



# FIRE AND RESCUE ANNUAL REPORT 2020



# CONTENTS

<b>CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
A Welcome from Chief Brian Hutchinson .....	5
<b>1. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DNVFRS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Your DNVFRS at a glance.....	6
What We Believe.....	7
Part of a Regional Fire and Emergency System .....	7
<b>2. COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3. REDUCING RISK.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Fire Investigations .....	11
Fire Inspections .....	11
Fire Safety Plans.....	12
Construction Plan Reviews .....	12
Pre-Incident Fire Plan Reviews .....	13
Direct Fee/Cost Recovery .....	13
<b>3. FIRE SERVICE ACCREDITATION.....</b>	<b>14</b>
What's involved .....	15
Why become an accredited agency?.....	15
Goals and performance .....	15
<b>5. RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Top 5 Incident Call Outs for 2020 .....	17
Response Time By Fire Station .....	18
Turnout Time by Incident.....	19
A Closer Look at Technical Rescues.....	20
Typical North Shore Rescues .....	21
Working with North Shore Rescue .....	22
Responding to Marine Emergencies with Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue .....	22
<b>6. PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES.....</b>	<b>23</b>
North Shore Emergency Management .....	23
35-Member Extended Operations Unit .....	24

Major Emergency Operations Plan .....	25
Urban Search and Rescue .....	26
Marine Firefighting .....	27
<b>7. IN THE COMMUNITY .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Community Events and Outreach .....	28
Giving Back .....	30
<b>8. WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Community Wildfire Protection Plan .....	31
Wildfire Training and Deployments .....	32
Partnership with Metro Vancouver .....	33
FireSmart Community Program.....	34
<b>9. TEAM BUILDING .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Succession Planning.....	35
Training .....	36
Specialized Training (Overview) .....	36
Specialized Training by Discipline (Top 5 disciplines) .....	38
Foundational Skills Training (Overview) .....	39
Foundational Skills Training by Subject (Top 5 subjects).....	40
Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) Partnership.....	40
Interagency Training Highlights .....	41
New Maplewood Fire & Rescue Training Facility.....	42
Mental Health .....	43
Diversity and Inclusion .....	43
Work Experience .....	44
<b>8. FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
2020 Operating Budget.....	45
What the Numbers Include .....	46
<b>9. LOOKING TO 2020.....</b>	<b>47</b>
Challenges and Opportunities.....	47
Fire Service Accreditation .....	48
Fire Investigations .....	49
Pre-Fire Planning and Mobile Inspections .....	49
Energy Efficient Fire Inspection Fleet .....	49
Community Risk Reduction .....	50
FireSmart Communities.....	51



*District of North Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (DNVFRS) provides essential emergency, risk education, and support services to our community.*

*We are committed to reducing life and property loss due to fire, and promoting public safety through fire education and awareness.*

*This report is a concise summary of our work and achievements in 2020.*



# A WELCOME FROM CHIEF BRIAN HUTCHINSON

It is an honour to present the District of North Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services (DNVFRS) Annual Report 2020.

This annual report describes how we did in the past year, not only by reporting the outcomes achieved in terms of data and statistics, but also – and perhaps more importantly – through sharing some of the stories of how our innovative and community-focused staff serve the community.

As the District has evolved and transformed, so too has its Fire & Rescue Service. We are always striving to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services through innovation and ongoing analysis of our operational results.

## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Over the past year, we undertook a collaborative approach to the development of our DNVFRS Strategic Plan 2020-2025. This five-year plan is ambitious, proactive, and looks to position our Fire & Rescue Services at the forefront of the changing environment in which we work and live. By developing a comprehensive plan that leverages data and metrics to inform how we evolve and change, we are consciously creating our future.

## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged our society and brought many changes to how we deliver services within the community. As always, the DNVFRS remains committed to providing the highest levels of emergency response and community risk reduction services to residents and visitors to the District of North Vancouver.

As Fire Chief, I am proud of the level of dedication and professional commitment that every department member embodies, regardless of rank, position, or assignment. I am truly honoured to serve with such a diligent and compassionate team who provide superior service and exemplary care throughout our community, and I'm thankful for the ongoing support we receive from District Council, our public safety partners, and the different operational divisions within the DNV.

Council and residents alike can be proud that their Fire & Rescue Services team is one of the most highly trained, innovative, resilient, and compassionate emergency service agencies in North America.

Respectfully,

Brian Hutchinson, MA, CEM®, ECFO



*DNVFRS Fire Chief, Brian Hutchinson MA, CEM®, ECFO*

# 1. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DNVFRS

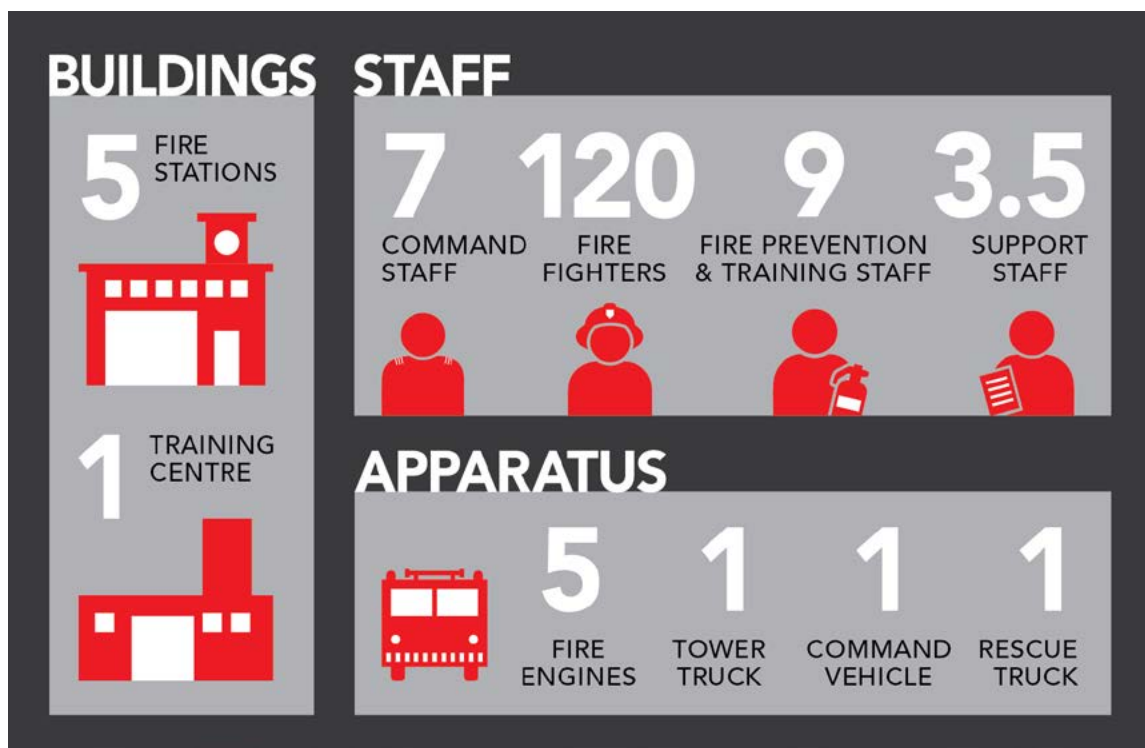


The District of North Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services (DNVFRS) is a mission-oriented emergency services agency focused on the safety and well-being of our community.

Our members deliver services through an integrated approach that encompasses emergency response for fire, rescue, and life safety, and community risk reduction through public safety programs, including risk-based inspections, fire investigation, plan review, and targeted public education.

## YOUR DNVFRS AT A GLANCE

With over 130 firefighters, command, training, and support staff at five strategically located fire stations, we serve the District's 82,500 residents and 160 square kilometres of urban and wilderness land.





# WHAT WE BELIEVE

## OUR MISSION

We proudly serve our community by providing exceptional fire suppression, medical aid, technical rescue, fire prevention and public education services.

## OUR VISION

To be an inclusive and progressive leader that consistently provides our community with excellent service.

## OUR VALUES

- **Community** — Treat people with kindness and respect
- **Integrity** — Do the right thing
- **Wellbeing** — Foster physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing
- **Innovative** — Drive change for the good



## PART OF A REGIONAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SYSTEM

We are part of a regional fire and emergency services system, working alongside West Vancouver Fire and Rescue and the North Vancouver City Fire Department under a Cooperative Fire/Rescue Services agreement.

As a participating agency, the DNVFRS has agreed, along with our two North Shore partners, to eliminate jurisdictional borders for fire and rescue responses.

This system is a model within British Columbia and across Canada and provides a much higher service level for citizens in the three participating municipalities.



## 2. COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE



The emergence of a global pandemic in March of 2020 required the DNVFRS to quickly adapt and develop a strategy that would allow us to maintain our current level of professional emergency services safely and responsibly.

### SOME OF THE INITIATIVES THAT WE IMPLEMENTED IN 2020 INCLUDE:

**Specialized Positions** — We assigned a Chief Officer to a full-time Emergency Management role coordinating our response to the pandemic following our Pandemic/Infectious Disease Plan. We also assigned a staff member to the role of Infection Control Officer to ensure our frontline response met and exceeded best practices in the field.

**Virtual Town Halls** — We implemented regular virtual meetings that brought all five fire stations, the training centre and command staff together for sessions that provided regular updates on COVID-related issues, changing medical response protocols, and further guidance from our Medical Director.

**Altered Work Week Program** — To address the number of staff in the workplace during the pandemic, we implemented a work week model that ensured added depth for on-site command staff 24/7 to support pandemic-level operations. This model will be used again for long-duration incidents, natural disasters, or in the event the pandemic increases in severity.

**Aeroclave Decon Units** — We installed Aeroclave decontamination units at all fire stations to disinfect fire engines, equipment, and buildings and reduce the risk of exposure to dangerous pathogens.

**Fire Training Risk Mitigation Plan** — At the onset of the pandemic, we developed procedures and precautions that would allow our firefighters to continue to fulfill our mandatory training and maintain all of our personnel's safety.

**Procuring Medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** — To prevent the risk of medical PPE shortages, we worked collaboratively with our partners to secure alternative and reliable PPE sources, building out our critical resource stockpiles. This allowed us to provide uninterrupted medical response services safely.



We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic will continue into 2021 and are planning to implement additional measures this year, including:

**Resource Deployment** — We are focused on moving to a 'Closest Hall' dispatching model that will further remove municipal boundaries in the deployment of fire and rescue to ensure the timeliest response to emergencies across the North Shore.

**Public Education** — With limited access to schools and public events during the pandemic, we will build on our ability to deliver fire and life safety education virtually. A primary focus will be on using digital technology to provide virtual engagement and information delivery.

