

# Fire Department



*The Chilliwack Fire Department is committed to community safety through public education, code enforcement, fire suppression and rescue services.*

## Fourth Quarter Report, 2019



**CITY OF  
CHILLIWACK**

## Administration - Personnel

### Career Staff - December 31, 2019:

Fire Chief	1
Assistant Chiefs	3
Fire Officers	5
Firefighters	30
Training Officers	2
Fire Prevention Officer	1
Public Educator / Fire Inspector	1
Administrative Support Staff	2

**Total Career Staff 45**



### Paid On-Call (POC) Firefighters and Officers

Hall 1 Downtown	39	Hall 4 Sardis	37
Hall 2 Rosedale	19	Hall 5 Ryder Lake	9
Hall 3 Yarrow	16	Hall 6 Greendale	12

**Total POC Members, December 2019 132**

Note: In 2019, 7 POC members left the department, and 15 new POC members graduated from the Recruit Training Program.



**Total career and paid on-call members - 177**

## Operations – Incident Responses

### Incident Responses

The Chilliwack Fire Department responded to 826 calls for service in the fourth quarter of 2019, for a total of 3,218 incidents for the year. This was an increase of 382 calls for service over 2018. This increase is related to an increase in calls for activated alarms, motor vehicle incidents, and burning complaints. Incidents for the quarter included 266 public service calls, 226 alarms activated, 130 motor vehicle incidents, and 68 fires.

In 2019, the five leading calls for service were:

- 1) Public Service (assist RCMP, BCEHS, home smoke alarm, and CO alarm calls)
- 2) Alarms Activated (industrial, commercial, multi-family, and single family residential)
- 3) Motor Vehicle Incidents (MVI's)
- 4) Fires (structures, vehicles, outdoor, dumpsters, trees, and bark mulch)
- 5) Burning Complaints (legal and illegal)

The above incident responses accounted for 2,865 calls, or 89% of the total calls responded to in 2019.



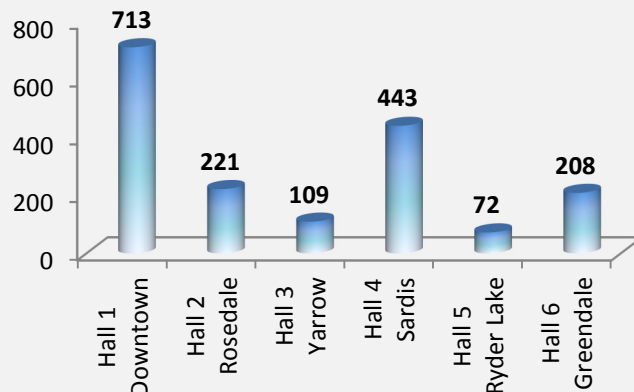
**Structure Fire, Vedder Road  
December 2019**

