

PARKSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

City of Parksville

CITY OF FIRE DEPT. PARKSVILLE

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Above: Ladder 49 at a commercial fire.

Message from the FIRE CHIEF



It is my pleasure to present the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department 2025 Annual Report.

Our team of dedicated members, most of whom serve on an on-call basis, provides exceptional service to the residents and visitors within our fire protection area. We are committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, teamwork, health and safety, and community engagement, supported by high and attainable standards.

In 2025, the department experienced a slight increase in total incident responses. The year was also successful for recruitment and retention, with seven new on-call volunteer members joining the department. PVFD members continued to provide professional fire rescue emergency response and community support services through our composite staffing model (career and on-call personnel). Additional highlights include:

- Fire Hall/Station renovation planning continued. Council authorized the Class B estimate; a $7 million Strategic Priorities Fund grant application was submitted; and PVFD participated in the Climate Ready Infrastructure Service BC Fire Department Cohort to develop practical, actionable recommendations to improve climate resiliency, reduce consumption, and reduce the carbon footprint associated with the renovation and addition project.
- The update of our Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP) commenced.
- PVFD received a Volunteer and Composite Fire Department Equipment and Training grant, supporting the purchase and installation of an equipment washer.
- Member engagement remained strong, reflected in consistent participation across operational and training activities.
- The addition of housing options closer to the fire station seems to have had a positive effect on membership.
- Career day shift implemented. In the spring of 2025, career Fire Rescue Service Technicians (FRST) staff were moved to two dayshifts of two members, rotating four days on and four days off.

Challenges

- Turnover among on-call volunteer members has slowed but continued; the average years of experience among on-call personnel continues to decline.
- Limited availability of on-call members to support daytime call volume.
- We continue to respond to incidents associated with complex social and health challenges in the community, including unsheltered individuals, substance use, and mental health concerns. These incidents may include overdose responses, outdoor fires, burning complaints, suspected arson, and other unsafe or hazardous conditions.
- As the City grows, fire department infrastructure must grow to accommodate increasing workload associated with calls for service, fire prevention inspections and the related training and OHS provisions.

- Fire station facility deficiencies are becoming increasingly acute as the community grows. Pressures are most evident in apparatus and equipment maintenance, storage capacity, and occupational health and safety provisions, particularly for gear decontamination and fitness areas, which can affect member safety, service resiliency, and overall operational effectiveness. Addition important needs include improved administrative space and the addition of dormitories (overnight sleep accommodation).
- Trauma Exposed Work - Firefighter/First Responder Mental Health has come into the forefront as our department has experienced directly the effects of cumulative exposure to traumatic events.

Looking ahead, Parksville Fire Rescue will continue working to modernize its facilities, strengthen wildfire and climate resiliency, invest in member training and health, and adapt its staffing, apparatus, and prevention programs to meet the needs of a growing community.

To conclude, I want to sincerely thank each member of the Parksville Volunteer Fire Department for your dedication to our community and fire rescue service. Your work is vital to both residents and visitors, and it is an honor to serve with you.

Sincerely,

Marc Norris, Fire Chief

ABOUT PVFD

The Parksville Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD) is a composite fire service, staffed by seven paid members and up to 44 on-call volunteer firefighters as well as a full-time administrative assistant. Our firefighters are a dedicated and diverse group of highly trained professionals, both women and men, most of whom volunteer their service.

Mission Statement: The Parksville Fire Department strives to protect and support the community by providing outstanding service in the areas of fire suppression, emergency response, member training, fire prevention, public education, and charitable community service (2014).

Departmental Values: Integrity and service.