**Learning Management System** — To limit potential exposure between staff at training events, we will deliver most lecture and classroom-based activities online ahead of practical Training sessions. The Learning Management System incorporates several features that provide engaging and interactive training formats that we will continue to build upon in the coming years.





### 3. REDUCING RISK

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The top priority for the DNVFRS is to deliver exceptional emergency services. An important part of this service delivery is to minimize the existing risks in our community. If we can prevent fires and emergencies from happening, we can greatly reduce the risk and increase the safety of our residents.

We pursue this goal by investigating fires to understand where they started and what caused them, by working with builders and developers to ensure that measures are in place to limit fire risk, and by regularly inspecting commercial, industrial, and multi-family buildings to ensure they comply with all fire codes and standards.

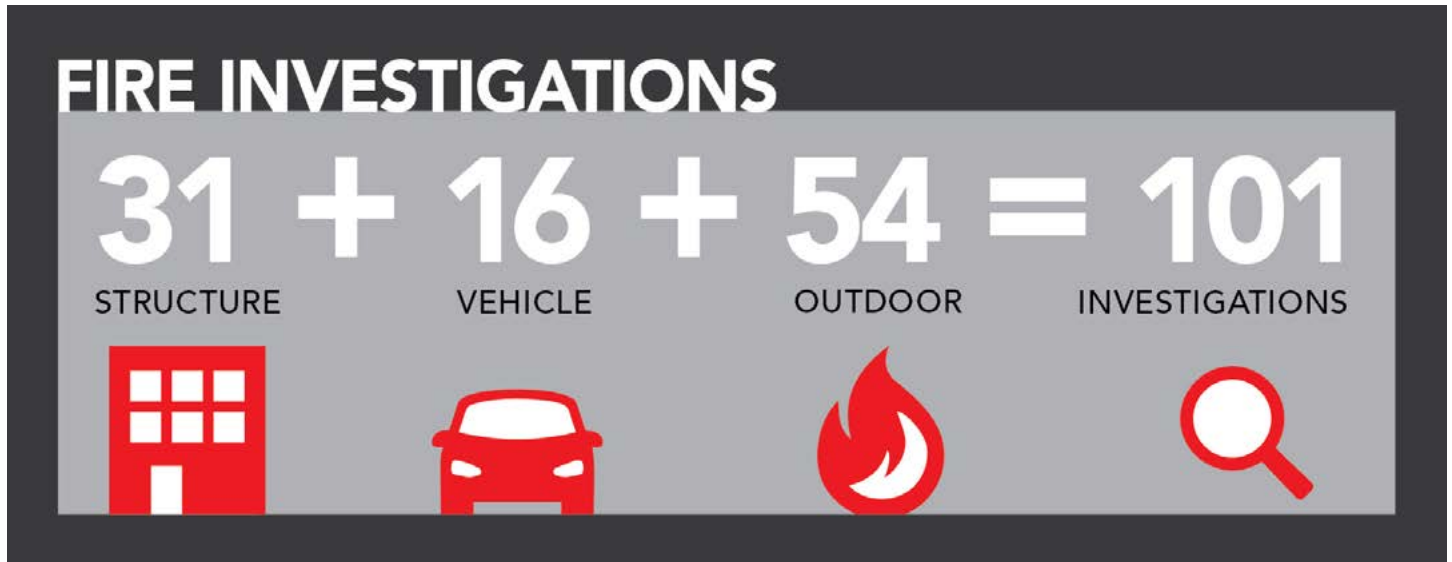
Here are highlights of our work in 2020 that helped minimize the risk of fire in the District.



# FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

As Local Assistants to the BC Fire Commissioner, we are responsible for investigating fires in our municipality to determine whether the fire was due to accident, negligence, or design flaw.

In 2020, we investigated 101 structure, vehicle, and outdoor fires. DNVFRS recovered \$5,000 for 10 of the fire investigations. Cost recovery is a Fire Bylaw requirement that provides direct costing for these investigations.



# FIRE INSPECTIONS

Our Public Safety Officers routinely inspect public buildings, apartment buildings, multi-unit strata (condo) properties, and lodging houses.

In 2020, we conducted 4,267 inspections, which generated \$24,290 in cost recovery resulting from non-compliance and re-inspection fines. In early 2020, we paused regular inspections due to COVID-19. Special inspections such as complaints, new occupancies and new businesses continued with new protocols in place.





# FIRE SAFETY PLANS

As part of fire inspection duties, our staff also process fire safety plans. We processed 67 fire safety plans in 2020, which are required in a number of circumstances:

- Buildings that the BC Building Code requires to have a fire alarm
- Demolition and construction sites
- Storage areas
- Where flammable liquids are stored or handled
- Where hazardous processes or operations occur
- Buildings that have assembly, care, treatment, or detection uses



# CONSTRUCTION PLAN REVIEWS

Our Public Safety Division staff work with developers during the design phase of their buildings through to the building permit stage.

This ensures that new buildings comply with the BC Building Code and the BC Fire Code and that they meet fire department operational requirements while under construction, during an occupancy inspection, and over the life of the building

We collect 0.075% of the value of the work to offset the cost of staffing, which in 2020, amounted to \$204,312

During this time, we reviewed over 69 submissions for alterations, additions, demolitions, and new construction, including review and recommendation for potential new projects.



# PRE-INCIDENT FIRE PLAN REVIEWS

DNVFRS personnel maintain a database of building data and plans for properties in the District. An online access program is actively being updated. Enhancements to building data and plans support fire department operations with timely access to information during an emergency.

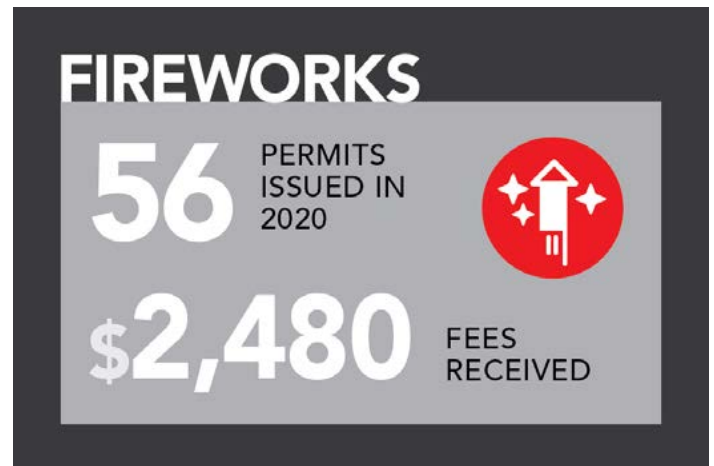
In 2020, developers submitted 42 plans to DNVFRS personnel for review and implementation and paid \$7,560 in review fees. We also updated 230 building data sets.

## DIRECT FEE/COST RECOVERY

The Public Safety Division provides direct services to the community for other services such as firework permits and information requests.

In 2020, our staff:

- Issued 56 fireworks permits, amounting to \$2,480 in service fees
- Processed file searches and Freedom of Information Act inquiries, amounting to \$4,320 in service fees



# 3. FIRE SERVICE ACCREDITATION

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In 2018, we began a multi-year process to become an accredited fire service through the Commission on Fire Service Accreditation (CFAI).

The journey to accreditation exemplifies our commitment to establishing a culture of self-improvement and providing the community with an innovative, progressive fire department that meets and exceeds expectations.

In 2021, we will complete the requirements to progress to being a 'candidate' agency, which will allow us to apply for formal accreditation in spring 2022.





# WHAT'S INVOLVED

Gaining international accredited agency status is a rigorous process that involves many steps and actions, including:

- Building an accreditation team
- Creating three documents:
  - Community Risk Assessment – Standards of Cover
  - Strategic Plan
  - Self-Assessment Manual
- Peer review of the documents, onsite assessment, and accreditation report
- Meeting requirements of Commission of Fire Accreditation International

# WHY BECOME AN ACCREDITED AGENCY?

The accreditation process sets a foundation for continuous improvement into the future.

We are committed to attaining and maintaining CFAI accreditation. The path to achieving this goal provides the opportunities to:

- Emphasize our dedication to excellence
- Establish a culture of continuous improvement
- Receive independent validation of our work
- Provide tangible data for our elected officials and stakeholders

# GOALS AND PERFORMANCE

The goals and performance of the DNVFRS are articulated in the three companion documents of accreditation:

- Community Risk Assessment /Standards of Cover 2020-2025 (CRA/SOC)
- Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual 2021-2026 (FESSAM)
- Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Learn more at **[DNV.org/FireAccreditation](https://www.dnv.org/FireAccreditation)**

# 5. RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS

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Our firefighters are highly trained, experienced, and industry certified to fight fires of all types, from those in structures to fires in vehicles and boats.

In addition to battling fires, our firefighters routinely respond to calls for medical assistance, rescues of all kinds, hazardous material concerns, requests for public assistance, and more.

