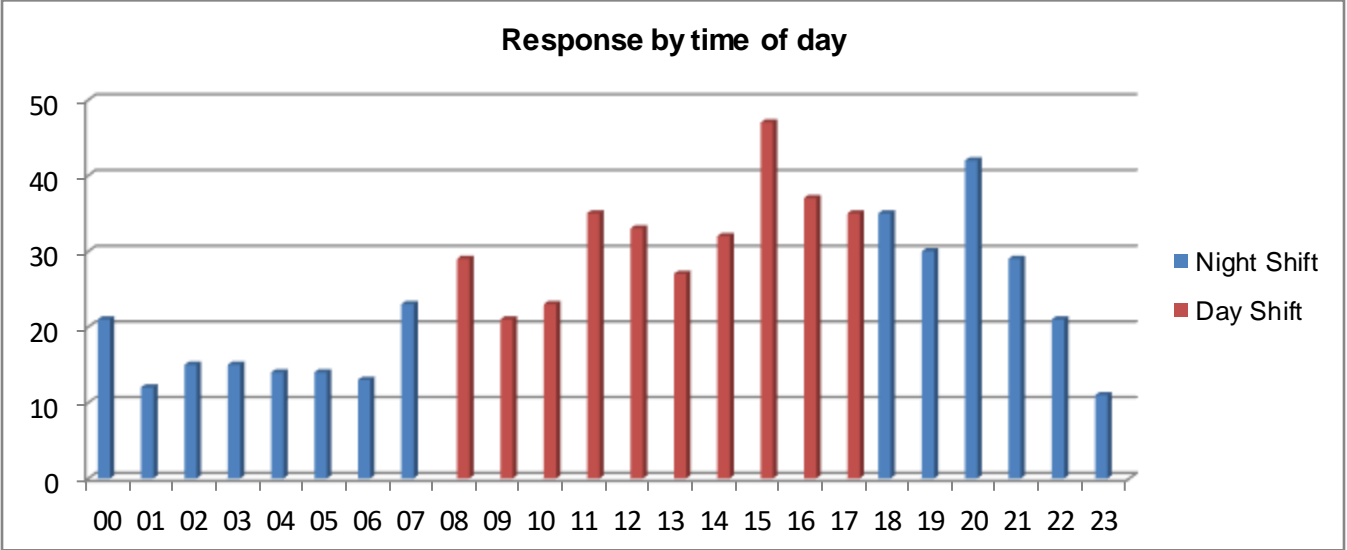
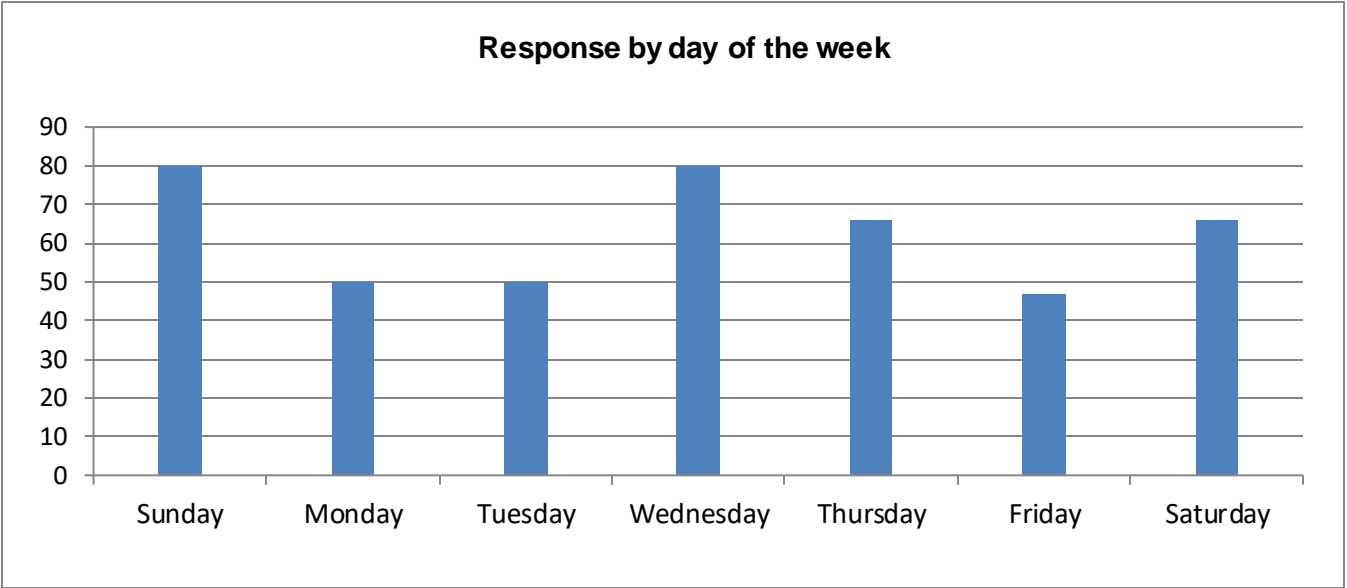
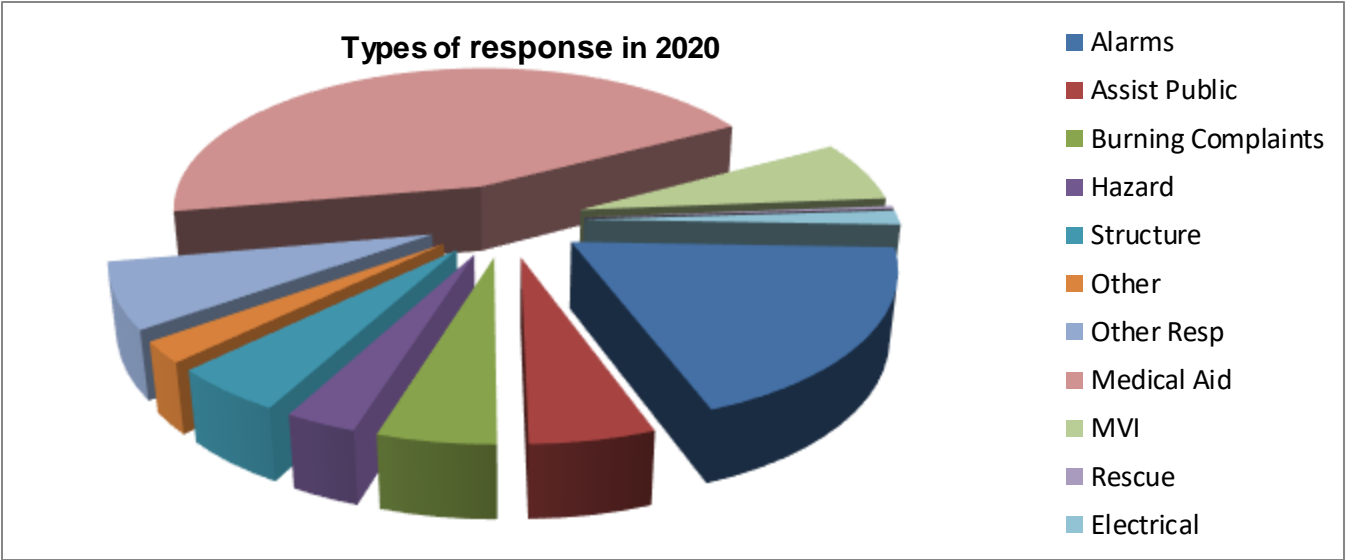
*Mill Hill fire drop by air tanker*