*Photos Courtesy of Paul Henderson, The Progress*

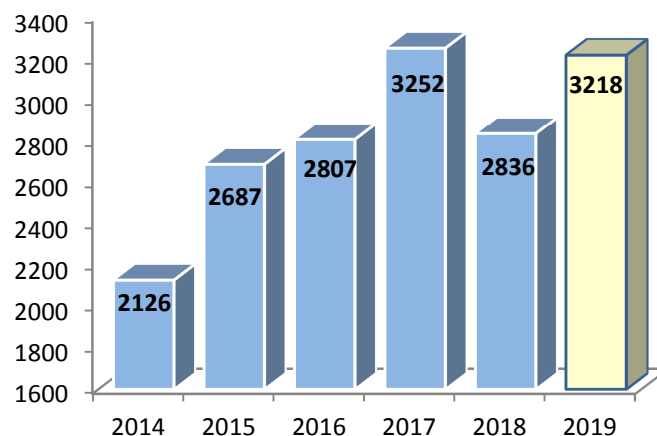


### 2019 Paid On-Call Responses by Hall

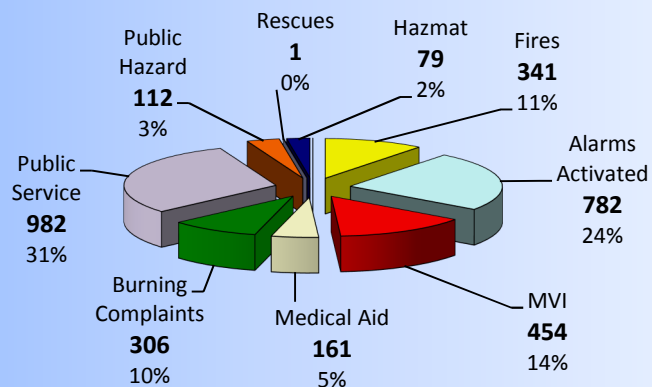
1,766 Total Responses by POC's



### Incident Responses by Year



### 2019 Incident Responses



## Operations - Incident Responses

	Monthly Summary			4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	Annual Total
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.					
<b>FIRES</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>341</b>
Structures	13	7	12					123
Vehicle	1	3	3					54
Outdoor / Other	8	19	2					164
<b>ALARMS ACTIVATED</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>782</b>
Single family residential	32	23	27					280
Multi-family residential	28	30	23					228
Non-residential	29	17	17					274
<b>MVI (NO FIRE)</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>454</b>
Auto Extrication	1	2	1					12
Provide Medical Care	28	19	31					246
Routine Cleanup / No injuries	14	10	15					170
Cancelled/Fire not required	2	4	3					26
<b>EMERGENCY MEDICAL AID</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>BURNING COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>306</b>
Illegal	22	14	7					
Legal	8	8	0					
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>982</b>
Investigate safety complaints and hazards	21	16	12					210
Assist other agencies (BCAS, RCMP etc.)	57	65	57					608
Home smoke alarm/Carbon monoxide alarm	9	4	4					69
Post Fire Recheck / Post Fire Investigation	2	1	0					29
Trapped in Elevator	1	0	1					24
Other	2	5	9					42
<b>PUBLIC HAZARD</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>RESCUES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>MUTUAL AID</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>3,218</b>

## Previous Years:

2018

2017

2016

2015

2014

2013

4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr	2nd Qtr	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr	Total
648	812	693	683	2,836
777	858	730	887	3,252
716	777	678	636	2,807
721	764	671	531	2,687
534	659	488	445	2,126
501	689	558	479	2,227

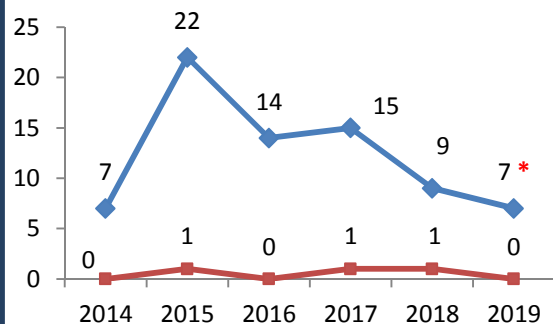


## Fire Prevention – Fire Investigations

### Fire Investigations / Losses

Fourth quarter fire losses were \$3,706,610, for total losses in 2019 of \$18,247,110. Structure fires made up 97% or \$17,618,885 of this total dollar loss in 2019. Seven (7) civilians suffered fire related injuries during the year. Five (5) of the seven (7) fire related injuries occurred in residential buildings. A total of 19 dollar loss structure fires occurred this quarter with 15 (79%) occurring in residential occupancies. Total 2019 structure fire losses were 88, with 69 (78%) occurring in residential occupancies. Of the 123 structure fires that occurred in 2019, 101 (82%) occurred in the Firehall 1 (Downtown) and Firehall 4 (Sardis) response zones. Fire origin and cause investigations were completed to identify fire loss trends and focus our education efforts to prevent future property losses, injuries, and fatalities.

