



2025 ANNUAL REPORT
Courtenay Fire Department



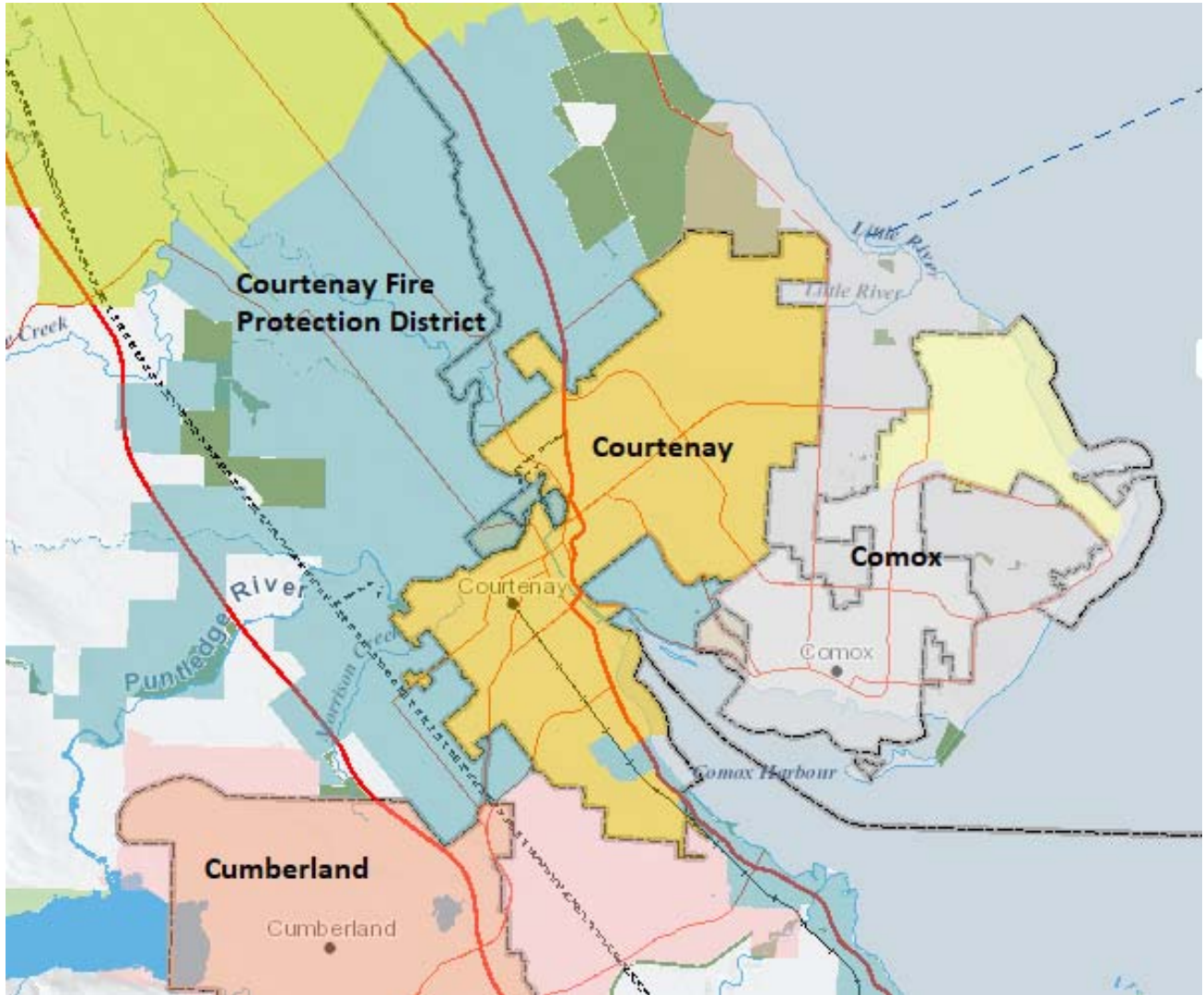
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – KEY TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

In 2025, the Courtenay Fire Department continued to provide reliable emergency response and fire protection services while adapting to changing service demands and community growth. Overall call volume declined modestly compared to 2024, driven primarily by reductions in open burning responses and ambulance assist requests; however, incident complexity and time commitments increased, as reflected in higher volunteer response hours. Call activity continued to shift east of the Courtenay River, reinforcing the importance of advancing the East Side Fire Hall project to support response times and service sustainability.