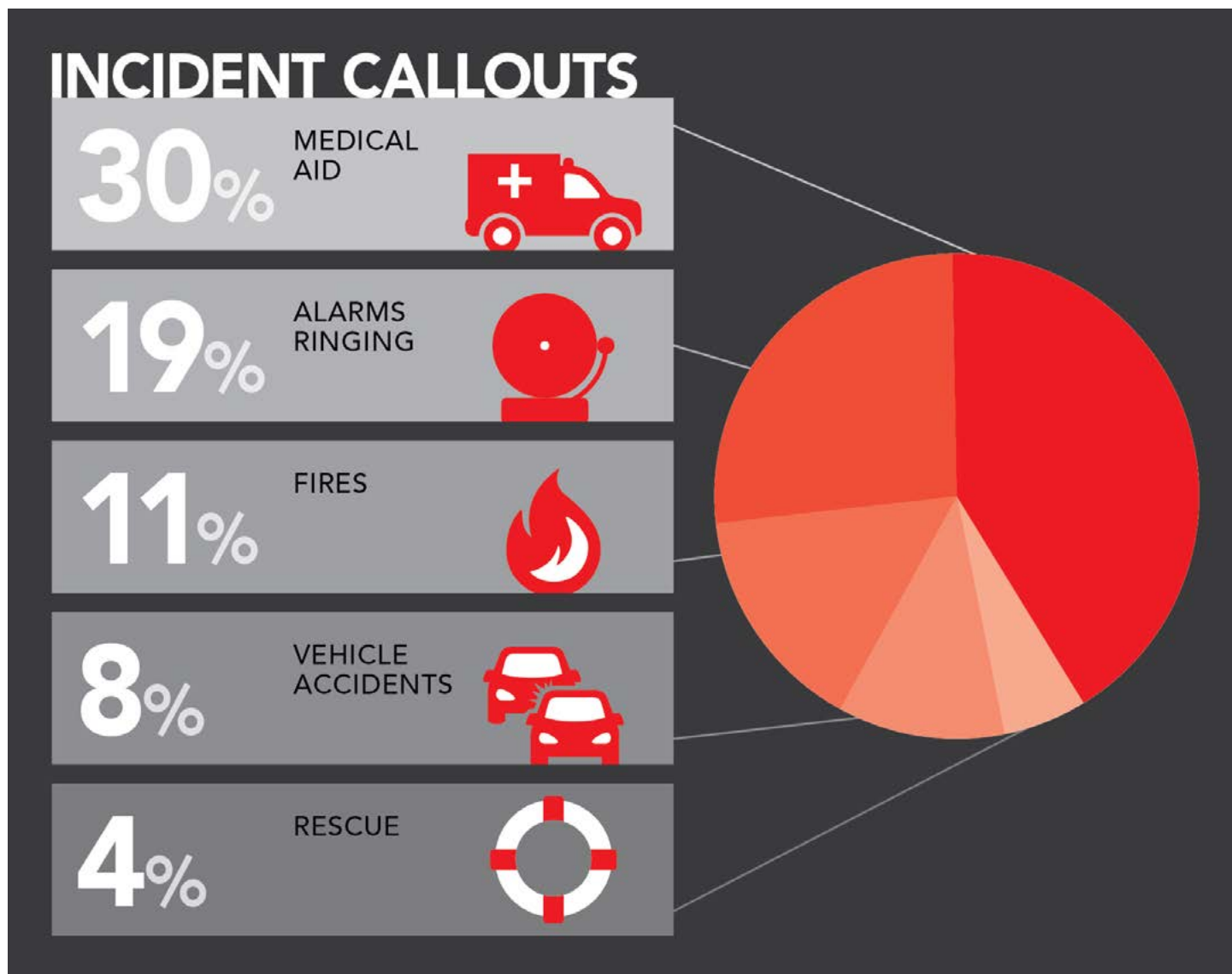
In 2020, we responded to 5,192 incidents, either on our own or as part of a tri-municipal effort. Our turnout time was 2 minutes and 16 seconds for 90% of our calls , and our response time was 8 minutes and 29 seconds for 90% of our calls.



# TOP 5 INCIDENT CALL OUTS FOR 2020

Our firefighters respond to a wide range of incidents, including fires, accidents, rescues, and medical emergencies.

Due to a temporary change in protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a decrease in the number of responses for medical aid in 2020.



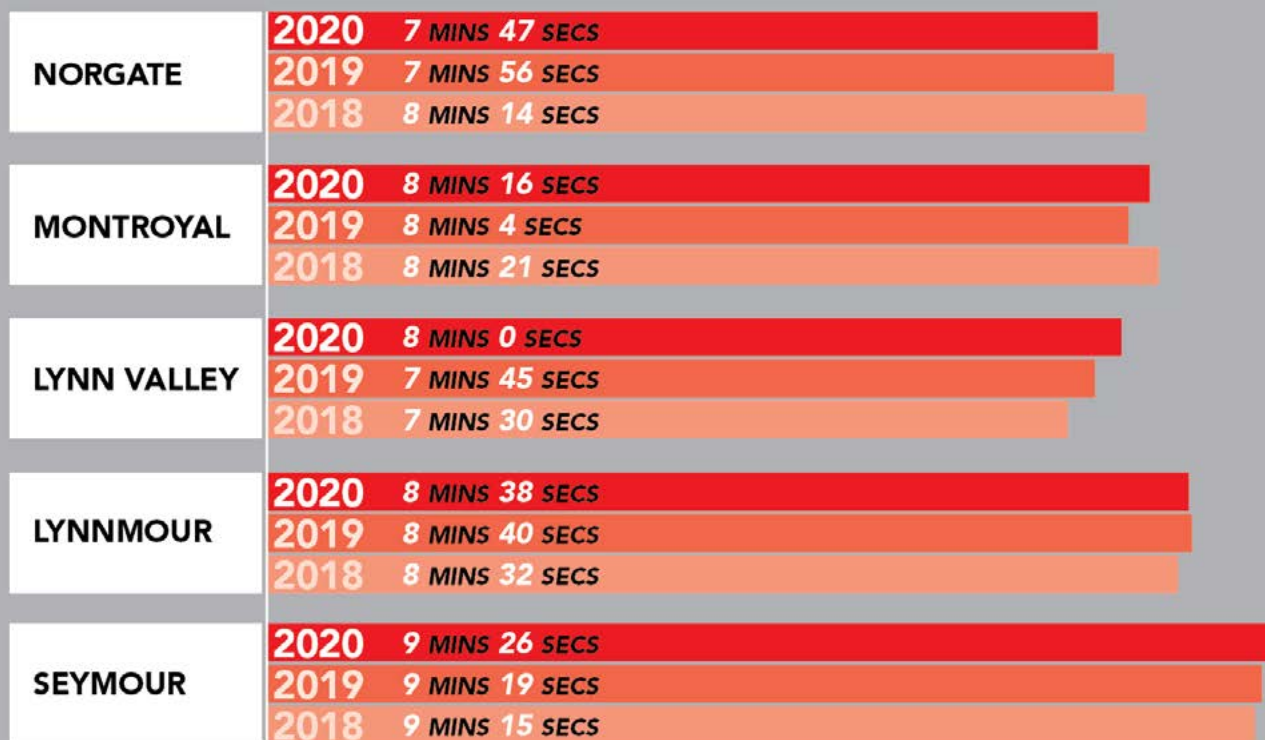


# RESPONSE TIME BY FIRE STATION

Firefighters respond to incidents from one (or more) of five different fire stations, depending on the emergency's location and size.

In 2020, we achieved an overall response time of 8 minutes and 29 seconds for 90% of our emergency responses. Response time is how much time elapses between when the fire department receives a call, and the first arrival of firefighters on the scene.

## RESPONSE TIMES\*

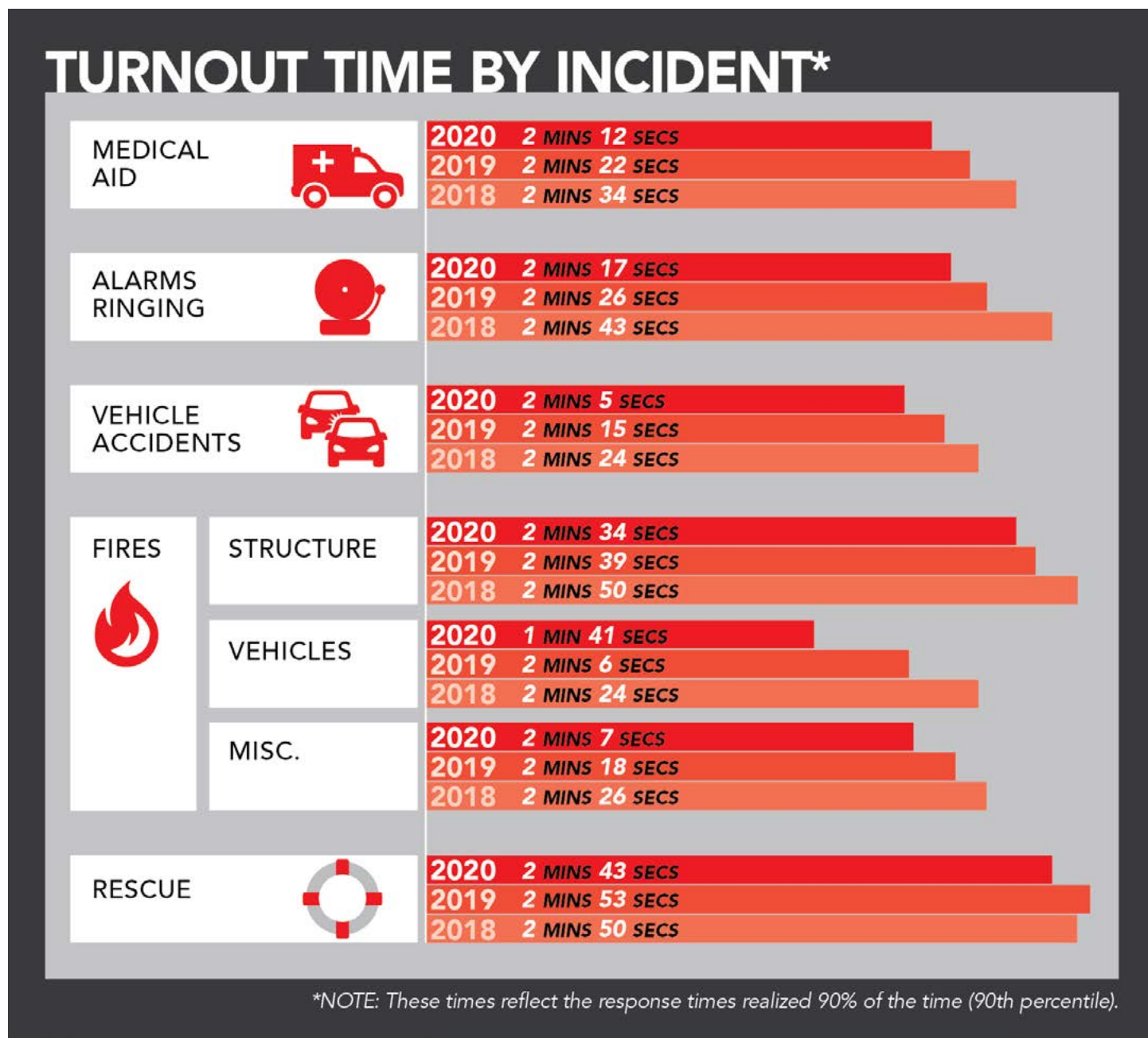


\*Response Times = Turnout Time + Travel Time

# TURNOUT TIME BY INCIDENT

In 2020, we achieved a 2 minutes, 16 seconds turnout time across all incident types when responding to 90% of our incidents.

Turnout time measures the firefighters' ability to stop what they are doing, get to the appropriate fire engine, put on their personal protective equipment, board the fire engine, and safely secure themselves for travel to the emergency.



