

Subject Protective Services Monthly Board Report

Month November 2024

East Kootenay Emergency Management Program (EKEMP)

NG911

The RDCO negotiated a 15-month extension with ECOMM for E911 services, expiring on December 31, 2025. This extension specifically excludes NG911 implementation, as a proposal for a new service agreement for NG911 service will follow in the coming months.

The CRTC mandate requires all Answering Points (PSAPs) across Canada to transition over to NG911 by March 2025. Many PSAPs are struggling to meet this deadline and have requested an extension; the CRTC is expected to decide on this request in October/November 2024.

Community Cooperative Wildfire Response (CCWR) Grant

In early October the Province announced a new grant funding stream, Community Cooperative Wildfire Response program in an effort to increase community resiliency to wildfires. Staff are currently assessing the implications and impacts of this grant stream and will bring it forward to Board once complete.

Emergency Support Services (ESS)

Staff continue to have ongoing discussions with the Canadian Red Cross and EKEMP partners to determine the future model of the ESS program. A decision on the program direction is expected in the coming weeks.

East Kootenay FireSmart and Fuel Reduction

FireSmart activities are starting to slow down as we move into the late fall, winter season. Local FireSmart Representatives and the Fire Smart Coordinator are working on finalizing metrics for the 2024 season. Staff are preparing for Neighborhood Champion recognition events taking place in November. The East Kootenay FireSmart team recently supported a very successful fuel reduction project led by the Lions Club and Senior Society in Jaffray. The Wildfire Resiliency Supervisor and the FireSmart team are preparing a CRI grant application for the 2025 program.

The Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction program continues to complete fuel reduction projects across the region. Currently, there are several projects scheduled to be completed late 2024/2025:

- Toby East/Kloosifer Recreation Trails – 42.1 hectares, hand and mechanical treatment
- Dutch Creek – 23.25 hectares, hand treatment
- Wasa – completing 16 hectares (started 2023/2024), hand treatment
- Westview Estates/Peavine – 49 hectares, Prescribed Burn completed September 2024
- Juniper Heights – FESBC/Kenpesq't Territorial Operations led fuel reduction project, 76.4 hectares, hand and mechanical treatment

RDEK Fire Services

Firefighter Work Experience Program (WEP)

The Work Experience Program (WEP) Pilot Project wrapped up in mid-October and was deemed a success by the Fire Chiefs and the Manager of Protective Services. The WEP was an extremely valuable initiative for the RDEK Fire Services. Having the WEP enhanced department capabilities when staffing levels are traditionally low, which improved response times and numbers, decreased the pressure on the paid-on-call members, and proved an overall success.

To highlight some of the WEP experiences: Elk Valley South Country (EVSC) WEP firefighters deployed for over two weeks as part of the structure protection crew (SPC) with the structure protection trailer to the Argenta wildfire N71058. This provided some significant experience for the WEP firefighters as they were exposed to wildfire operations at a higher level. During Fire Prevention Week in October the WEP firefighters assisted in 4 class visits at the firehalls to teach fire safety along with some of the regular members. Prior to the end of the WEP term the team assisted with seasonal demobilization of Columbia Valley Fire's wildfire gear and delivered another session of Fire Extinguisher training to the public. Additionally, throughout the summer/fall, the WEPs were also exposed to various incidents, which provided them with the knowledge and experience needed to apply for and hopefully gain employment with municipal fire services.

The plan for 2025 is to lengthen the term from four months to six months, allowing the WEPs to be in place at the start of wildfire season, and those not from British Columbia to participate in any BC Wildfire Services (BCWS) wildfire training. The term would commence in April and terminate in October.

Columbia Valley Fire

CV Chiefs and a few firefighters, along with RDEK CV Utility operators took part in Confined Space Entry and Rescue in Non-Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) Atmosphere training as part of ongoing learning and support within the organization.

Fairmont Fire hosted Dynamic Rescue Systems for Vehicle Extrication Training and was well attended with most Fairmont members upgrading/recertifying along with new members gaining these skills. Two Windermere members also attended the same training with Invermere Fire earlier in the month.

The annual recruiting drive was successful in engaging 12 new CV recruits across all 4 halls and staff are preparing them for their initial Exterior Level FF training over the winter months.

Elk Valley South Country Fire

EVSC Fire submitted applications for the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) grants to be issued in 2025.

EVSC Fire Departments hosted their annual Firefighter Recognition Dinner, where numerous firefighters were recognized for their efforts and dedication, and one retirement for Captain Willie Rayman (ret) after sixteen years of dedicated and committed service to the RDEK Fire Service-Jaffray Fire Department. A retirement event will be held for Captain Raymond in early December to allow other retired members to attend.

2024 Responses to date	Fire Service Areas								Totals
	Baynes Lake	Edgewater	Elko	Fairmont	Hosmer	Jaffray	Panorama	Windermere	
Fires: Structure, Chimney, Vehicle, Garbage, etc.	3	3	1	5	3	6	2	10	33
Fires: Forestry, Brush, Grass, Interface, etc.	8	0	6	5	2	8	2	6	37
MVI/Extrication	4	2	12	7	8	27	1	11	72
First Responder	20	26	21	49	20	34	19	63	252
Tech Rescues; Embankment Ice/Swift/Water	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	7
Electrical Emergencies: Hydro/Telus; Downed Lines, Pole Fires, etc.	2	12	0	4	0	2	4	21	45
Natural Gas/Propane Carbon Monoxide	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	4	10
Alarm Activation: Good Intent, Malicious, Accidental/Faulty.	3	2	2	8	1	3	6	21	46
Burning Complaints, Bans, Fireworks, etc.	1	2	1	3	0	3	1	6	17
Public Service/Other Misc Incidents	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	2	7
EMCR, Other Tasks (sandbagging, EOC, etc)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	42	49	47	82	36	87	36	147	526
Average Attendance for Training	5	7	6	12	4	5	9	12	
Average Attendance for Incident	3	4	5	4	3	4	3	6	
Volunteer Roster	8	11	14	18	9	14	20	20	