Volunteer engagement remained strong throughout the year, supported by increased training activity and the progression of a new recruit class. Fire prevention and public education efforts expanded, reflecting a continued emphasis on risk reduction and community preparedness. While emergency program activations were lower due to fewer extreme weather events, the department played an active role in supporting wildfire response efforts on Vancouver Island, including deployments for wildfire suppression and Emergency Operations Centre operations at the Wesley Ridge and Mount Underwood fires. Together, these trends show a department that is adapting to changing service demands, supporting community growth, and preparing for future infrastructure and legislative requirements.

FIRE PROTECTION AREA

The Courtenay Fire Department provides service to the City of Courtenay, the Courtenay Fire Protection District and neighboring jurisdictions through reciprocal mutual aid agreements.

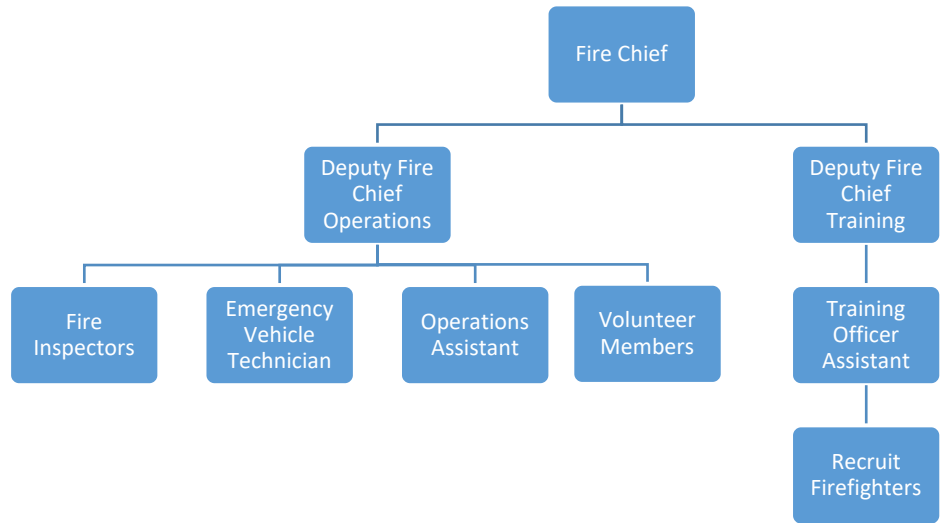


	Population (estimated 2021)	Properties Protected (2021)
City of Courtenay	28,420	13,006
Courtenay Fire Protection District	6,500	2,929
Totals	34,500	15,935

FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Career Staff

- Fire Chief
- Deputy Chief Operations
- Deputy Chief Training
- Fire Inspectors (2)
- Operations Assistant
- Training Officer Assistant
- Emergency Vehicle Technician



Volunteer Members

- Fire Captains (4)
- Fire Lieutenants (8)
- Firefighters (43)
- Recruit Firefighters (12)