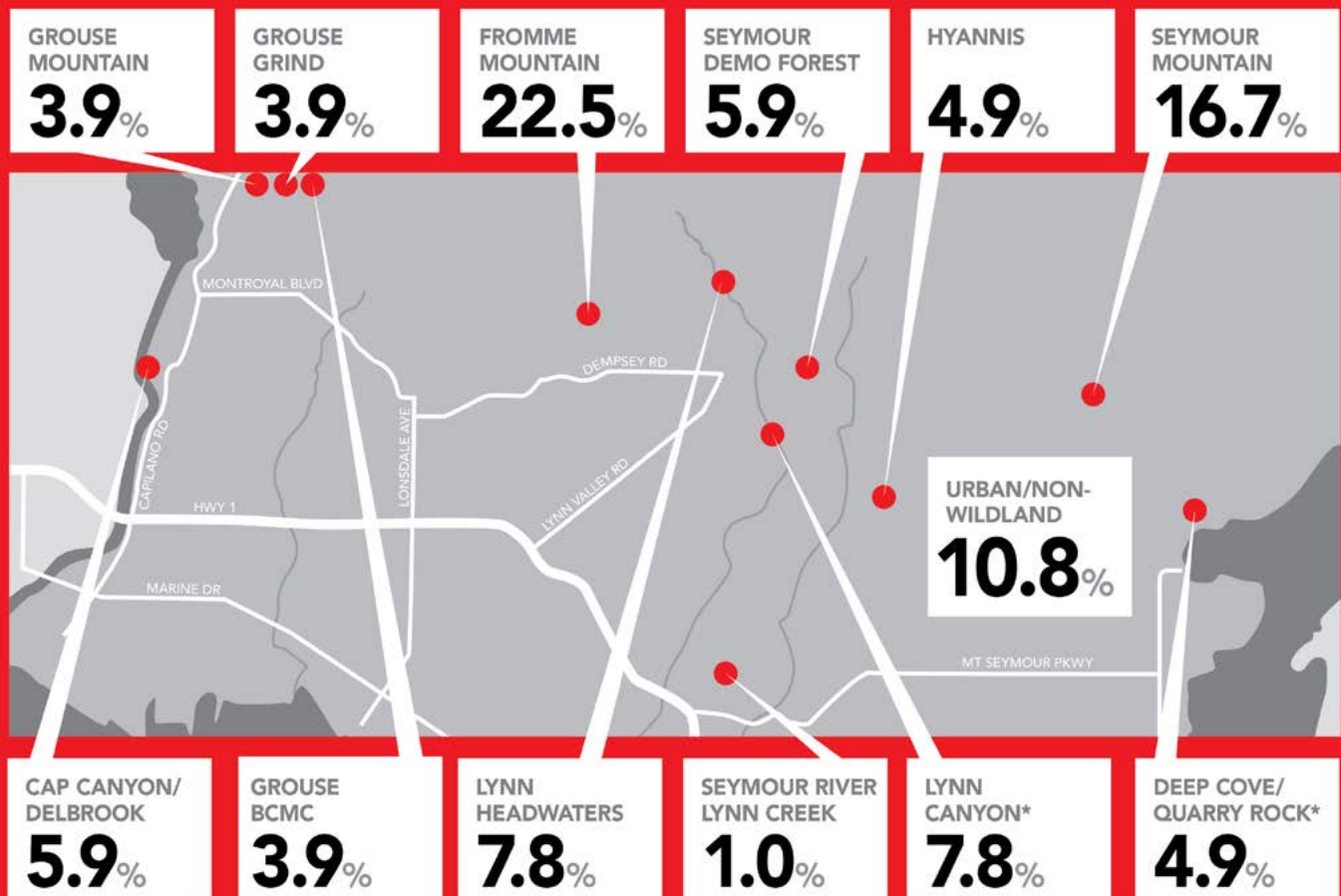
# A CLOSER LOOK AT TECHNICAL RESCUES

In addition to its urban core, the District of North Vancouver also includes hundreds of square kilometres of rugged mountain wilderness with dozens of hiking and mountain biking trails intersected by rivers and ravines. We are also home to Grouse Mountain and Seymour Mountain ski operations, as well as the Grouse Grind trail.

Our team is unique in Metro Vancouver because of the number of highly technical rescues we execute each year, and the close mutual support relationship we have with the all-volunteer North Shore Rescue (NSR) team.

In 2020, we attended 102 rescue incidents, with 48% of those incidents occurring on Fromme Mountain, Seymour Mountain or Lynn Canyon.

## RESCUE REGIONS



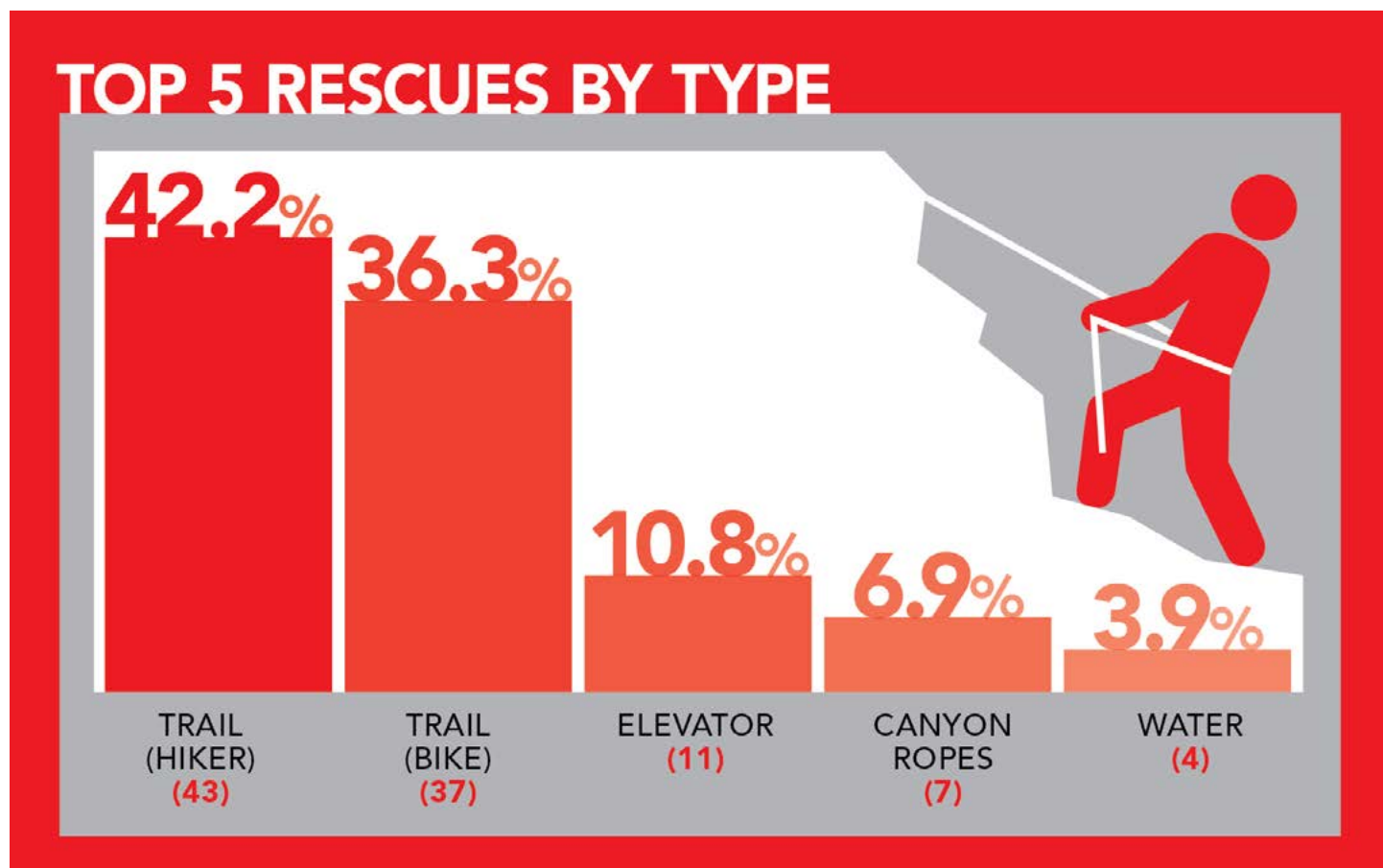
\*NOTE: The Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge and the Quarry Rock Trail were closed for the majority of 2020 due to COVID-19 precautions.



# TYPICAL NORTH SHORE RESCUES

Of the 102 rescue incidents the DNVFRS responded to in 2020, over 89.2% were related to outdoor recreation in our wild spaces (hikers, mountain bikers, swimmers, kayakers, etc.) followed by rescues in elevators, at 10.8%.

Our firefighters are trained to industry standards in high-angle rope rescues and swift-water rescue techniques that are used every summer in Lynn Canyon, Capilano Canyon, and Quarry Rock in Deep Cove.



# WORKING WITH NORTH SHORE RESCUE

When responding to wildland search and rescues, and technical, trail, and water rescues that occur in the District, we immediately liaise with North Shore Rescue (NSR) to coordinate our response and ensure that each agency is aware of the incident.

Our working relationship with NSR allows us to capitalize on the skill sets of both of our agencies to best serve residents and visitors, while providing an efficient and coordinated response to all wildland emergencies on the North Shore.

We also work collaboratively to exchange information and host training programs that focus on our respective strengths as response agencies.



Due to provincial COVID-19 restrictions, we had limited opportunities to participate in interagency training activities in 2020. However, we were able to participate in a ski lift evacuation training exercise with NSR and the Mount Seymour Ski Patrol in February 2020.

Moving forward, we plan to provide supplemental rope rescue and medical training to NSR, and look to participate in additional patient location and helicopter operations training opportunities with NSR instructors.

You can read more about the life-saving services that North Shore Rescue provides at [northshorerescue.com](https://northshorerescue.com).

## RESPONDING TO MARINE EMERGENCIES WITH ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE SEARCH AND RESCUE

We work with Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCMSAR) on all marine and waterfront emergency responses in the District of North Vancouver. This includes transporting firefighters and equipment to remote and boat-only access locations, providing water-based information and intelligence for shore-based emergency operations, and performing water rescues in areas that are inaccessible by DNVFRS firefighters.

As with our other partner agencies, we work closely with RCMSAR to share information and provide training that capitalizes on each agency's strengths. Due to provincial COVID-19 restrictions, we had limited opportunities for interagency training activities in 2020. However, we were able to work with RCMSAR members from both the North Vancouver and West Vancouver stations during a marine firefighting training course hosted at Seaplan Vancouver Shipyards in early 2020.

DNVFRS plans to resume providing medical aid, rope rescue, and self-contained breathing apparatus training to RCMSAR in 2021 and engage our members in boat safety and fleet response capability awareness training delivered by RCMSAR instructors.

For more information about North Vancouver Royal Canadian Marine Search & Rescue, visit [rcmsar.com](https://rcmsar.com)

# 6. PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES



The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is but one example of how the DNVFRS uses all-hazards planning to develop the capacity to deal with multiple emergencies that may impact the community. Helping prepare for, respond to, and recover from major North Shore-wide emergencies is a significant focus of our fire and rescue service.