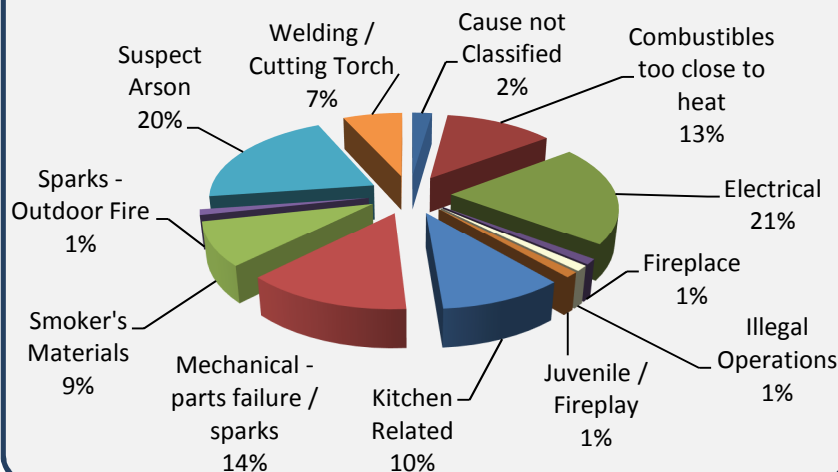
### Summary of Injuries & Deaths by Year



\*2019 total of fire injuries suffered is the lowest number in five years

— Total Injuries — Total Fatalities

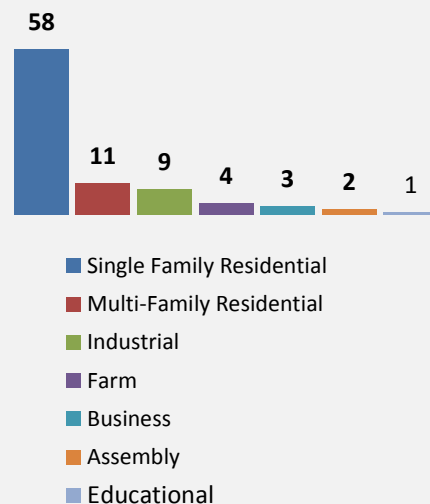
### Causes of 2019 Dollar Loss Structure Fires



Leading causes of fire losses in 2019:

- 1) Electrical - Accidental
- 2) Arson – Intentionally set
- 3) Mechanical (parts failure / sparks) - Accidental

### 2019 Structure Fires Losses by Occupancy Type



69 (78%) of 88 structure fires occurred in residential buildings

## Fire Prevention – Fire Investigations (continued)

### Fire Investigations / Losses

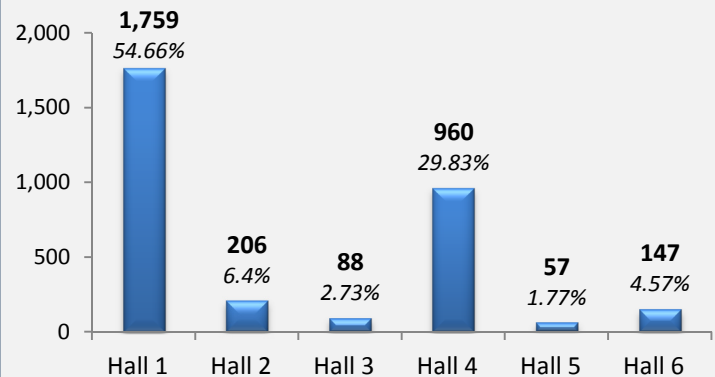
The significant increase in fire severity/losses are attributed to the following major fires in 2019:

- Industrial Way (February)
- Aitken Road (February)
- Industrial Way (March)
- Bearstone Place (June)
- Stevenson Road (August)
- Vedder Road (December)

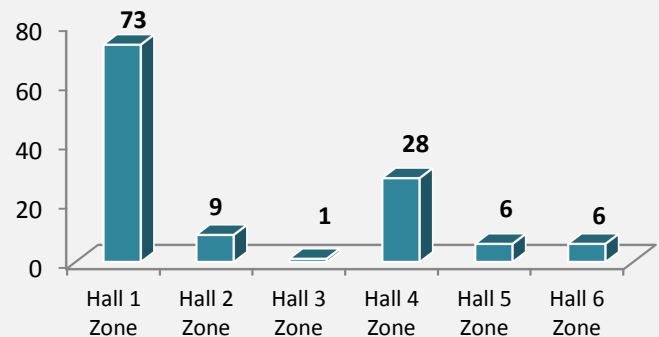
These six (6) fires totaled \$13,254,110 or 73% of the City's total fire losses for the year. All six (6) of these fires were accidental and five (5) of six (6) buildings were not sprinklered. The replacement buildings will be sprinklered.