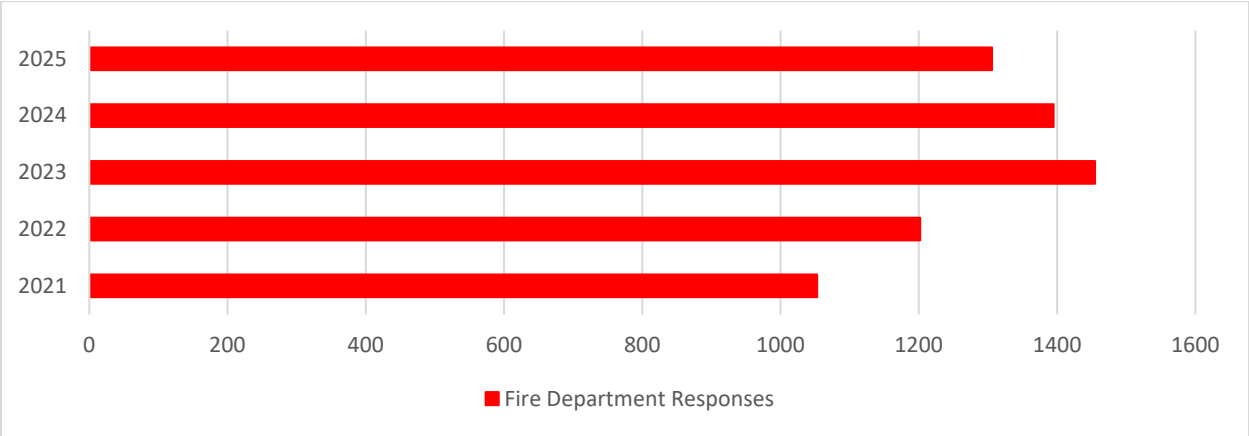


FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

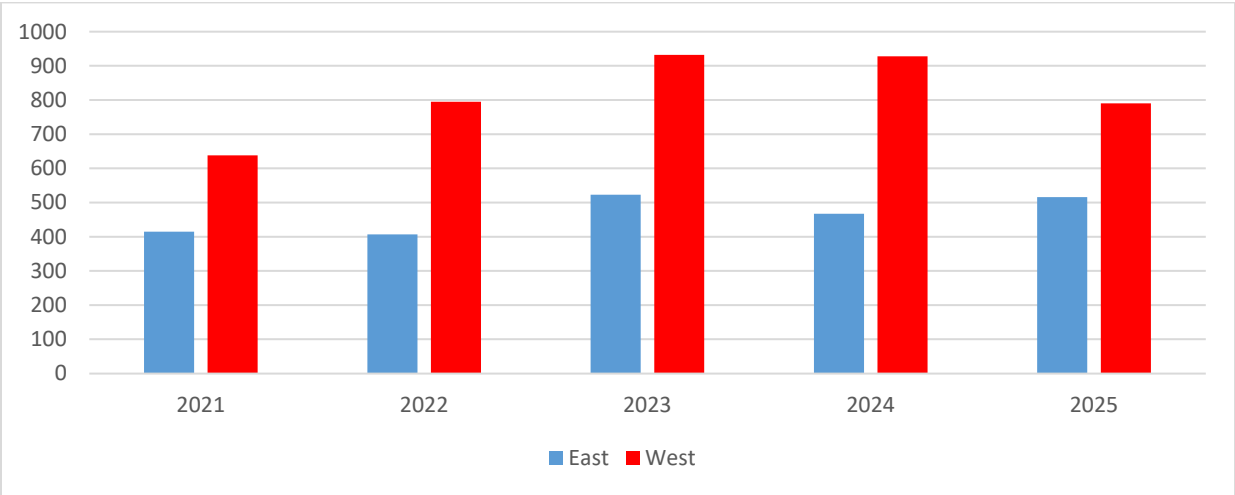
In 2025, the Courtenay Fire Department continued its commitment to providing reliable fire protection and emergency response services to the City of Courtenay and the Courtenay Fire Protection District. The department responded to 1,306 calls for service, representing a modest decrease from the 1,395 responses recorded in 2024. This decline is primarily attributable to fewer medical assistance requests from BCEHS, with ambulance assist calls dropping from 139 in 2024 to 104 in 2025, as well as a significant reduction in open burning responses, which decreased from 379 in 2024 to 280 in 2025.

Of the total incidents, 790 occurred west of the Courtenay River and 516 east, maintaining the consistent distribution seen in previous years. As the department reflects on this year's activity, it continues to prioritize readiness, community safety, and collaboration with partner agencies to meet the evolving needs of the community.