Our comprehensive major emergency operations plan and pandemic/infectious disease plan are living documents that are continually updated to stay relevant and effective.

The COVID-19 pandemic has validated our established process and focus on planning for emergencies that are anything but routine. This experience in 2020 reinforced our capacity to deal with major emergencies.

## NORTH SHORE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

North Shore Emergency Management (NSEM) is an inter-municipal agency that provides emergency management services to all three municipalities on the North Shore. We work closely with NSEM on training initiatives and disaster relief exercises that emulate real-life response to scenarios such as urban interface fires, earthquakes, floods, and other emergencies.

NSEM is a valued partner agency that also supports the Disaster Emergency Readiness Training (DERT) program, which aims to improve the District of North Vancouver's operational resiliency in the event of large-scale emergencies.

You can learn more about the work that North Shore Emergency Management does for North Shore Communities at **[NSEM.info](https://www.nsem.info)**.



# 35-MEMBER EXTENDED OPERATIONS UNIT

We established the District of North Vancouver Extended Operations Unit (EOU) in 2018 to strengthen the response to local, naturally occurring emergencies, increase community resiliency, and facilitate swift recovery from a natural disaster.

The 35-member team consists of DNV employees — many of whom already have relevant skills and experience from their 'day' jobs (arborists, heavy equipment operators, and so on). In the event of earthquakes, landslides, floods, wildfires, and other natural disasters, this team would be called on to support Fire & Rescue.



During large or significant naturally occurring emergencies, this group of trained staff will enhance our capacity and capability to mitigate incidents.

## EOU TRAINING IN 2020

Members participated in the following training opportunities to enhance emergency response skills and knowledge.

### **WILDFIRE BASIC FIRE SUPPRESSION AND SAFETY (S-100) AND WILDFIRE ENTRAPMENT AVOIDANCE AND SAFETY (S-185) (Refresher Training)**

Official wildfire training courses by the Province of BC.

### **ARBORICULTURE CANADA 'CHAINSAW SAFETY & CUTTING TECHNIQUES COURSE'**

Delivered by Arboriculture Canada certified DNVFRS Fire Fighters/Instructors.

### **SWIFTWATER AWARENESS TRAINING**

Delivered virtually by Emergency Management BC and Rescue Canada.

### **HELICOPTER LANDING ZONE TRAINING**

Delivered virtually by British Columbia Emergency Health Service's Aviation division.

# MAJOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

We are part of an annual tri-municipal training initiative that prepares us to respond to large-scale incidents that result in the failure of critical infrastructure, communications, and supply chains.

The Major Emergency Operations Plan (MEOP) was produced as a result of the District's Earthquake Ready Action Plan, which is designed to strengthen our earthquake resiliency in four key areas — mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery — by focusing on the people, buildings, infrastructure, and systems that are most vulnerable.

The plan is reviewed and tested annually by all three municipalities during field exercises that replicate a post-disaster environment when all resources are overwhelmed.

In 2020, 81 staff and 14 pieces of apparatus from all three North Shore fire departments participated in a daily exercise – over the course of four days – with 324 overall participants. During the test, crews went into the field during a simulated earthquake to review the structural integrity of District bridges, roadways, and other infrastructure and reported back on their findings.

The exercise in 2020 also incorporated a simulated activation of the Department Operations Centre (DOC), which is used to coordinate response activities, gather real-time intelligence, provide logistical and operations support, and maintain a chronological report of incidents and status updates in the event of an emergency.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused us to adapt, be flexible, and employ creative approaches to exercising this plan. The reality of potential concurrent events (for example, an earthquake during a pandemic) reinforced the importance we place on this approach across the North Shore. These adaptations allowed us to test our ability to set-up a mixed in-person and virtual DOC, which aligns with the very real situation where our chief officers and municipal officials cannot physically come together due to the nature of the emergency.

The timing of the field exercise aligned again with the annual Great BC Shake Out earthquake drill to coordinate the District's earthquake initiatives with provincial efforts.



# URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE

Urban Search and Rescue provides critical resources and a specially trained task force of personnel with medical, fire suppression, emergency response, search and rescue, and engineering backgrounds.

Teams deploy with trained dogs, electronic search equipment, and heavy construction equipment to remove debris and help extract people trapped in major structural collapses during naturally occurring emergencies such as earthquakes.

Our members regularly attend monthly training sessions alongside Canada Task Force (CANTF-1) members to build on our collaborative efforts.

Building on the parameters laid out by Public Safety Canada, the DNVFRS continues to work towards ensuring our firefighters have the training and equipment to be interoperable with our CANTF-1 partners..





# MARINE FIREFIGHTING

We are active partners alongside West Vancouver Fire & Rescue, North Vancouver City Fire Department, and Vancouver Fire & Rescue when responding to marine emergencies.

Over the past year, 20 additional North Shore firefighters received training to prepare for, respond to, and recover from several emergencies that can occur on the water, including 13 members from the District of North Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services. This increases the number of North Shore firefighters qualified to this standard to 80, including 53 from the DNVFRS.

This training program was delivered by the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) and hosted by our partners at Seaspan Vancouver Shipyards.

The programs are a model of interagency collaboration, with the following agencies actively participating in each session:

- Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCMSAR)
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police Marine Unit
- Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services Fireboat
- Vancouver Police Department Marine Unit
- Port of Vancouver



# 7. IN THE COMMUNITY



Serving in and caring for our community is our top priority, and we take pride in the work we do for our residents and businesses.

Whether it's teaching fire safety to children, helping our seniors plan and practice evacuation in an emergency, or demonstrating the tools and techniques we use daily to help keep everyone safe, we are always looking for opportunities to connect with people.

Despite the many challenges presented by the global pandemic, we offered a number of COVID-19 friendly events aimed at increasing public awareness and safety throughout 2020.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH

We are always looking for opportunities to bring members of the public together to learn about fire safety, get to know our firefighters, and have some fun.

In 2020, we held 364 events, engaging with over 8,000 people.

### SOME OF THE MORE NOTABLE EVENTS INCLUDED:

- **Operation Birthday Program:** We offered Fire Engine "drive-by" birthday parties to 289 children and seniors who would have otherwise been unable to celebrate their birthdays due to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020.
- **Kindergarten Class Visits:** We offered 53 physically distanced fire safety educational visits this year that taught youth about the importance of being fire safe.





- **Community Events:** We participated in seven COVID-19 friendly community events, including the North Vancouver Canada Day Parade and the Remembrance Day Celebration.
- **High School Grad Parades:** We were honoured to help our 2020 high school graduates celebrate their special day by participating in multiple grad parades.



Left to right: DNVFRS' Jared Reynolds, Fire Chief Brian Hutchinson and Derek Lamber participated in the Climb the Wall fundraiser for the BC Lung Association. (February 2020.)



Each year, our firefighters support Cops for Cancer in our community.



Each February, DNVFRS firefighters don pink to show their support for Pink Shirt Day. (Photo taken prior to COVID-19.)



DNV Firefighters Charitable Society raised more than \$30,000 for the Harvest Project.



# GIVING BACK

Our firefighters contribute hundreds of volunteer hours annually through the DNV Firefighters Charitable Society and in 2020 raised \$196,000.

These funds benefit important causes such as youth mental health, high school scholarships, the BCPFF Burn Fund, Athletics 4 Kids, Seymour Salmonid Society, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, and other local organizations.

Key fundraising events included:

Event	Charity	Amount raised
COVID-19 Local Assistance	Harvest Project	\$33,000
The Fishing Derby	Seymour Salmonid Society and Athletics for Kids	\$71,000
Jack.org	Jack.org (fundraiser in place of Barn Burner)	\$30,000
SD44 School Board Scholarships	High school students interested in firefighting careers	\$1,000 x 4
Clothing Donation Bins	DNVFRS Charitable Society	\$62,000

In addition, we made donations to:

- Cancer Drivers Society
- Lions Gate Hospital Foundation
- BC Lung Association
- BCPFFA Burn Fund
- North Shore Mountain Bike Association

For more information, please visit [dnvfirecharity.ca](https://dnvfirecharity.ca).

## 8. WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

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Our firefighters take part in annual training opportunities and full-scale functional exercises to practice interagency response to a potential wildfire.

The District of North Vancouver has a significant amount of area where our community meets the forest, which may be especially vulnerable to wildfire damage. Our wildfire preparedness and readiness capabilities are enhanced through programs, partnerships, and training, as well as grant and funding opportunities.

In 2020, we continued our door-hanger program focused on the 7,000+ homes in our wildfire development permit area. We also designed and hosted a COVID-19 friendly wildfire tabletop exercise that had 12 agencies participate in-person.

### COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

Urban interface fires typically require more resources in terms of personnel and equipment than any one department has available and, by nature, they require cooperation and coordination between multiple departments, agencies, and organizations.

Our Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), which was updated in 2020, helps us prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfires, particularly in areas where our community meets the forest, known as the 'wildland urban interface.'

The plan contains 52 recommendations for improving our emergency response and training, community education, emergency communications, building practices, and more to make the District as fire-safe as possible.

# WILDFIRE TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENTS

To prepare for potential wildfires, our members undergo annual training and practice interagency communication during emergency response exercises.

Key training programs, exercises and deployments in 2020, included:

- **Christie Mountain Fire near Penticton** — deployed two DNVFRS members and a fire engine, along with one member who was assigned as a strike team/task force leader.
- **Squamish Valley Fire** — deployed five members and one of our Structure Protection Units (SPU's).
- **Sunshine Falls Fire** — responded to a wildfire in the District's Woodlands area, which was a great reminder of how quickly conditions can change and that we are well-prepared for a wildfire on the North Shore.
- **Wildfire Initial Attack Crew (DNV-IAC)** — this 25-member program, unique to a BC municipal fire department, has been established to fight wildfires within or adjacent to the wildland areas of the District. These fires may be inaccessible to our fire engines, so members have been selected and trained to fight wildfires in more remote locations and for extended periods.
- **BC Wildfire Service strike team/task force leaders** — training was completed by our command staff and wildfire instructor team leaders in a new provincial standard to support the BC Wildfire Service and Office of the Fire Commissioner. One of our newly trained task force leaders provided support during the Penticton wildfires this summer.
- **Interagency wildfire tabletop exercise** — we hosted this training event that included multiple agencies and stakeholders. This initiative was made possible by Community Resiliency Initiative (CRI) funding.
- **'Chainsaw Safety & Cutting Techniques' program** — we expanded this program, liaising with Metro Vancouver Watershed Protection to enhance training for the DNV-IAC.
- **3rd Structure Protection Unit (SPU)** — we completed the outfitting for this unit, which will be strategically positioned within the DNV for wildfire readiness and response.
- **Wildfire Working Group** — we developed this group, which includes partner agencies from across Metro Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast/Sea-to-Sky Corridor. This group will regularly discuss best practices regarding Wildfire PPE, equipment, training, and logistics.