In contrast, the comparable value of buildings protected in Chilliwack is approximately \$3 billion, with a current population nearing 100,000 residents. A safe, effective and efficient public fire protection service, and community risk reduction (CRR) program ensures our frequency and severity of fire losses, including injuries and fatalities are kept to a minimum.

### 2019 Summary of Incident Responses by Fire Hall Response Zone



### 2019 Summary of Structure Fire Incidents by Fire Hall Response Zone



### Chilliwack Fire Losses by Year



## Fire Prevention – Public Education & Code Enforcement

The Chilliwack Fire Department is proactively working to protect lives, property and environment through education, engineering, code enforcement, and fire investigations.

### Fire & Life Safety Education

A total of 92 fire and life safety sessions were delivered to the community in 2019. This includes fire prevention week events, and emergency preparedness classes delivered to the community. In 2019, 4,593 residents have been educated or trained in fire and life safety and emergency preparedness.

2019 Public Education Activities	# of Events	Persons Educated
Juvenile Fire Setter Interviews	2	4
Fire Safety Classes	27	809
Fire Extinguisher Training	27	621
Fire Hall Tours	17	398
Emergency Preparedness Classes	8	211
Other Public Education Sessions (including Fire Prevention Week)	11	2,550
<b>Totals</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>4,593</b>

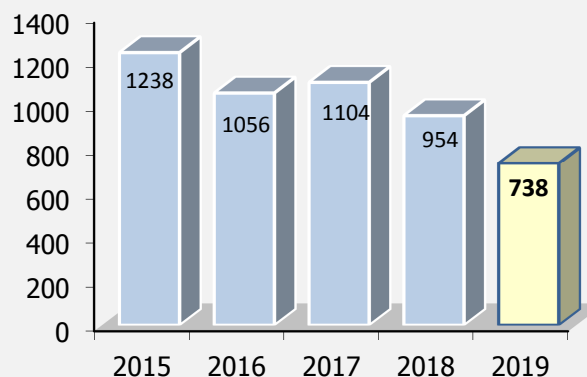
### Code Enforcement

The department completed 738 fire and life safety inspections during 2019, including health and safety inspections with the Bylaw Department, RCMP, and BC Safety Authority.

### Engineering

The department completed 28 plan and sprinkler reviews this quarter for a total of 132 for the year. Fire Department personnel also conducted numerous on-site inspections to ensure fire code and bylaw compliance.

### Fire & Life Safety Inspections Summary by Year



### Fire Prevention Week – Home Depot October 2019



## Training

The last quarter of 2019 was a very busy period for the Training Division. In addition to our regular training, we also began our recruit training camp for Paid-on-Call Firefighters.

- **Paid-on-Call Firefighter (POC) Recruit Camp:** This program is designed for the new firefighter entering into our POC ranks, and focuses on fundamental firefighter training. This year's camp has 12 new members. The training provided through this recruit camp enables the new firefighters to operate safely, effectively, and efficiently at emergency incidents.

### Technical Training

- ❖ **Pre-Hospital Care** - Is a large component of our training curriculum and includes regularly scheduled CPR, AED, and First Responder (FR) Level 3 courses. Numerous sessions were delivered to our career and POC firefighters.
- ❖ **Aerial Operations** – Firefighters practiced scenarios using Tower 1, a 30m (105 foot) elevated platform. Firefighters are also training on the new aerial (Ladder 4) that will be stationed in Hall 4 (Sardis) in early 2020.
- ❖ **Rapid Intervention Teams** – Firefighters conduct training to prepare to rescue each other when conditions suddenly deteriorate within a compromised structure.
- ❖ **Fire Ground Operations** – Firefighters continue to maintain their firefighting skills. With the addition of six (6) new career firefighters in 2019, the focus in the last quarter was on the evaluation of firefighting and rescue skills.
- ❖ **Electrical Safety for Firefighters** – All Chilliwack firefighters participated in reviewing electrical safety procedures when responding to incidents involving electrical wire and energized electrical systems.
- ❖ **Driver Training** – This training was delivered to ten (10) firefighters who were trained as driving instructors certified to the IAPD Standards.