# OPERATIONAL RESPONSES

The department provides a wide range of emergency and non-emergency services to the citizens of Esquimalt. The following data provides a brief overview of these activities. In 2020, the department experienced a decrease in the overall calls of service (medical aid) from 2019 primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Type of Response	2020	Overall %
Alarm calls	123	18.87%
Assist public	35	5.37%
Burning complaints	33	5.07%
Electrical emergency	10	1.54%
Hazardous materials	20	3.07%
Structure fires	32	4.91%
Other fires	15	2.30%
Other responses	46	7.06%
Medical aid	293	44.94%
Motor vehicle incidents	43	6.60%
Rescue	2	0.31%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>100%</b>





## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERFORMANCE

### Response times

Emergencies in our community range from medical aid to structure fires and they range in severity and complexity. Fire damage to property and threat to life increases exponentially over time if a fire goes unchecked. The success of patients who experience a critical medical event, such as cardiac events, decrease substantially if critical medical interventions are delayed by seconds and minutes.

One of the best measures of the efficiency of a community's fire protection service is the time elapsed between the first call to 9-1-1 and the time when firefighters arrive on scene and provide critical interventions. Several National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards are based on best practices and referenced across North America, such as:

- NFPA 1221 (Standard for the installation, maintenance, and use of emergency services communications systems) is the standard for alarm handling, operating procedures and fire department notifications.
- NFPA 1710 (Standard for the organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to the public by career fire departments) is the standard most departments strive towards.

