

The Year in Review

The past 12 months were the busiest for the PIVFD in recent history. Attending 18-Callouts, our members never wavered in their dedication to responding to neighbours in times of great need.

In addition to lending a hand during and after our usual major winter storms, the department provided assistance night and day for a wide range of events, including;

- Medical emergencies
- RCMP assists
- Brush fire
- Power line failures

People

The PIVFD is comprised of a dedicated and talented crew of 22 Firefighters and First Responders.

The Department's efforts are supported by a team of 14 volunteers, who operate behind the scenes, ensuring things run smoothly and safely.

In other words, it truly does take a village, or an island in our case, to run a volunteer Fire Department.

Being a Member of the Department, and the nature of living on an island, means our team makes ourselves available to answer the call whenever needed. It requires constant training, the ability to function during high-stress situations and to be a supportive teammate.

The quality of the team, the camaraderie and the shared dedication to the community that our Members possess make it an honour to assume the role of Chief.

Training

Training requirements for both First Responders and Firefighters are increasing, with the Provincial Government introducing new regulations, standards and materials that the PIVFD will be required to train to in the coming year. Since our last report, we have trained over 1000 person-hours.

Practices have been very well attended this year, with members maintaining their First Responders and Exterior Operation Level Fire Fighters certification.

Highlights;

- Firefighter Training on Module 1 of the new Provincial Guidelines, issued by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.
- First Responder Captain Brunham's recertification as a VERA Instructor-Examiner, allows Sandy to continue to train our First Responder team in-house.

- Successful recertification exams for First Responders Stancill, Keats, and Irvin.
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fire training for firefighters, resulting in their S-100 Wildfire Training Certification, a crucial element in the department's ability to respond to forest fires.
- Securing guest instructor, Graham Gilley, to provide Berniece Archibald Heart-to-Heart CPR Clinic for all interested Islanders on July 15th.

Equipment

Equipment is vital in enhancing our firefighting capabilities, and we are grateful for the successful UBCM Grant application. With \$30,000 in new equipment generously provided by the grant, we have bolstered our department's effectiveness and capabilities.

The Department also received a substantial donation of new firehose from the Burnaby Fire Department.

Fire Prevention

As Islanders, our single greatest opportunity to prevent a disastrous wildfire from occurring is implementing a community Fire Prevention plan.

On Piers, we are fortunate to have been provincial leaders in adopting the Neighbourhood FireSmart program.

Developed to promote Wildfire Prevention and Education, Piers Island has been recognized as a Fire Smart Community since 2016. It cannot be emphasized enough what a significant accomplishment this is.

Full gratitude to the team of Pauline Olesen, Gloria Morson, Anne Bell and Carol Fevang for promoting FireSmart's science-based programs that all property owners can adopt to ensure our properties are less susceptible to the risk of extreme damage from wildfire.

In 2023, we were again recognized for our efforts and received a \$500 Grant to continue promoting Wildfire Prevention and Education.

Everyone has an opportunity to get FireSmart this summer. Our team will be conducting FireSmart Home Assessments, each homeowner who participates will be entered into a draw to have a FireSmart work crew at their home; the winner will also receive a BBQ feast for the volunteers.

A final note, a huge thanks to Anne Bell, who is stepping down after serving on the FireSmart leadership team since 2016.

A Final Few Thoughts

Assuming the role of Chief was not an easy decision. The impact of the role reverberates into all facets of our life on Piers and asks a lot of my wonderful partner, Kerry. Already a FireFighter and First Responder, Kerry now takes on all the responsibilities of running our Department. It is a big ask, and I thank her for her love and support.

No two people know the level of commitment being the Chief requires better than Pauline and Steve. It is fair to say without them, I would not be submitting this report. The Department and its Membership that exist today is a testament to their dedication and incredible hard work. For this, we owe them a debt of the utmost gratitude.

Respectfully submitted to the good folks of Piers Island,

Chief John Hall