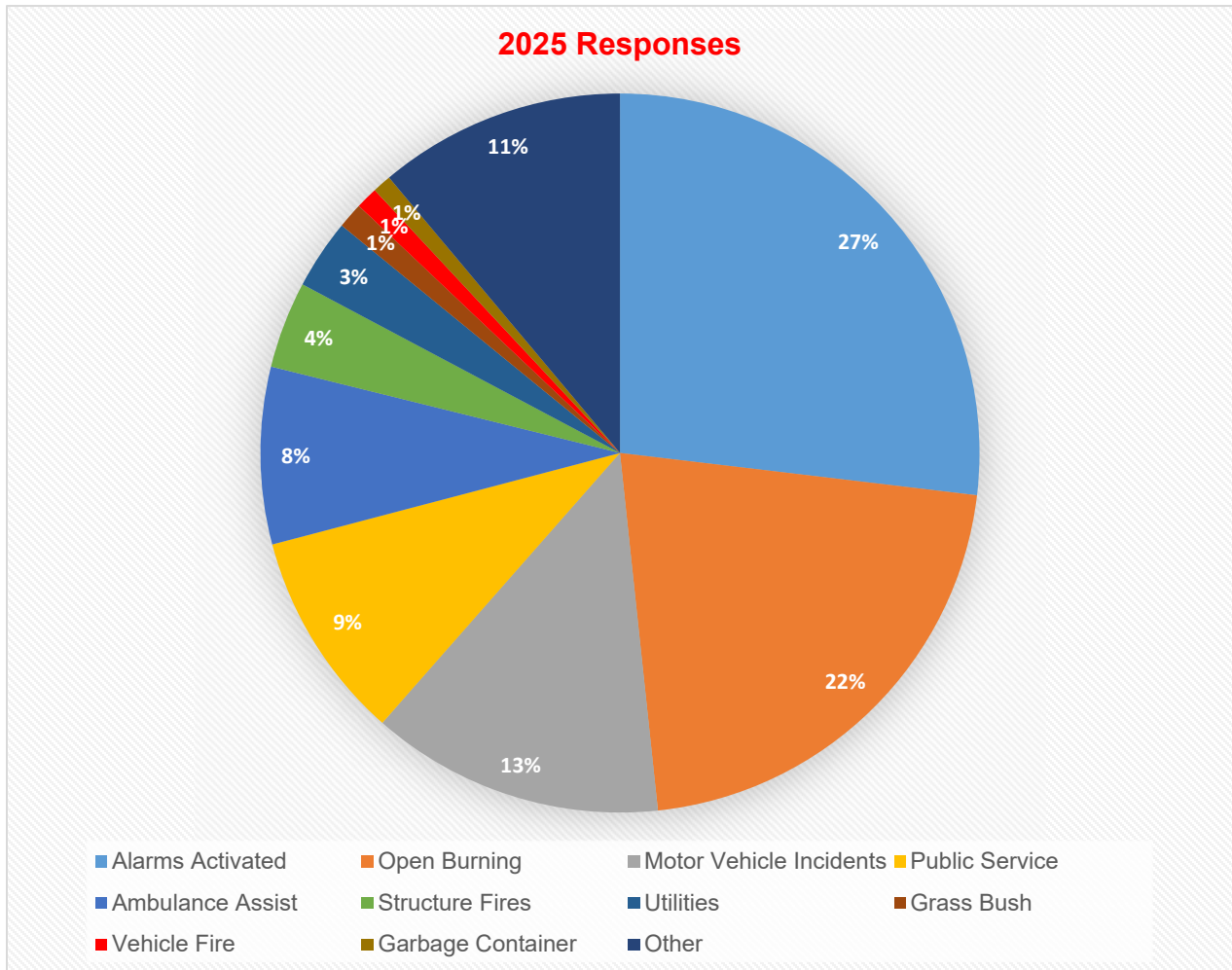
Fire Department Responses by Year 2021-2025



Fire Department Responses East vs. West 2021–2025



The year-end fire report indicates a consistently active year for fire response services. Alarm activations accounted for the highest number of incidents at 351 calls, followed by open burning (280) and motor vehicle incidents (172). Public service requests (123) and ambulance assists (104) continued to contribute significantly to overall response activity.



In total, our volunteer firefighters spent over 13,714 hours responding to incidents within the City of Courtenay and the Courtenay Fire Protection District. This works out to each member volunteering to respond to 249 hours' worth of incidents, which does not include the additional time commitment of training, maintaining certifications, public education, etc.

FIRE PREVENTION

Our full-time staff conducted 1842 fire inspections across the city and the Courtenay Fire Protection District, with many properties inspected found to be free of major fire code or life safety violations. Among the violations identified, the most common issues were

burned-out emergency lighting and exit signs, as well as fire extinguishers requiring annual servicing.

We also delivered 191 public safety education events for residents within the City of Courtenay and the Courtenay Fire Protection District. These events covered a range of important topics, including FireSmart education, Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety Talks, and fire station tours. Through these initiatives, we continued to promote fire safety awareness and community preparedness, fostering a stronger culture of safety throughout our region.