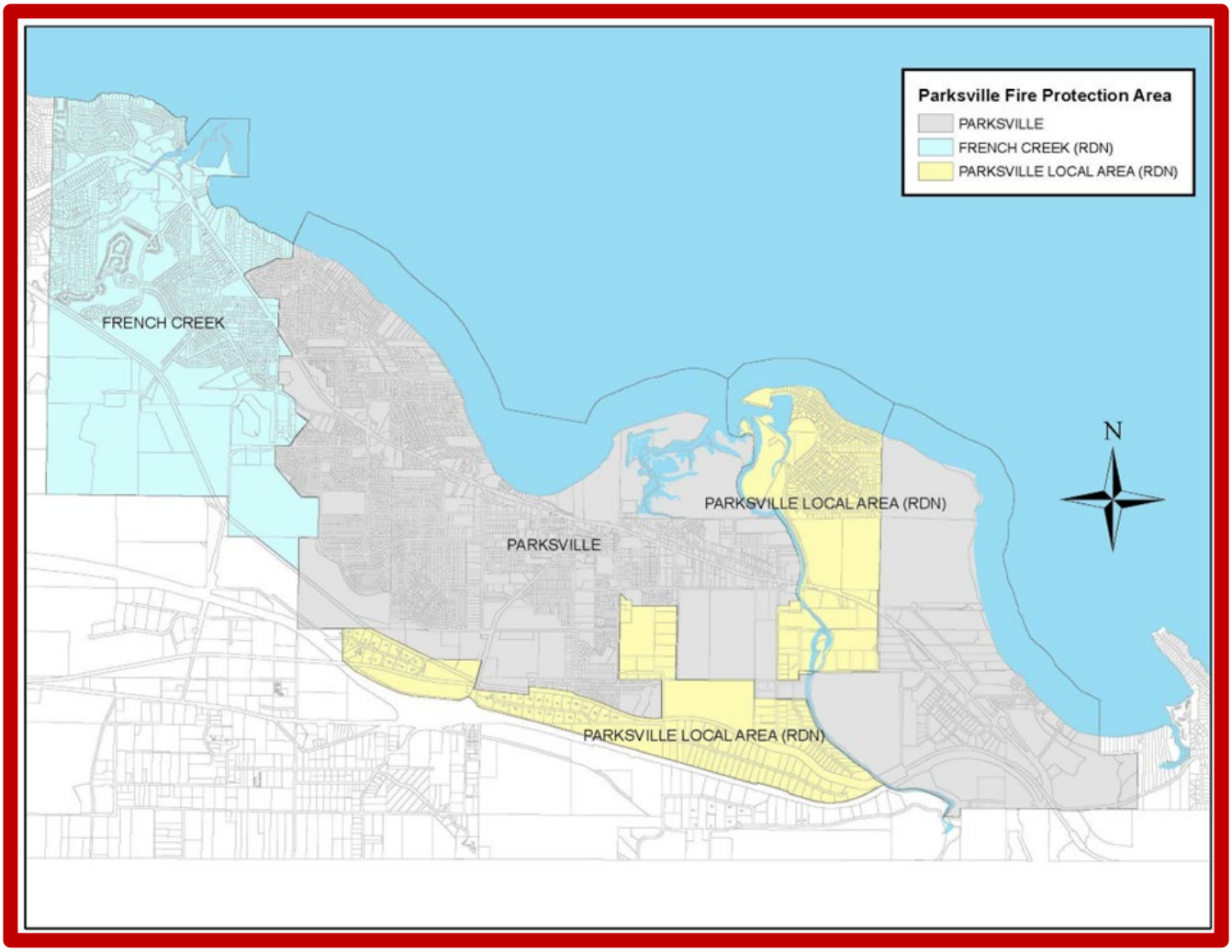
Vision: Commitment to the betterment of the community through dedication and sacrifice and through actions and behaviors which exemplify core beliefs and values. Choose what is right over what is convenient and comfortable.

Motto: Pride - Courage - Passion - Teamwork



SERVICE AREA

The Parksville Fire Protection Area covers the City of Parksville, plus the French Creek and Parksville Local Service Areas in Electoral Area "G" of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). Our fire rescue team works together with neighboring fire agencies under mutual and automatic aid agreements.



