

Subject Protective Services Monthly Department Report

Month April 2026

RDEK Fire Services

The Chiefs are pleased to welcome this year's WEP firefighters on May 4 and have been actively preparing for their arrival.

Columbia Valley will be using the upstairs dorm space at Windermere Hall for this WEP season and is looking forward to incorporating this component into the program. Elk Valley South Country plans to move in a similar direction over the next few years and will welcome WEP firefighters to dedicated dorm space at Jaffray Hall once the addition is completed.

Columbia Valley Fire (CV)

Four CV members, along with the Columbia Valley Local FireSmart Representative, attended the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit in Victoria. In addition, four members attended the Fire Service Women of BC Conference in Kamloops. Two firefighters from Fairmont and Panorama also attended FDIC International in April 2026 after winning conference passes through the BC Fire Training Officers' Association Conference draw last year.

Training Update

- Annual Exterior and Interior Firefighter training has been completed in partnership with Invermere Fire Rescue, with most theory and skills evaluations now complete and only a few testing sessions remaining this year.
- First Responder training, including scope of practice updates, is ongoing.
- Basic First Aid training with transportation endorsement is underway to meet updated BC Wildfire deployment requirements.

Elk Valley South Country Fire

Members of EVSC Fire, together with the Electoral Area A and B Local FireSmart Representative, attended the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit in Victoria last month and returned with valuable insights from the sessions and workshops.

Training Update

The 10-week Junior Firefighter Program has now concluded, with five students from Fernie Secondary School successfully completing components of Firefighter Levels 1 and 2 in alignment with the BC Office of the Fire Commissioner's Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards. The program's first year was a success, and staff look forward to expanding participation next year. Appreciation is also extended to Brogan Fire & Safety for its sponsorship and support.

2026 Responses to date	Fire Service Areas								Totals
	Baynes Lake	Edgewater	Elko	Fairmont	Hosmer	Jaffray	Panorama	Windermere	
Fires: Structure, Chimney, Vehicle, Garbage, etc.	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	5	13
Fires: Forestry, Brush, Grass, Interface, etc.	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	6
MVI/Extrication	0	0	4	4	5	9	1	8	31
First Responder	5	9	0	15	3	9	4	23	68
Tech Rescues; Embankment Ice/Swift/Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Electrical Emergencies: Hydro/Telus; Downed Lines, Pole Fires, etc.	0	1	8	0	2	0	0	0	11
Natural Gas/Propane Carbon Monoxide	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	5
Alarm Activation: Good Intent, Malicious, Accidental/Faulty.	0	0	0	4	0	0	5	5	14
Burning Complaints, Bans, Fireworks, etc.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Public Service/Other Misc Incidents	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	4
EMCR, Other Tasks (sandbagging, EOC, etc)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	7	14	13	26	11	23	13	48	155
Average Attendance for Training	5	6	10	16	4	6	9	16	
Average Attendance for Incident	4	4	6	5	4	5	4	6	
Volunteer Roster	10	14	14	21	12	12	16	22	

East Kootenay Emergency Management Program (EKEMP) trainings:



Elk Valley: Tabletop Exercise (Sparwood) April 14th and 15th

The East Kootenay Emergency Management Program, Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and Elk Valley Resources (EVR) organized a two-day tabletop exercise (TTX) in Sparwood. The exercise was conducted on April 14th and 15th, 2026.

The organizations practiced responding collaboratively to a large-scale disaster scenario in the Elk Valley. Day one included a presentation from Elk Valley Resources (EVR), followed by a tour of the facility. Day two included a mock disaster scenario, with the objectives of practicing clear roles and responsibilities of each organisation and team building.

Organizations attend this exercise includes the following:

- Regional District of East Kootenay
- Elk Valley Resources
- Emergency Support Services
- BC Ministry of Environment
- City of Cranbrook (Observer)
- City of Fernie – Fire Department
- The Salvation Army
- BC Hydro
- Health Emergency Management B.C. (HEMBC)
- Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
- RCMP - Elk Valley Regional RCMP
- Village of Canal Flats (Observer)
- yaqit ?a-knuq'it First Nation
- Ministry of Transportation and Transit
- Elkford Fire Department
- Sparwood Fire Department
- BC Emergency Health Services

Flood Response Tabletop Training – April 22nd

In anticipation of upcoming freshet season. East Kootenay Emergency Management and the RDEK Flood Response Unit conducted a half day exercise. The exercise was held at the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and brought 14-15 staff together to provide a refresher of their roles and responsibilities and conduct a brief after action review from previous incidents.

Psychosocial Resilience in Disasters – April 28th

The East Kootenay Emergency Management program organized “Psychosocial Resilience in Disasters” training in Cranbrook on April 28th, 2026. Emergency Management personnel from various backgrounds and organizations attended the training.

This course focused on psychosocial needs of emergency management personnel and communities before, during, and after disasters, as well as strategies and resources to support psychosocial resilience (e.g., self-care, worker care).

EAST KOOTENAY FIRESMART

The FireSmart Program has launched its seasonal awareness campaigns, and requests for community engagement continue to grow. Inquiries have been received for barbecues, chipping events, bin events, presentations at community AGMs, and property assessments. It is encouraging to see how invested residents are in FireSmart principles and how eager they are to learn ways to better protect themselves and their properties.

Upcoming public outreach events include Ember Stomp in Jaffray on May 1, 2026, the Windermere Community Association FireSmart education event on May 2, 2026, and Emergency Preparedness Day in Fernie on May 9, 2026.

Wildfire Mitigation Program assessments have increased exponentially compared with previous years and are on track to exceed expectations once again. With recent changes to the FireSmart program in British Columbia, there are new opportunities to strengthen community connections and reinvigorate existing programs.