TRAINING

In 2025, the Courtenay Fire Department's Training Division achieved significant milestones to ensure members remain fully prepared to respond to a wide range of emergencies. Members dedicated more than 4,900 training hours to maintaining proficiency in key disciplines, including fire suppression, auto extrication, rope rescue, and self-rescue techniques.

This training program also incorporated completion of the BC Emergency Medical Assistants (BCEMA) mandated GAP training modules, which focused on the implementation of updated patient assessment and care protocols, including blood pressure monitoring, blood glucose testing, and other enhanced first responder medical procedures. The department has completed all required GAP training and meets the new legislative and provincial requirements governing first responder medical response and patient care.

Collectively, this comprehensive training program enables the department to meet the British Columbia Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards for Full-Service designation, allowing members to conduct advanced structural firefighting operations such as interior fire attacks and search and rescue in hazardous environments.

In addition, twelve members commenced the department's recruit training program in September 2025 and have been performing at a very high level to date. At the time of this report, the class is approximately halfway through the program and is demonstrating strong progress toward achieving the required competencies.

FIRE DEPARTMENT DEPLOYMENTS

The 2025 wildfire season in British Columbia was significant, with more than 1,350 wildfires burning approximately 886,360 hectares across the province. While less severe than the record-setting 2024 season, wildfire activity continued to impact communities through evacuation orders, alerts, and sustained emergency operations.

During the season, the Courtenay Fire Department provided regional mutual aid support to the Wesley Ridge Fire in the Regional District of Nanaimo and the Mount Underwood Fire in the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District. Department personnel were deployed to support wildfire suppression and Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) operations during the Wesley Ridge Fire, and to provide EOC support during the Mount Underwood Fire. These

deployments demonstrate the department's ability to integrate effectively into multi-agency response and emergency management structures beyond municipal boundaries.

The Courtenay Fire Department continues to maintain a high level of wildfire readiness through ongoing training and inter-agency coordination, ensuring the capacity to support provincial wildfire response and emergency management operations when required.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Comox Valley Emergency Management supported community resilience during adverse events through the activation of regional warming and cooling services. These services were activated twice each, for a total of four days, delivering essential shelter and resources to vulnerable populations. Members of the Courtenay Fire Department provided outreach services to those in need during these events, and feedback received from the public was positive.

In 2025, Comox Valley Emergency Management focused on regional coordination, EOC readiness, and community preparedness through training, outreach, and planning. Activities included community and neighborhood preparedness training, ESS volunteer development, participation in Emergency Preparedness Week, and continued access to provincial ICS and EOC courses. From a funding perspective, the program successfully leveraged approximately \$195,000 in provincial grant funding to support EOC training, equipment, and operational capacity, in addition to locally budgeted capital funding, reinforcing regional emergency management capability and resilience.

FIRE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In 2025, the Courtenay Fire Department advanced several key strategic priorities to enhance service delivery and community safety. Notable progress was made on the East Side Fire Hall project, including the awarding of the design contract and the commencement of detailed planning and design work for the new East Courtenay Fire Hall at the City's fire training grounds. These advancements ensure the department remains well-positioned to meet the growing needs of the community and support improved emergency response capabilities in the eastern portion of the city.

At the provincial level, implementation of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) continued to evolve. While further information became available in 2025 regarding the Province's intent to phase in new regulatory requirements over an extended timeline, local governments and emergency response agencies, including the Courtenay Fire Department, continue to await final regulations, guidance, and implementation details from the Province to fully understand the operational and resource impacts.

In the year ahead, the Courtenay Fire Department will maintain its focus on delivering effective emergency services while advancing strategic initiatives aligned with community growth and evolving regulatory requirements. Priorities for 2026 include continued progress on the East Side Fire Hall project, enhanced wildfire preparedness, and ongoing review of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act as implementation details are

confirmed by the Province. These initiatives will support the department's continued efforts to meet service demands and community expectations.

Staff wish to thank Council for its continued support and guidance. This ongoing commitment is essential to the Courtenay Fire Department's ability to deliver reliable emergency services, advance key strategic priorities, and protect the safety and well-being of our community.