Fire Protection Area	Estimated Number of Residential Units	Estimated Population – 2021 Census	Estimated Population – 2024 BC Gov. / RDN Stats
City of Parksville	7,105	13,642	14,987
RDN EA "G" Contract Areas	2,772	5,817	5,817
Parksville Fire Protection Area – Total	**9,877**	**19,459**	**20,804**

Tourist influx in peak season estimated at (hotel/resort/campsites/STRs) **8,000+** on top of the permanent population noted above.
Tourism stats from Parksville Qualicum Beach Tourism Association
RDN stats from RDN Fire Service Coordinator/GIS

PERSONNEL

"Our members are critical to the provision of fire rescue services. They are the backbone of our organization and our most precious resource."

- *Chief Norris*

1 – Fire Chief

1 – Assistant Chief Operations & Training

1 – Assistant Chief Fire Prevention & Administration

1 – Administrative Assistant

4 – Fire Rescue Service Technicians (FRST)

- **Two shifts of two persons.**
- **Rotating four days on, four days off.**
- **06:00 to 18:00, 7 days per week.**

Up to 44 – On-call members





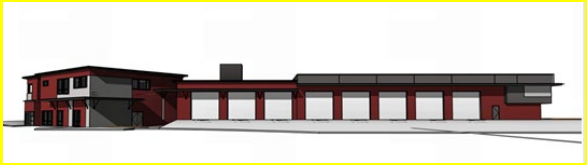
FACILITIES AND APPARATUS



FACILITIES

- Main Fire Station (Station 41) - 160 Jensen Avenue West
- Training Centre - 1159 Franklin's Gull Road

Fire Station Project:



- Canada Community Building Fund, Strategic Priorities Fund Grant application submitted requesting $7M.
- Climate Readiness Infrastructure Service – Enrolled in BC CRIS Fire Department Cohort for recommendations on opportunities to increase energy efficiency, retrofit opportunities, carbon reduction and improving resiliency.
- Detailed design and construction cost estimates started.





APPARATUS

- **Engine 41** 2014 Spartan/HUB Main Pumper (planned replacement 2031)
- **Engine 42** 2011 Spartan/HUB Main Pumper (planned replacement 2029)
- **Engine 43** 1997 Freightliner/Superior Pumper – Reserve (planned retirement 2027/2028)
- **Rescue 45** 2022 Spartan/Fort Garry Rescue (planned replacement 2042)
- **Tender 47** 2006 Stirling/Profire Water Tender (planned replacement 2026)
- **Ladder 49** 2018 Spartan/Smeal 105' Quint Aerial Ladder (planned replacement 2038)
- **Car 41** 2023 Dodge 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Command/Utility Unit (planned replacement 2028)
- **Car 42** 2023 Dodge 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Command/Utility Unit (planned replacement 2028)
- **Car 43** 2023 Dodge 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Command/Utility Unit (planned replacement 2028)
- **Special Ops Trailer** 2008 Interstate Cargo Trailer (planned conversion to Structural Protection)
- **Special Ops Vehicle** Planned 2028
- **Type 6 Forestry Engine** 2026 Work Plan (Includes forestry Skid Tank/Pump Unit donated by Global Medic)

Note: As call volumes and training requirements increase, wear and tear on apparatus is increasing, requiring more frequent maintenance and repairs. Replacement schedules will need to be amended to more frequent intervals.

RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS

Calls for service – In 2025, PVFD responded to or dealt with **766** incidents equaling **504** hours of incident duration and **4,124** person hours. Responses included fire, medical aid, hazardous materials, rope rescue, confined space rescue, auto extrication, alarms, motor vehicle incidents, burning complaints, and miscellaneous public service.