Within these standards, a fire department's total response time to incidents is comprised of several components broken down into:

- alarm handling:
  - call answering
  - public service answer point (PSAP) call handling
  - alarm processing time
- turnout time
- travel time

### Alarm handling

The Township of Esquimalt's PSAP services are provided by the ECOMM located in the District of Saanich. Medical aid calls and motor vehicle incidents are forwarded to the PSAP, then forwarded to the British Columbia Ambulance Service in Langford, and then to our Fire Dispatch in Surrey. If a fire is reported, the PSAP will forward the call directly to Surrey Fire Dispatch.

Action / reliability emergency alarm processing	NFPA Std	2019 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile	2020 Esquimalt Fire @90 percentile
90 per cent	1:00	0:48	0:46

## Turnout time

Turnout time is defined when fire dispatch notifies the fire department of an emergency by an audible or visual notification and ends at the beginning point of travel. Turnout times are often not reported in the fire service, largely because many fire departments do not set them as a goal.

Action / reliability turnout time	NFPA Std @ 90 percentile	2019 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile	2020 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile
EMS (first responder)	:60	2:12	1:58
Fire and special operations	1:20	2:22	2:03

## Travel time

Travel time begins when the fire apparatus is enroute to the emergency incident and ends when the apparatus arrive at the emergency scene.

Action / reliability travel time	NFPA Std @ 90 percentile	2019 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile	2020 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile
EMS (first responder)	4:00	4:25	4:07
Fire and special operations	4:00	4:09	4:22

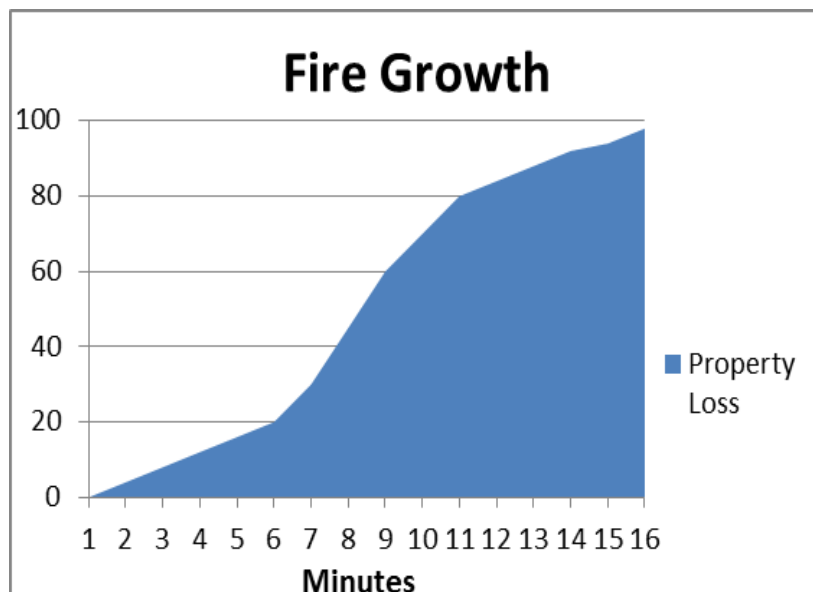
## Total response time

The total response time is the time interval from the receipt of the alarm at the dispatch center to when the first emergency response unit arrives and initiates action or intervenes to control the incident.

Action / reliability total response time	NFPA Std @ 90 percentile	2019 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile	2020 Esquimalt Fire @ 90 percentile
EMS (first responder)	6:00	6:29	6:12
Fire and special operations	6:20	6:39	5:53

The figure to the right provides an approximate scale of fire progression during a structure fire.

It is important to note that all fires have many variables that impact fire development, such as types of fuel and amount of air.