## PARTNERSHIP WITH METRO VANCOUVER

Working with Metro Vancouver Watershed Protection on a variety of initiatives, we are able to enhance our inter-agency relationship and increase our interoperability in the event of a wildfire emergency or technical rescue.

We will continue to:

- Liaise with the Metro Vancouver Watershed Protection team on joint initiatives such as the Wildfire Initial Attack Crew (DNV-IAC) training, dangerous tree assessment, helicopter training and overall wildfire protection across the North Shore and in our two watersheds (Capilano and Seymour).
- Coordinate communications through weekly fire danger rating reports to update our new signage and social media channels throughout the hot and dry season.

# FIRESMART COMMUNITY PROGRAM

The wildfire in Sunshine Falls has motivated many residents and communities to reach out and actively engage with DNVFRS.

Two of our communities are now officially recognized by FireSmart BC, with three more committing to community assessments by our Local FireSmart Representatives. FireSmart assessments include recommendations for mitigating measures to reduce risks to property by wildfire and increase the community's resiliency. As of 2020, we have 11 members qualified through FireSmart Canada as Local FireSmart Representatives (LFRs).

During the dry season, we meet weekly with partners to discuss information about potential fire dangers and preparedness tactics. We also work with personnel on construction sites to mitigate risks when the fire danger rating reaches high or extreme.

Our Structure Protection Unit (SPU) was on display for a Community Demonstration Event in June hosted by our Wildland Instructors and LFRs in the Woodlands area, and we look forward to more events like this in the coming year.

As part of the FireSmart door hanger program, our firefighters, public safety personnel, chief officers, administrative staff, and District park rangers delivered outdoor burning information to 3,271 homes (an increase from 2,225 homes in 2019) in the urban interface and wildfire development permit area.

Members trained as Local FireSmart Representatives performed FireSmart reviews for five pocket communities in our urban interface, as well as six District-owned buildings identified as critical infrastructure.

We will continue to partner with the community and other agencies on the North Shore to increase FireSmart awareness and Community Risk Reduction.

## GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In 2020, we received a Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) grant through the Union of BC Municipalities.

The CRI grant program allowed us to move forward with pursuing a number of the recommendations Mayor and Council adopted as part of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

We have worked with wildfire partner agencies such as Bowen Island, Coquitlam, Delta, Lions Bay, Port Moody, Richmond, Squamish, and the Sunshine Coast to better understand the wildfire capabilities of our neighbouring communities. We will be liaising with Britannia Beach and Whistler in 2021, and including all of these partner agencies in the working group, so that we can share information and provide better situational awareness during the wildfire season.



# 9. TEAM BUILDING

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The women and men of DNVFRS are our greatest asset, and we're proud of the work they do every day to keep our community safe.

We are continually working to develop and support our diverse and inclusive team of dedicated professionals. We strive to provide an environment of professionalism and well-being that aids our team to obtain the skills and attributes that allow them to excel in their positions. Through our tri-municipal recruiting program, health and wellness programs and training and certification programs, we are building an exemplary workforce.

Our team-building initiatives are reflected in the positive working relationships and partnerships that we maintain with the many other professional and emergency service agencies in our region. We continually support these relationships with regular initiatives, including interagency training and leadership programs.

## SUCCESSION PLANNING

Through a collaborative process with the International Association of Fire Fighters (Local 1183), we continue to support and develop our Chief Officer Development Program (CODP) for our Company Officers.

In 2020, we added two additional members to this program, for a total of nine (9) Captains who are trained and provided opportunities to fill temporary Assistant Fire Chief Positions.

Developing tomorrow's leaders today is the key to progressive organizational behaviour. The CODP provides an opportunity to prepare the next generation of leaders through professional development, mentoring, and practicum experience.

The DNVFRS is pleased with this program's progress and is excited by the opportunity to further develop these members into the future leaders of our organization.



# TRAINING

To give the community the excellence of service they deserve, we provide comprehensive ongoing training to our members. In 2020, we had a training budget of \$399,768, which allowed us to provide 12,417 hours of specialized training to 126 men and women.

## SPECIALIZED TRAINING (OVERVIEW)

Each year, we provide specialized training in multiple fire and rescue disciplines, including fire behaviour, swift-water rescue, high-angle rope rescue, vehicle extrication, fire ground operations, wildland firefighting, emergency vehicle operator and emergency medical responder.

These training sessions are delivered by our professionally certified instructors and typically take place either at our dedicated training centre or at various offsite training locations within our response area.

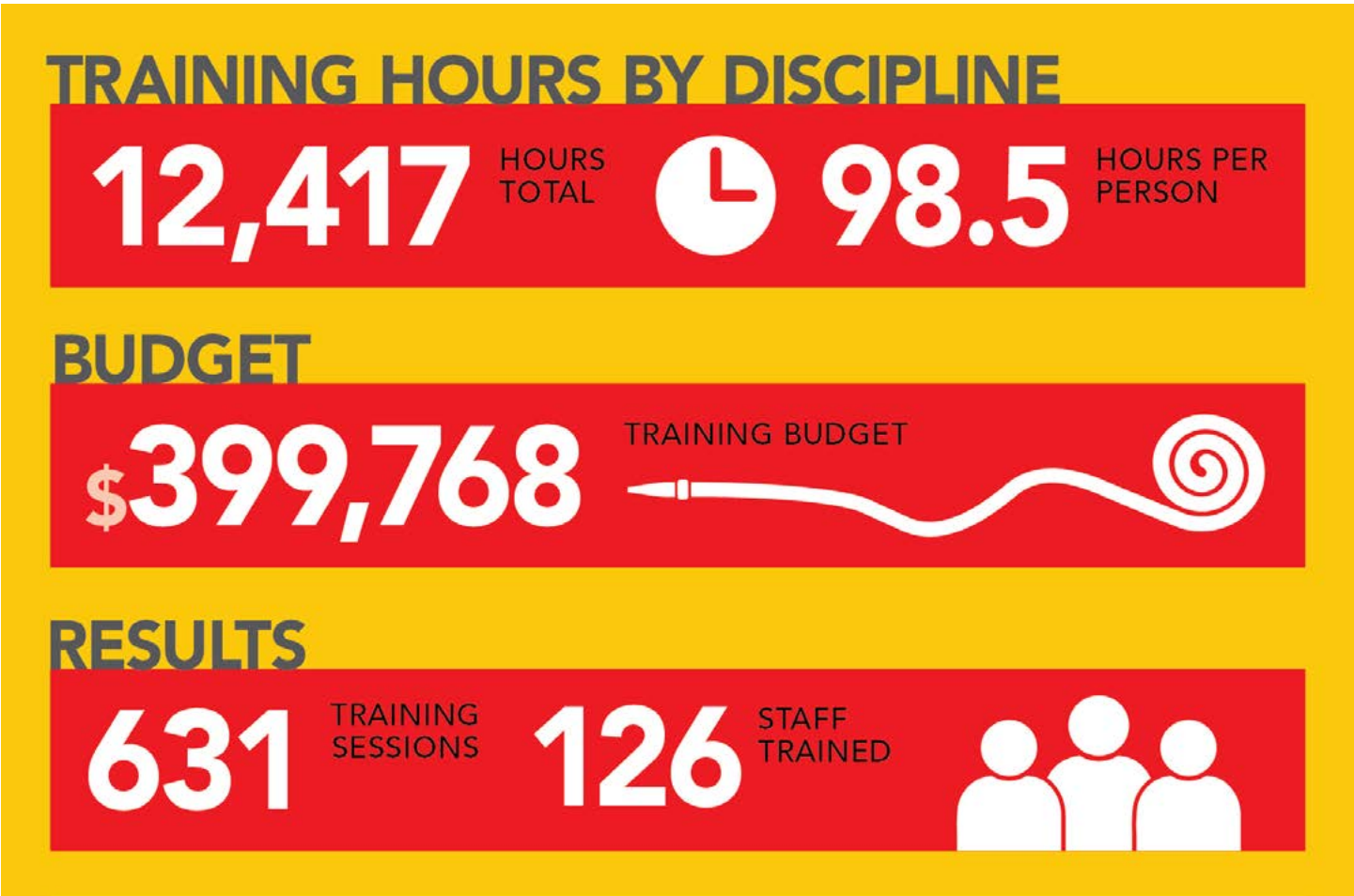
To expand our operational capacity and effectiveness when responding to emergencies, we have provided our firefighters with training in several new and expanding areas in 2020.

- Wildland Urban Interface Task Force/Strike Team Leader
- Wildfire Initial Attack Crew (DNV-IAC)
- Wildland Urban Interface Structural Protection (SPP-115)
- Structural collapse operations
- Chainsaw safety and operation



*DNVFRS members participate in a tram rescue exercise on Grouse Mountain*

Here is an overview of the specialized training we provided to our firefighters in 2020.



*DNVFRS members participate in urban search and rescue training exercises at BC Place*





*Firefighters practise battling wildfires during these training exercises*

# SPECIALIZED TRAINING BY DISCIPLINE (TOP 5 DISCIPLINES)





# FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING (OVERVIEW)

In addition to specialized training, firefighters receive a significant amount of regular, on-the-job training that supports and maintains their foundational skills. This training includes ladder operations, incident command training, traffic safety, radio communications, hose deployment, gas and electrical safety, and building construction.

This training ensures our firefighters maintain the required competency standards for full-service firefighters, as outlined by the BC Office of the Fire Commissioner in the BC Fire Service Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook.

Here is an overview of the foundational skills training we provided in 2020.