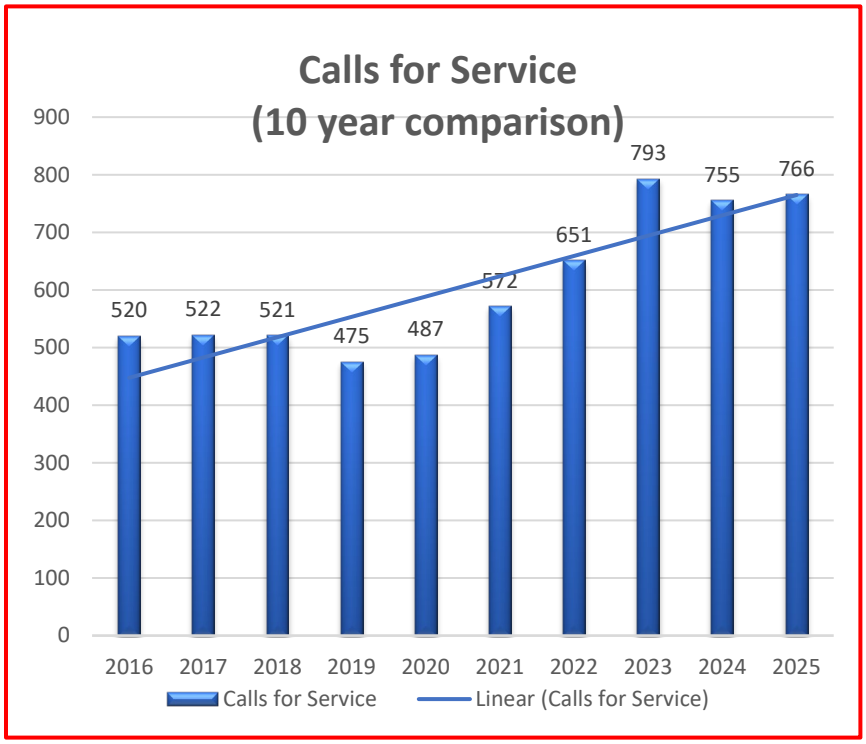
Calls for Service:

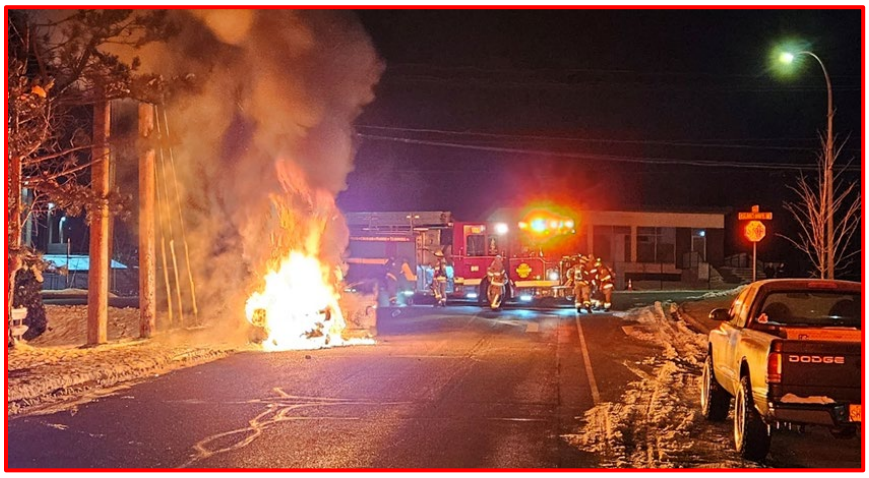
766
Incidents

504
Incident Hours

4,124
Person Hours

Challenge: Volume of calls is beginning to stress the on-call system. Additional career staffing will be required in the future to maintain service levels.





TRAINING



The fire rescue service is a highly diverse and technical environment. **Training** standards adopted by the province, required by WorkSafe BC and through recognized standards of best practices are substantial and time intensive. In 2025, our department continued with extensive training, allowing our firefighters to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

2025 Training:

500
Sessions

190
Subjects Covered

1,676
Session Hours

10,291
Person Hours



Our training programs cover a wide range of areas, including:



- Education to obtain or maintain licenses or credentials.
- Recruit training.
- Medical and specialized training.
- Fire suppression.
- Scene management.
- Apparatus operations (driving skills).
- Technical rescue (rope or auto extrication).
- Company officer training and development.
- Professional development.
- Other necessary or required training.