*Mill Hill Interface Fire*

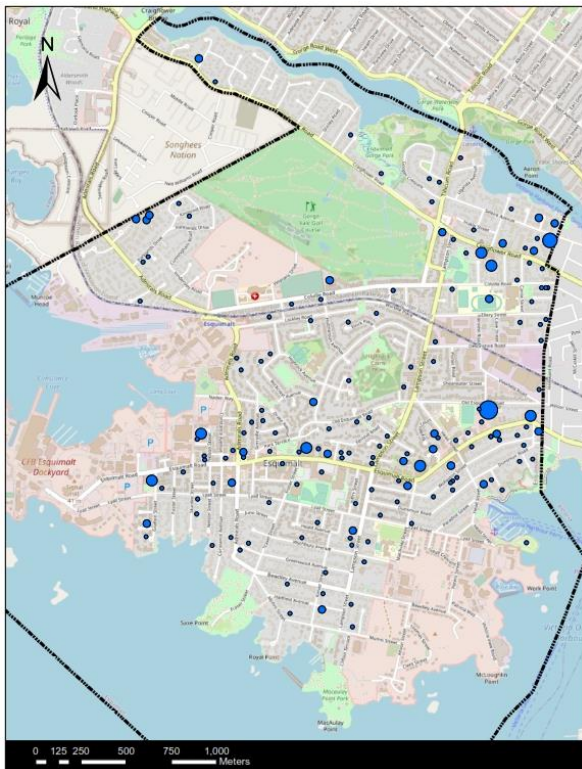
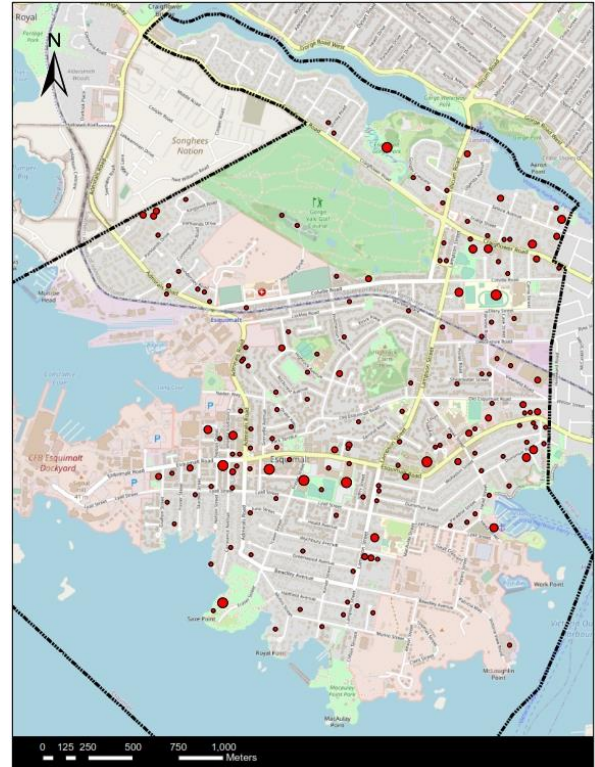
# RESPONSE LOCATIONS

## Fire and other calls

The response data contained within these maps was converted to a series of maps with the assistance of one of the township's planners, Alex Tang.

The department responds to a variety of events that range from alarms, structure fires, public assists and assisting other agencies.

The map to the right illustrates the various geographic locations where these calls occurred within the township in 2020. Multiple calls to the same area are illustrated by the larger red dots.



## Medical aid

The Esquimalt Fire Department provides medical aid assistance to our citizens as part of the Provincial First Responder Program.

The map to the left illustrates the various geographic locations where these calls occurred within the township in 2020. Multiple calls to the same area are illustrated by the larger blue dots.



# COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

2020 was a challenging year for community involvement. The membership takes pride in educating citizens on the importance of fire safety during community events.

In early spring, pre-COVID, members of the department attended Ecole Victor Brodeur for a school-wide anti-bullying day.

The public safety building received visitors from time to time, and even potential young recruits. We appreciated their visits and the connections made.

The department participated in the Moose Hide campaign to demonstrate a commitment to end violence against women and children along with several other agencies in the township such as municipal staff and the Victoria Police. Members were encouraged to wear the moose hide pin during the month of February.



*Crew with Ecole Victor Brodeur for Anti-Bullying Pink Shirt Day*

In the first few months of the pandemic, members of our department along with the Victoria Police Department conducted drive by celebrations to people isolated due to provincial orders restricting gatherings.

In the summer, the department supported Pride Week with members wearing rainbow-colored epaulettes instead of the traditional ranks. In December, members of the department along with Canadian Force Base Esquimalt Fire Department attended a flag raising event for the HMCS Winnipeg that returned to port with a missing sailor, Master Sailor Duane Earl. On behalf of the Esquimalt Fire Department our thoughts and condolences go to the Earl Family.



*Firefighter Andrew Luch with children dressed in rescue gear*



*Ladders raise Canadian flag in honour of lost sailor*

# FUNDRAISING / COMMUNITY SUPPORT



*This page submitted by the Firefighters' Charitable Foundation.*

With the trials and tribulations of this past year, with all we have faced as members of a community, as members of a department, and as members of the Esquimalt Firefighters' Charitable Foundation, I genuinely feel we were able to get help to those who needed it most. With the guidelines in place from the World Health Organization, as well as from our beloved Dr. Bonnie Henry, we did what we do best: we put one foot in front of the other and carried on. We pride ourselves on being able to meet the ongoing commitments we have made to foundations, schools, and local resources, and this year was no exception.