## TRAINING HOURS BY FOUNDATIONAL SKILL

**25,368**

HOURS  
TOTAL



**201**

HOURS PER  
PERSON

## RESULTS

**17,624**

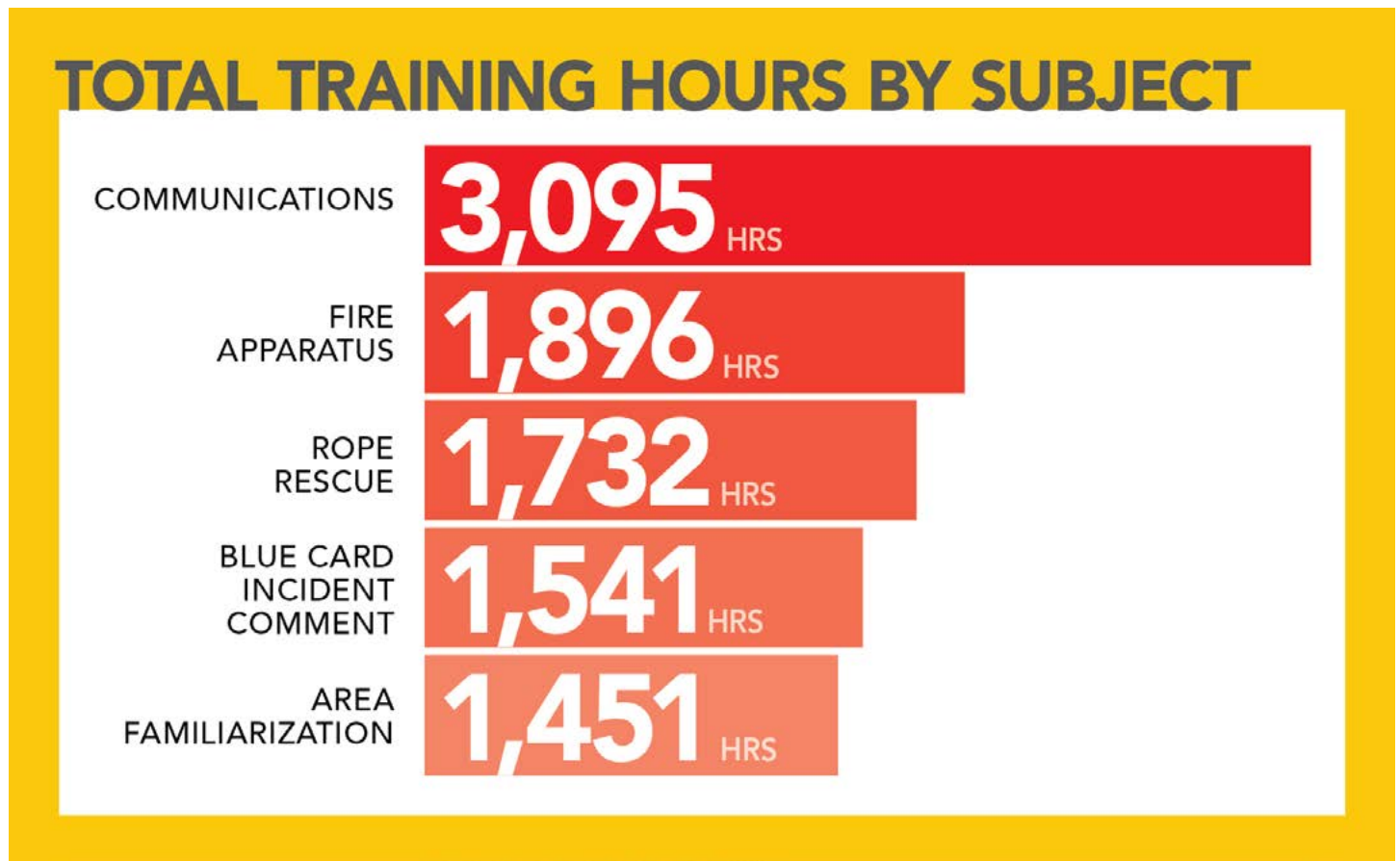
TRAINING  
SESSIONS



**126**

STAFF  
TRAINED

# FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING BY SUBJECT (TOP 5 SUBJECTS)



## JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF BC (JIBC) PARTNERSHIP

The JIBC is a provincially recognized and industry leader of emergency service educational programs and training.

In 2020, we initiated a fire training partnership agreement with the JIBC that recognizes DNVFRS as an authorized provider of accredited training courses for the JIBC. This partnership will enable us to work together with the JIBC to enhance and improve the quality of fire training programs available to our region's fire service agencies.

# INTERAGENCY TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

We engage in training events with many of our regional emergency partners, as well as regular training initiatives with our fellow North Shore fire departments.

Some examples of this training in 2020 are:

- **Canada Task Force 1 (CANTF1)** — monthly training with Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services, Vancouver Police Department, British Columbia Ambulance Services, and North Shore fire departments
- **Municipal and Metro Vancouver park staff training** — includes radio communications, fall restraint, swift-water awareness, wildland fire-fighting, and emergency medical first aid
- Emergency planning and response exercise at Capilano University
- **International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Firefighter Survivability Training Course** — session with all three North Shore fire departments
- **Ski lift evacuation** — training with North Shore Rescue and Mount Seymour Ski Patrol
- **Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) and Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) Training** — session with all three North Shore fire departments
- **JIBC Shipboard Firefighting for Land Based Firefighters** — training involving all three North Shore fire departments, Seaspam Vancouver Ship Yards, Vancouver Fire Department, North Vancouver RCMP, Vancouver Police and RCM Search and Rescue



*Chainsaw training exercises with District parks and operations crews*



# NEW MAPLEWOOD FIRE & RESCUE TRAINING FACILITY

In early 2018, we began planning for a new Fire and Rescue Centre in Maplewood to consolidate our current Fire Station #2 (Lynn timer) and Training Center on St. Denis Avenue, as well as to centrally locate management and administrative staff from Fire Station #1 in Lynn Valley.

Combining a fire station, training centre, and administrative functions into one new facility will improve fire response times, create operational efficiencies, and optimize the capital investment required to accommodate these functions over the long term.

The construction of this facility is expected to begin in spring 2021 and will take approximately 18 to 24 months, with an anticipated completion date towards the end of 2023.



*Rendering of new Maplewood Fire & Rescue Training Centre*

# MENTAL HEALTH

Stress management and mental health care are at the forefront of our efforts to ensure staff are happy and healthy in their service to our community.

Our firefighters are trained to build psychological strength by taking part in the Resilient Minds program developed by the Canadian Mental Health Association, which teaches our members how to mitigate the impact of injuries related to occupational stress through early recognition and intervention.

Members receive the tools they need to improve their psychological health and enhance the quality of life. The program also provides our members with peer support when they have been exposed to distressing situations such as violence, trauma, or death through post-incident defusing and debriefing. Looking ahead, in 2021 we will develop and implement a comprehensive 5-Year Well-Being Plan to improve and support the mental, physical and behavioral health of all personnel.

# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Women and visible minorities represent a small percentage of the total DNVFRS staff.

We continue to reach out to the community and encourage everyone to consider the benefits of a career in the fire service. This year, we developed a recruitment and outreach program with a goal to attract potential future firefighters from our local high school and post-secondary student populations.

Here are select events we held or attended in 2020:

- **Camp Ignite** — An annual camp for young women between 16-18 who want to learn firefighting skills and techniques, which we were honored to host at our training centre
- **JIBC Informational Workshop** — We held one virtual and two in-person workshops this year with the our Training Division and students currently enrolled in the Justice Institute of BC's Career firefighter technologies program



*Camp Ignite instructors welcomed girls from across the Lower Mainland to the District of North Vancouver Fire Rescue Training Centre*



# WORK EXPERIENCE

We enjoy giving local young people an inside look at the challenges and rewards of a firefighting career.

In 2020, we planned to continue to offer a 'behind the scenes' look at a day in the life of DNVFRS through the following programs:

- **Bring Our Kids to Work Day** — students spend a day participating in firefighting demonstrations and activities
- **Work experience program** — Local high school students get the opportunity to experience a day in the life of a fire service member

Unfortunately, we had to cancel these programs in 2020 due to COVID-19, but we look forward to offering and expanding on these programs once again in 2021. The DNVFRS values these programs and their outcomes greatly.



*In 2020, approximately 25 girls had the opportunity to explore a career in firefighting by participating at Camp Ignite*



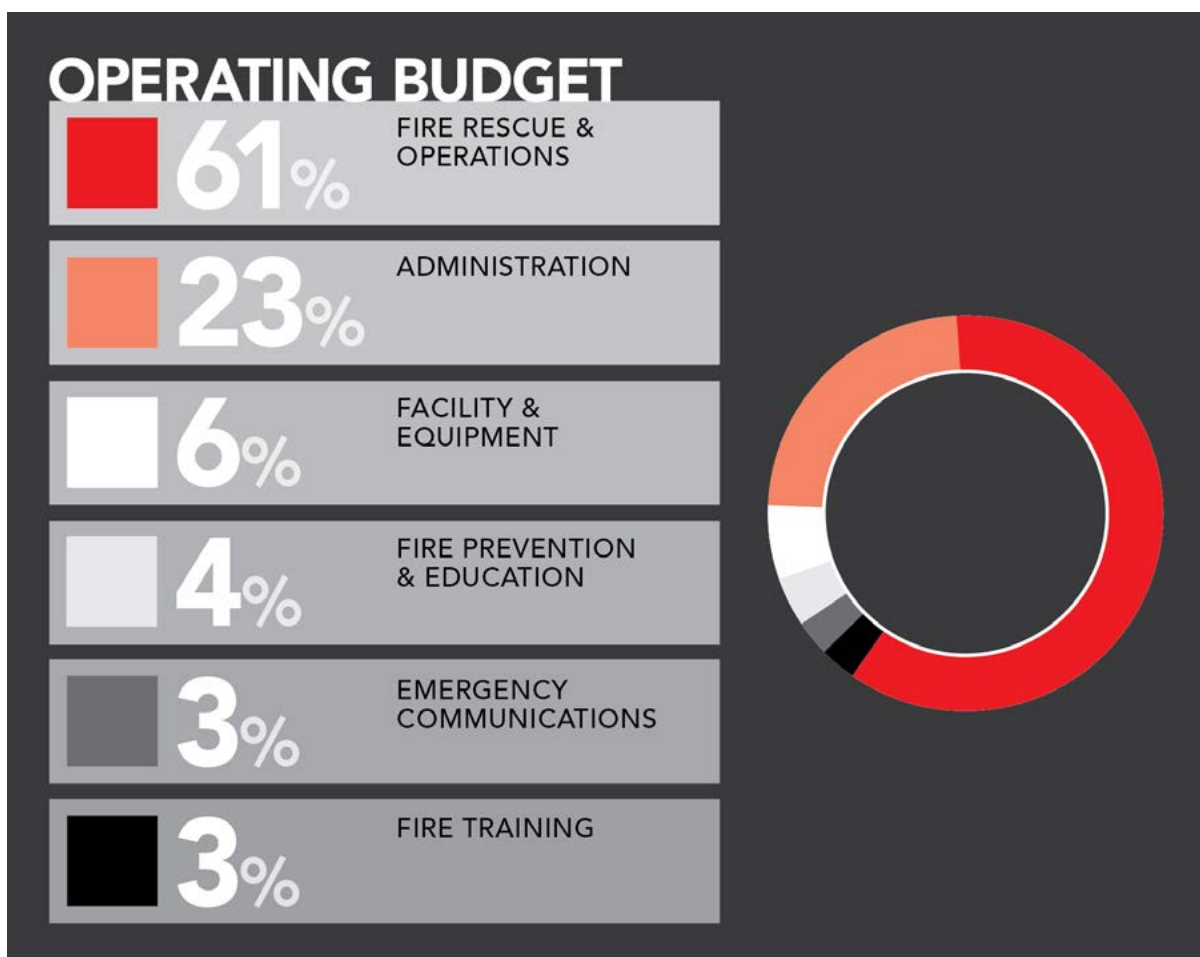
## 8. FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



### 2020 OPERATING BUDGET

Our 2020 operating budget was \$22,037,147.

