



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

BRIEFING NOTE

To: Council

File No.: 7200-01

From: Fire Chief Kurt MacDonald

Date: August 30 2023

Subject: Courtenay Fire Department Semi-annual Activity Report

PURPOSE:

To provide Council with a brief recap of fire department activity between January 1 2023 and June 30 2023.

BACKGROUND:

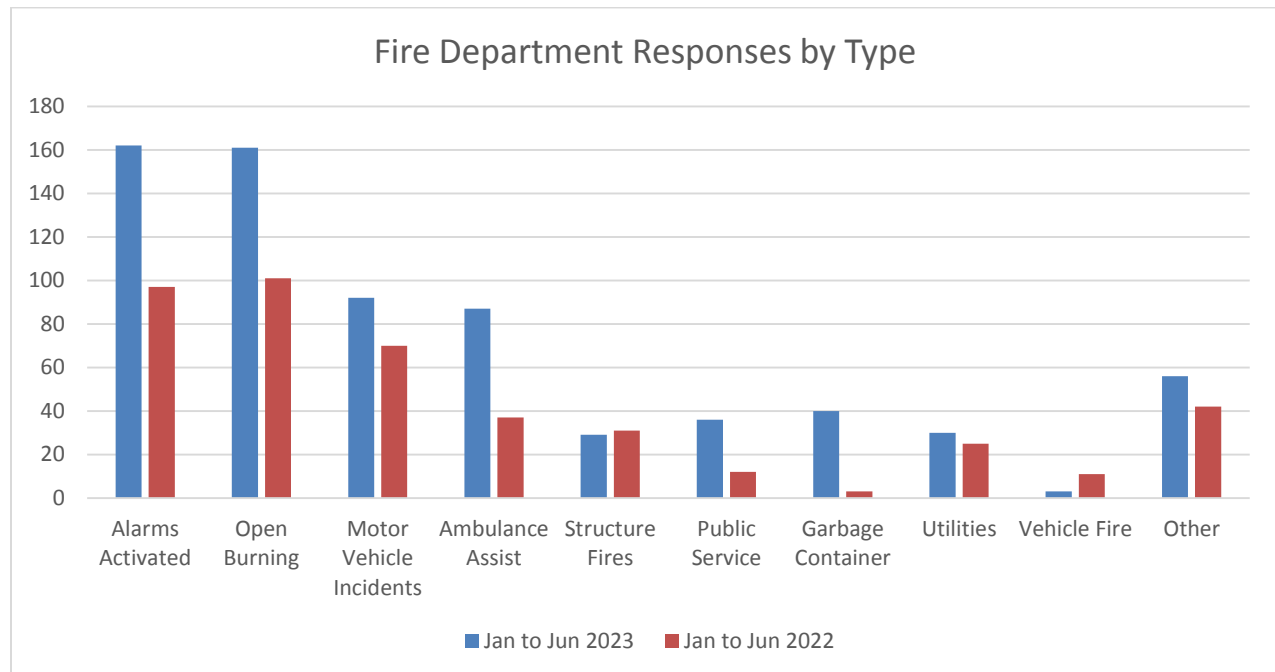
The following is a summary of fire department activities performed during the first half of 2023.

Fire Department Responses

The fire department responded to 696 incidents between January 1st and June 30th 2023, which is 267 more calls than we responded to in the same time period in 2022. Many of the responses made by our crews were to alarms activated calls (162), open burning (161), motor vehicle incidents (92), and ambulance assists (87).

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023 Total	2022 Total	+/-
Non-Emergency Calls	103	141	-	-	244	99	145
Emergency Calls	218	234	-	-	452	330	122

Responses to fire alarm activations, open burning issues and ambulance assists were the call types that had the largest increase overall in comparison to the first half of 2022. The increase in the fire alarms activated were caused in large part to failing components of older systems and a growing inventory of buildings with fire alarm systems installed, while the majority of the increase in open burning and ambulance assists was related to urban issues.



Training

The volunteer members of our organization invested 838 hours on training subjects including Tower 12 familiarization and operations, live fire drills, auto extrication and search and rescue techniques. Our members also participated in joint emergency vehicle operations training with Oyster River Fire Rescue, Merville Fire Rescue, Cumberland Fire Rescue and Comox Fire Rescue, and rural firefighting operations with both Oyster River Fire Rescue and Merville Fire Rescue.

Fire Inspections and Prevention

Our fire inspectors performed 898 fire inspections of commercial properties in both the City and the fire protection district. We are pleased to report that most of these properties were compliant and only a small number of violations were found. We also conducted an additional 7 fire investigations as required by the Province of British Columbia, 6 of which were related to the structure fires we attended during this time period.

Prevention staff participated in 40 public education events during the first half of the year. These events included fire extinguisher training, FireSmart education sessions, fire hall tours, and Fire Safety House presentations at our elementary schools. The feedback received from the participants of these activities has been positive and rewarding for the staff who have delivered the training.

Strategic Priorities

- 1) Bullex Digital Firefighting Screen Replacement – Completed.
- 2) Chevy Tahoe Replacement – Contract awarded, 52 week delivery period.
- 3) Mental Health Resiliency Program – 4 of 6 sessions completed, positive feedback from membership received.

- 4) Summer Weekend Coverage Pilot Program – Program started on time, gathering information on effectiveness. Volunteer members have provided positive feedback on program so far, Chief Officers very happy with the quality of work being provided by membership.
- 5) 2023 Recruit Training Program – Completion of Recruit Training Program is almost complete, with recruits being “response ready” two weeks ahead of schedule.

Prepared by: Kurt MacDonald, Fire Chief

Concurrence: Geoff Garbutt, M.P.I., MCIP, RPP, City Manager (CAO)