The difference this year, however, was that there was less demand for financial support from sports and recreational groups, and higher demand from local organizations providing community support during the pandemic. The Township of Esquimalt is fortunate to have local organizations like the Rainbow Kitchen, the Neighbourhood House, and Peers, as well as surrounding organizations such as CFA Santa's Anonymous and the Victoria Hospitals Foundation, supporting our community. Forming partnerships with these organizations allowed us to streamline funds raised back into Esquimalt and surrounding areas.

The funds raised this year came in differently than in years passed. For example, we modified our annual Rib Fest by turning it into a rib sauce drive-through. This adjustment allowed us to comply with all safety protocols and raise much needed funds for our Charitable. In doing so, we kept the Rib Fest name on people's minds and let our community know that even though things might be different, we are resilient and will be back up and running when it's safe to do so. Additionally, our online platform allowed for people to safely make donations throughout the pandemic, and this year we ran three separate fundraisers internally where our Charitable matched funds raised by our members. These funds were then donated to local organizations and families in these trying times.

We are excited for this upcoming year as we have postponed events that we are eager to go forward with, as well as planned events that are in the works. We are so fortunate to be part of this community, and although it has been a trying year, our members are motivated and as determined as ever to do our part in making the community stronger. Regardless of what we face as a Charitable and a Local, help will always be there for those who need it.

Follow us on Instagram @esquimalt\_fire\_fighters or on our Facebook page, Esquimalt Fire Fighters IAFF 4262, to see upcoming content about our local organizations or to see previous contributions. We wish to thank the community for their ongoing support of our Charitable.

*Scott McMillan*  
*EFFCF Executive*



*Donation with group*

# WHAT OTHERS HAD TO SAY

## Community Service

“There is a frail elderly gentleman who walks daily and they cleared the pathway. As a long-time Esquimalt resident, I take pride in our force and thank them for their duty and dedication.”

Laurie P.

“Once again, Esquimalt Fire Dept. has gone above and beyond regular duties and I feel very lucky to have such service and friendship in Esquimalt.”

Muriel D.

## Hosted Training

“Just wanted to send you a quick thank you for yesterday, the course was outstanding!!!”

Heath B.

“The delivery of the program was executed in a professional yet inviting atmosphere with good engagement from the presenters and the audience.”

Kathy F.

## Fire Response

“I discovered a small arson in Esquimalt tonight and called it in. I wanted to commend the officers on scene who were prompt, friendly, and professional. Kudos also goes to Esquimalt Fire.”

Jeremy L.

## 2020 GOALS: HOW DID WE MEASURE UP?

The following are goals the department established for 2020, with a brief synopsis of how the department did for each one.

1. Assist in the development of the new public safety building.

*The department membership participated by providing input to the draft plans as presented by HCMA Architects. The department provided input on areas of particular interest such as first floor decontamination design, second floor living spaces and the need for integrated training spaces.*

2. Continue to host regional fire training courses.

*The department was challenged for a significant part of the year due to COVID restrictions. The department was able to host several courses while ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. These courses and topics ranged from software training to mental health topics.*

3. Update region wide emergency services mapping to be used as part of the computer assisted dispatch system.

*The department was assisted by Development Services to develop a region wide emergency services map. This map will be used by FDM Mobile Data Station Software users in responses to emergency events from Victoria to Langford.*

4. Conduct a review of the Fire Underwriters rating.

*The department submitted an update to Fire Underwriters to review our township Rating. Many changes have occurred since our last review in 2017. Improvements include a change of fire dispatch, substantial completion of our pre-incident plans, automatic aid with CFB Esquimalt and increased fire prevention programs. We expect to receive the results of this review in early 2021.*

5. Continue to deliver and expand fire and life safety programs within the township.

*The department was limited in our traditional public education program delivery in 2020 due to COVID 19. The department quickly changed gears and developed new online materials and reconfigured our fire department website pages. In addition, the department's membership along with several local residents assisted in developing a smoke alarm and carbon monoxide safety video to promote the importance of having working detectors inside of buildings within the township.*



# 2021 GOALS

**The department has established several goals as we move forward into 2021:**

1. Implement mobile inspections using our mobile data terminals.
2. Continue with hosting regional fire training courses while ensuring best practices in respect to COVID 19 and Provincial Health orders and recommendations.
3. Place Rescue 10 into service.
4. Develop COVID safe public education programs.
5. Provide self development opportunities for members who are interested in becoming Assistant Chiefs.
6. Participate in Rescue Task Force training with the Victoria Police Department to safely respond to hostile events.
7. Create a hazardous materials index to compliment our current pre-incident plans within the township.



*Crews provide mutual aid to View Royal Mill Hill Interface Fire*



## **Township of Esquimalt Fire Department**

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250-414-7126

### **CONNECT WITH US**

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