



Ships Point Volunteer Fire Department

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Ships Point Improvement District Annual General Meeting

Fire Chiefs Report

- 07 April 2018 -

In the past twelve months the department has responded to 20 official emergency calls: 12 first responder calls, four fire calls and four Duty Officer calls. We've also responded to Good Samaritan calls from local residences to members of the department. Once again we were very pleased that we did not have any structure fires on the Point, and for that I would like to thank you all. It takes your due diligence to ensure our community remains safe and secure.

Normal departmental training tempo has remained high. The department continues to hold regular practices every Tuesday, as well as briefings and subject exams on most Wednesday evenings. This training allows department members to learn and practice firefighting techniques and procedures that meet both Work Safe BC and Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) guidelines. We continue periodic joint training with Fanny Bay and Deep Bay Fire Departments, since we maintain a mutual aid agreement in the event of an emergency situation that one department cannot handle. In addition, members attended live fire training at the Comox and Courtenay Fire Department Training Centres, and completed training on specialized firefighting techniques for interface fires, incident scene management and motor vehicle extrication. Specialized medical training was also carried out in order to license three new First Responders, and recertification training was completed by four currently licensed First Responders. Note that First Responders are required to recertify every three years in order to maintain their license.

The department had four members retire this year and one member who has gone on a leave of absence. The current composition of our volunteer force is such that we generally have a turnout of 10 to 12 members in response to an emergency page, even though on paper the department currently has 19 active members (16 Firefighters and three Firefighter Auxiliary). Consequently, we are in serious need of new volunteers to fill the ranks. If you have a desire to contribute to keep your community safe, you could be a volunteer firefighter. We need men and women who respond to fires and emergencies, and those who can assist with community education, fundraising and administration. As mentioned in the previous year's report, to assist with manpower issues we established a Firefighter Auxiliary. The Auxiliary is meant to appeal to those members of the community who have expressed a desire to provide support and/or assistance to the Fire Department without becoming fully trained firefighters. The use of trained non-firefighting personnel to provide various levels of support increases the manpower pool and allows firefighters to carry out their primary responsibility, thereby improving the overall level of support to the community. Positions available for Firefighter Auxiliary include First Responder, Traffic Control and Pumper Operator. Application forms for both regular and auxiliary volunteers are available at the SPID Office.

I would like to thank the Ships Point Fire Fighters Association, who have raised and donated money towards firefighters equipment and first responder training. They recently purchased a new television and computer for our training room as well as a portable remote area light in order to assist with maintaining a safe

working environment on the fire ground. Without their financial aid and community action assistance we would be unable to offer the level of support that we currently provide.

All residents are reminded to review local regulations as they pertain to back yard burning and fire permits. Even if a burn permit is not required to burn back yard waste, all other burn restrictions still apply. Remember to always check the Vent Index before burning back yard waste. A link to the Environment Canada Vent Index is located on the SPID/Fire Department web page. Noxious smoke settling over the community is unpleasant, and every effort must be made to minimize the smoke from a yard burn. You must make sure the Ventilation Index for Central Vancouver Island region is "good" before burning. Also, a polite reminder that at no time are beach fires allowed on the Point.

And finally, I'd like to express my thanks to the volunteer fire fighters who have willingly given their time to provide Fire Protection and First Responder services to our community. A lot of time and effort has been expended in order to provide for your protection.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Hoffart', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Terry Hoffart
Fire Chief
Ships Point Fire Department