Fire rescue and operations accounted for the largest piece, at 61% of the total budget.



# WHAT THE NUMBERS INCLUDE

## FIRE RESCUE & OPERATIONS (61%)

- Fire suppression and rescue operations (includes marine firefighting and rescue)
- Prompt emergency and non-emergency response to all incidents
- Other rescue functions such as Hazmat response, motor vehicle incidents, and technical rescues (high angle, swift water)

## ADMINISTRATION (23%) & FACILITY & EQUIPMENT (6%)

- Maintenance (painting, plumbing, electrical, renovations, seismic upgrades, repairs, lawns and gardens, heating and lighting) of all fire facilities (stations, and training/maintenance centres)
- Maintenance, inspection, and repair of fire fighting equipment such as turnout gear, forestry equipment, and fire response vehicles
- Equipment procurement process

## PUBLIC SAFETY & EDUCATION (4%)

- Community risk reduction and pre-incident fire planning
- Fire prevention activities such as risk-based fire inspections, fire incident and arson investigations, fire code and bylaw enforcement, and plan reviews
- Targeted public education for purposes of fire prevention reducing risks to life and property

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (3%)

- All aspects of fire and emergency response communications, including dispatch services and wide-area radio equipment
- Includes the maintenance of all other communications equipment (pagers, cell phones)

## FIRE TRAINING (3%)

- Fire training facility operations and training programs, which range from internal recruit and special operations training, to training for external customers such as the ProBoard Certification program

## 9. LOOKING TO 2020

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It is impossible to talk about the future without first acknowledging the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The District of North Vancouver was one of the first communities in Canada impacted by the pandemic. Maintaining the highest level of service to our citizens required flexibility, adaptability, and a commitment to stay ahead of best practices in the field from our entire organization during these challenging times.

With that approach, we witnessed positive results from our efforts and we continue to look for more opportunities to improve the tools and strategies we use to care for our community.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As the DNVFRS looks to the future, we will maintain a heightened awareness of the changes facing our community.

Our population is aging, which means we need to ensure pre-hospital care continues to meet the needs of this important demographic.

At the same time, as the number of wildfires rise due to climate change, we will continue to increase the work we do around wildfire mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

We are also revising our Fire Bylaw to improve clarification and create more effective interpretations that better reflect the community's needs and provide better support for our department, organizational needs, and the manner in which we conduct business.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2019, we completed a 10-month process to identify and articulate our organizational mission, vision, and core values.

This process culminated in 2020, following a collaborative process over 11 months to deliver our five-year Strategic Plan 2020-2022.

This Strategic Plan 2020-2025 consists of four Strategic Priorities. These priorities are our long-term aspirations. Each priority identifies several Strategic Objectives that define what DNVFRS must do over the next five years to support our priorities, fulfill our mission, and move towards our vision, as well as tangible and measurable actions that we will take in the short term.



## FIRE SERVICE ACCREDITATION

We have currently progressed from being a 'registered agency' to being an 'applicant agency' as we work towards fire service accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) and the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI).

- Working towards achieving and maintaining Fire Service Accreditation will:
- Enhance awareness within the community of who we are
- Emphasize our dedication to excellence
- Establish a department-wide culture of continuous improvement
- Communicate our leadership vision and philosophy
- Build on our labour/management relationship
- Offer independent verification and validation of our operations
- Provide tangible and transparent data for decision making

This multi-year program is expected to take three years to complete. This will result in a thorough review and alignment of all sections of our business and will align us with industry best practices for emergency service agencies. The next step in the process is for the DNVFRS to attain 'candidate agency' status, with a goal of being granted the designation of an 'accredited agency' in March 2022.

Recognition by the CFAI is considered to be the highest level of recognition by peers within the Public Safety Industry.

# FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

To ensure that our fire investigators have the tools and personal protective equipment necessary to perform this mandated service, we commissioned a state-of-the-art fire investigation unit (FIU) in 2020, which has been well utilized for fire investigations and in support of other public safety outreach programs.

The FIU incorporates private areas for changing gear and preparing confidential paperwork, as well as a separate area for tools and equipment that helps improve the health and safety of our fire investigators by protecting them from carcinogens.

# PRE-FIRE PLANNING AND MOBILE INSPECTIONS

The mobile computers and digital devices on all fire engine apparatus have been linked to a new mobile software program.

The program allows for real-time updates and access to pre-incident plans — a site plan of a building and property to be used by, and ensure the safety of our firefighters. For 2021, the pre-incident planning program will be expanded to include high-risk construction sites, and communities at greatest risk of wildfire.

The new software program also provides us with access to pre-incident plans for our shared service partners in the District of West Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver.

We plan to move forward with a mobile fire inspection program for 2021..

# ENERGY EFFICIENT FIRE INSPECTION FLEET

Last year, we replaced 50% of our aging fleet of gas-fueled Public Safety vehicles with alternative fuel vehicles.

This switch has resulted in positive feedback from personnel and further reduces the District's carbon footprint.

Plans are underway to replace the remaining Public Safety fleet with alternative fuel vehicles over the next two years.

# COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

To increase our interactions with the public, review and revise our programs, and identify new ways to reach at-risk groups, we've funded a new position for a Captain of Public Safety and Community Risk Reduction.

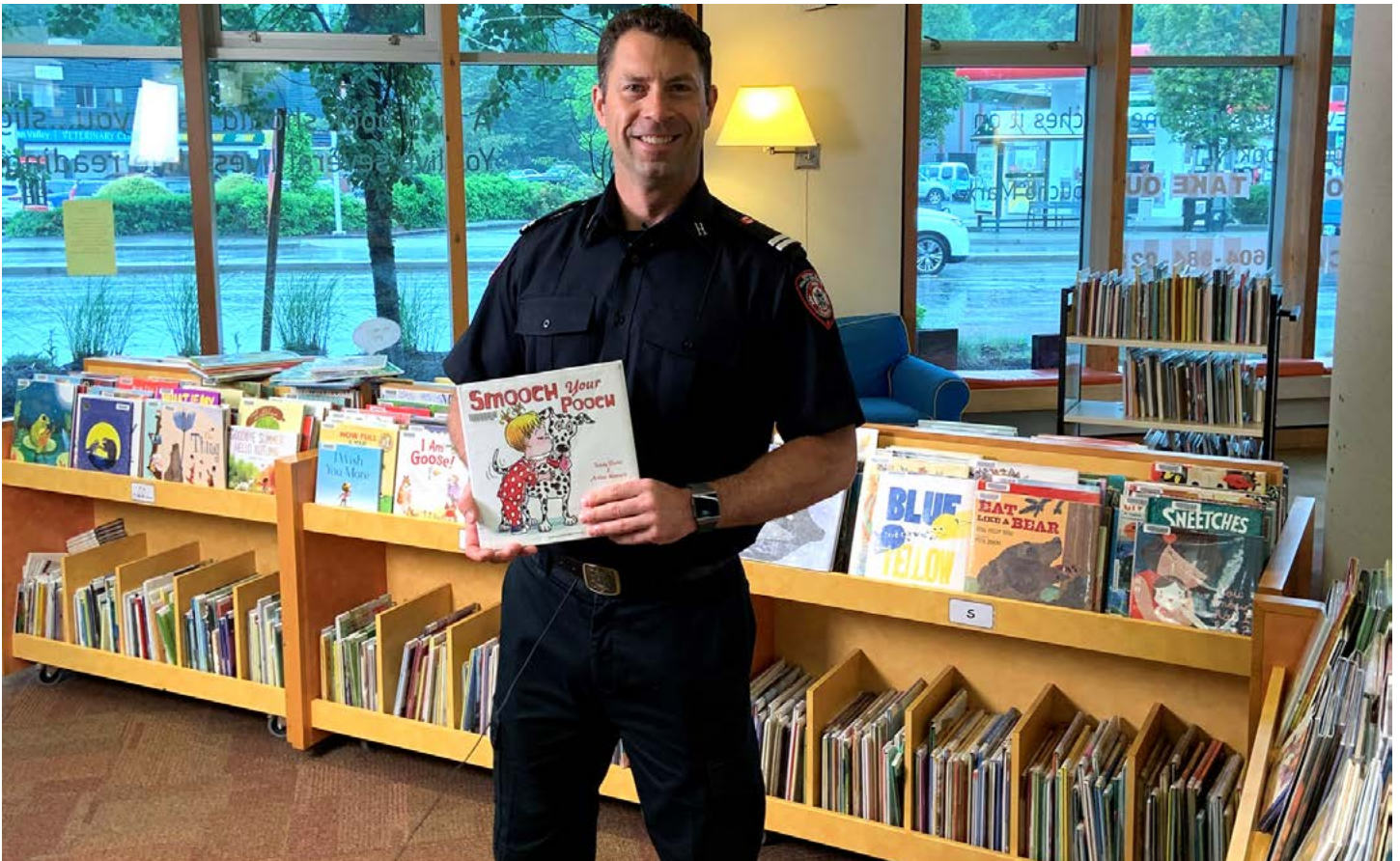
This position allows us to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the specific risks to our community demographic and design and create a community risk reduction plan. The result will be targeted public education programs for our community and stakeholders, including the redesign of our traditional public education programs to meet current COVID-19 protocols

Plans are underway with our partners in the City of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver to partner on a redesigned Fire Safety House. Both the new Captain of Public Safety and Fire Safety House will provide the necessary updates to the Grade 3 fire safety outreach program, along with many other programs.

A FireSmart community puts valuable fire protection knowledge in homeowners' hands, empowering them to improve safety for themselves, their families, and the community.







## FIRESMART COMMUNITIES

Being a FireSmart community means there is valuable fire protection knowledge shared with homeowners, which empowers the public and increases community resilience to wildfire across the District.

Our Public Safety Division continues to proactively engage with residents and communities across the District and we had two more areas achieve the designation of being FireSmart Communities in 2020.

Becoming FireSmart takes time and coordination with your neighbours and others, but getting started is actually relatively straightforward, and the DNVFRS is here to help.



*[DNV.org/FireAnnualReport](http://DNV.org/FireAnnualReport)*