In 2019, POC fire officers and firefighters dedicated 34,200 hours of time serving our community by responding to incidents, and attending training courses and hall practices.



**Aerial Apparatus Water Supply Training  
October 2019**



**Training Event with School District 33  
October 2019**





## Emergency Management

2019 proved to be a fairly non-eventful year for natural and man-made disasters. Snow pack levels were at record lows across the Province in the spring resulting in the absence of a Fraser River freshet event. From a seasonal wildfire perspective, unexpected mild weather and above average precipitation in the summer months contributed to reduced fire behavior in the area.

Although 2019 wasn't an active year in terms of disaster response, the emergency program had one of its most active years ever in training and education. Sixteen (16) section-specific training sessions were delivered to our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team, in addition to sending several EOC team members to Emergency Management BC-sponsored training courses in EOC Essentials, Finance, Operations and Planning.

The EOC team also completed three (3) successful tabletop exercises in 2019 that focused on a wildfire scenario in the Eastern Hillside and addressed topics such as situational awareness, information management, declaring a state of local emergency, evacuation planning and implementation and incident action planning.

The Chilliwack Emergency Program continues to hold bi-monthly meetings with internal and external stakeholders to further emergency planning efforts, relationship building and review of learnings from past emergency incidents. Topics of discussion in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter included: seasonal preparedness (flood, extreme winter weather), transportation-based mass casualty incidents, BC Emergency Program Act modernization and evacuation planning.

The Chilliwack Amateur Radio Club met weekly throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and continues to provide regular training to their membership. On October 26-27th, the club delivered a basic amateur radio licensing course, which allows members of the public a chance to obtain their amateur radio operator license upon successful completion of the course as well as an exam. These courses are of significant benefit to our emergency management program and utilize in-house instructors and evaluators.

The Chilliwack Emergency Support Services (ESS) Team met bi-monthly to train and discuss past emergency incidents. The team was activated twice in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to support displaced residents from residential structure fires. The Provincial ESS Program is currently progressing through its own modernization project, which is designed to streamline processes (particularly in large-scale evacuations) and provide better support to evacuees and ESS volunteers.

Total number of ESS call-outs in 2019 was sixteen (16).



**Emergency Operations Centre Team Exercise  
October 2019**



**Emergency Support Services  
Incident Update  
October 2019**

## Community Engagement

The Fire Department continues to be actively involved in many community events and fundraisers. This quarter, Chilliwack firefighters and the Chilliwack Firefighters Charitable Society (CFFCS) volunteered at the following events:

- Harvest Days, Rosedale;
- Fire Prevention Week –Home Depot;
- Remembrance Day Cenotaph processions (with the department's Honour Guard);
- Purple Light Nights barbeque;
- Fire truck visits and barbeques at other local community events;
- Downtown BIA and Yarrow tree Lighting events;
- Salvation Army Food Drive (with Chilliwack Search and Rescue, Emergency Social Services and St. John Ambulance volunteers, Mayor Popove and his wife, 1<sup>st</sup> Fairfield Scouts, and Chilliwack Midget A1 Jr. Bruins hockey team) collected approximately 21,000 food items;
- Department calendar and clothing sales;
- Breakfast with Santa at Hall 1;
- Arrival of Santa to Cottonwood Mall;
- Assisted with "Bright Nights" in Stanley Park (sponsored by the BC Professional Firefighters' Burn Fund).
- Santa Run, with local elementary students to raise money for the BCPFF Burn Fund

The Chilliwack Firefighters Charitable Society donated \$24,000 during 2019. This quarter, the CFFCS donated in support of the following:

- City of Chilliwack's sponsored "Adopt a Family";
- Salvation Army Food Bank and hamper;
- Purple Light Nights;
- Chilliwack Community Services;
- Two local families



### Cheque Presentations by Chilliwack Firefighters Charitable Society to Chilliwack Community Services and Julie Callaghan



Salvation Army  
Food Drive,  
December 2019