Weekly, recruit, certification, special operations, cross-training, and other required training is scheduled throughout the year on weekdays and weekends, locally and out of area, using both in-house and contracted providers. This ensures members maintain the knowledge and skills needed to provide fire and rescue services to residents and visitors of the Parksville Fire Protection Area.



Fire Prevention



Fire Prevention is multifaceted; parts of it are legislated and it is one of the main areas we can be proactive.

2025 Fire Prevention

38
Public Education Events

851
Inspectable Occupancies

796
Fire & Life Safety Inspections

104
Inquiries

38
Public Education Events

43
Reportable Fires/ Investigations

Loss est. = $1.6M

Saved est. = $49.8M

The main areas of fire prevention are:

- Fire and life safety inspections (Provincially legislated, *Fire Safety Act BC*)
- Fire cause and origin investigation
- Fire cause and origin reporting
- Public education such as fire and life safety and FireSmart initiatives.
- Development, building permit and business licensing reviews.
- Fire safety plan reviews – Construction site, new building and updates.
- Knox Fire Department lockbox program
- FireSmart
- Fire safety inquiries







In The Community

Fill the Boots for Food Drive - Each year in November, firefighters set up outside local retail stores for two days, encouraging public donations, in support of the Salvation Army food bank and the Society of Organized Services toy drive. In 2025, Parksville firefighters successfully collected $22,205 and the Craig Bay Residents Association contributed a record $76,510 in cash and 1,334 kg of food. The grand total collected was $98,715, and the community donated over 60 toys for the SOS Christmas program.





There are many examples where Parkville firefighters participate in and support community and charitable events throughout the year.

Charity Hockey Game



Stair Climb



Polar Bear Swim



THE FUTURE

As we move into the future, Parksville Fire Rescue is focused on **capacity, resilience, and modernization**. Key initiatives continue to include:

- **Fire hall renewal and expansion** to address growing operational demands, limited administrative space, apparatus/equipment storage, decontamination needs, fitness space, and overnight accommodation.
- **Climate resiliency and sustainability**, including recommendations developed through the Climate Ready Infrastructure Service BC Fire Department Cohort and community.
- **Wildfire preparedness**, supported by the updated Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan, a planned Type 6 forestry engine, and conversion of the special operations trailer toward structural protection.
- **Asset Management apparatus lifecycle planning**, including planned replacement of Tender 47 in 2026, retirement of Engine 43 around 2027/2028, a future special operations vehicle planning.
- **Recruitment and retention**, especially maintaining on-call volunteer strength, supporting newer members, and addressing daytime availability challenges.
- **Training and professional development** to meet increasing technical, regulatory, and operational expectations.
- **Member health and safety**, including improved decontamination, mental health supports, and occupational health provisions.
- **Growing service demand**, driven by population growth, tourism, daytime call volume, and increasingly complex social and health-related incidents.

WANT TO BE A FIREFIGHTER?

Volunteer Today!

Become an On-call Firefighter with Parksville Fire Rescue and serve your community.

We offer:

Paid-on-call Honorarium
On-call member and family Extended Health and Dental Benefits after one year of service
Employee Assistance Program
Annual Physical and Mental Health Checks
Full WorkSafe BC Coverage
Full-Service Firefighter, Apparatus Operator, Technical Rescue, Leadership and Professional Development training, and more!
Professional team atmosphere
Public interaction and support opportunities
Social events
All Personal Protective Equipment and uniforms, including a Cool Helmet
A challenge, should you choose to commit

What we need:

Commitment to our mission of service delivery to our community
Positive can-do team-oriented attitude
Willing to work all hours, on-call
Meet minimum attendance requirements
Honesty and Integrity

Visit parksvillefirerescue.ca, **call** 250 248-3242, **email** fire@parksville.ca or **stop by** the fire station at 160 Jensen Avenue West, Parksville, **for more information.**

Questions about this annual report?

Please call us at 250 248-3242 or email to fire@parksville.ca.