

OTTER POINT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



ANNUAL REPORT
2017



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE FIRE COMMISSION

As Chair, I am very proud of the contributions that this Fire Department offers to our community. The Otter Point Volunteer Firefighters respond to the emergency needs of our residents, always demonstrating high levels of respect and skill.

This year, 2017, has seen work continue with upgrades to the electrical service and wiring within the fire hall and property as well as a start on replacement of the exterior finish. The upcoming years will see the continuation of this work as well as replacement of the roof and driveway.

I would like to thank the Firefighters for all their work that they continue to contribute to the community events such as the Halloween fireworks at Camp Barnard, Canada Day at the Flats and the New Year's Day Polar Bear Swim. I would also like to recognize the volunteer effort they give by being on call each and every day. The Commission recognizes the Firefighters families for their support.

I would especially like to thank Fire Chief Kevan Brehart, Deputy Chief Duane Corbin, Assistant Chief John McCrea and the officers for their professionalism in managing this department.

The Commission continues to appreciate the successful working relationship between the members of the department and the Commission.

Respectfully,

Kenny Jones
Chair, Otter Point Fire Protection and Emergency Response Service Commission

BACK GROUND

The Otter Point Fire Protection Specified Area was established by the Capital Regional District (CRD) beginning January 1, 1980. The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department, the successor to the Otter Fire District society, came into existence at the same time.

Otter Point is a rural residential community with a little over 1100 properties covering roughly 24 square kilometers. It has a population of approximately 2500 with the majority of homes nestled in the trees on small acreages. It is located directly west of Sooke and approximately 50 minutes west of Victoria, on southern Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

ORGANIZATION

The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department is governed by a CRD commission of seven members, six elected by the residents/property owners and the seventh is the current regional director. Each of the six elected commission member serve for a 2 year term with 3 positions expiring each year.

This commission oversees the general operation of the fire department and is responsible for appointing the Fire Chief who manages all operational aspects of the department.

The commission meets once a month on the second Wednesday except for the month of July.

The current commission members are Kenny Jones (Chair), Marie-Ann Davidson, Bud Gibbons, Lloyd Heinemann, Joanne Hemphill and Harold Melville.

SERVICE LEVEL

The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department, as required by the Office of the Fire Commissioner's Playbook, has identified our fire service level for the community as **Interior Operations**. This indicates that we will provide training at or above the corresponding levels as identified within the OFC Playbook to our members. Only members who have met the required training levels are allowed to work within a structure under fire conditions.

INCIDENT RESPONSE STATISTICS

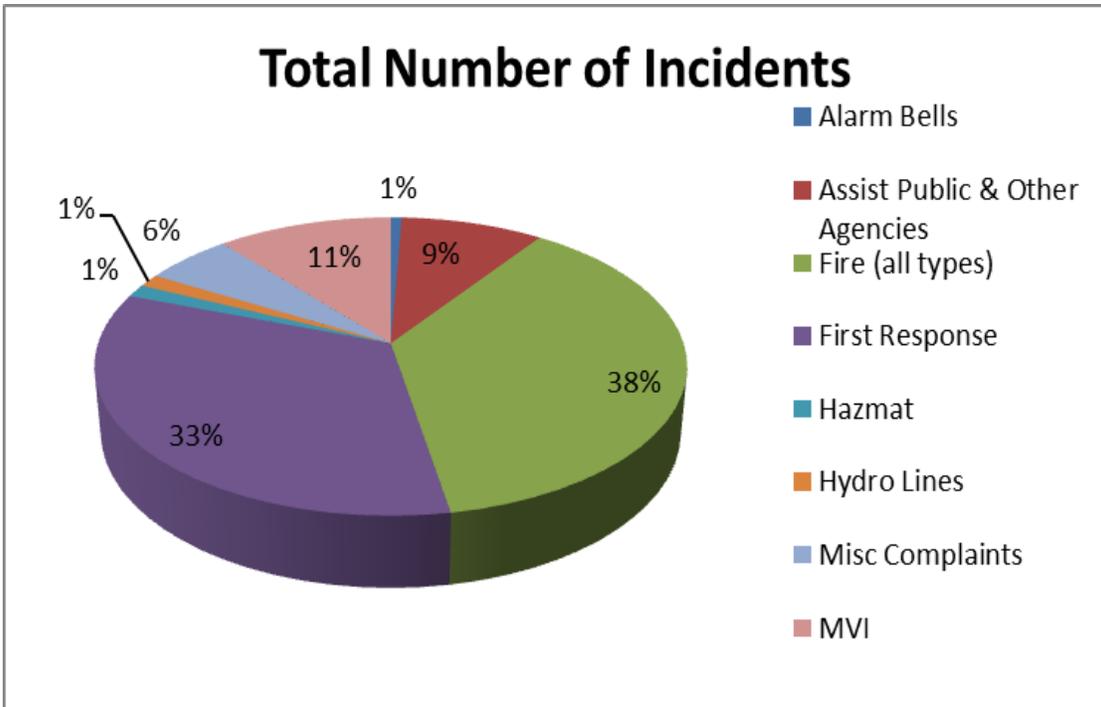
For the period November 1, 2016 to October 31, 2017:

Incident Category	Previous Year, 2016	Current Year, 2017
Alarm Bells	5	1
Assist Public & Other Agencies	9	13
Fire (all types)	65	54
First Response	52	48
HazMat	0	2
Hydro Lines	7	2
Misc Complaints	9	8
MVI	6	16
TOTAL	153	144

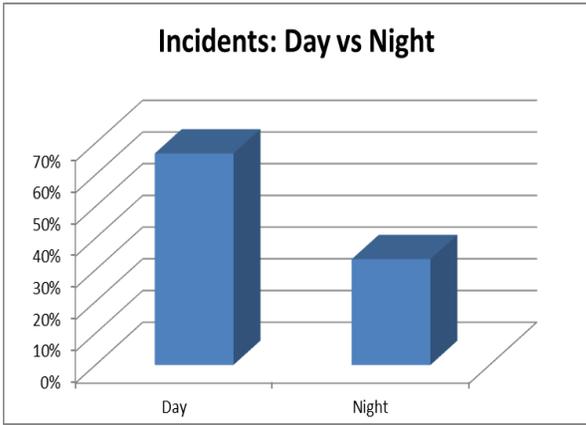
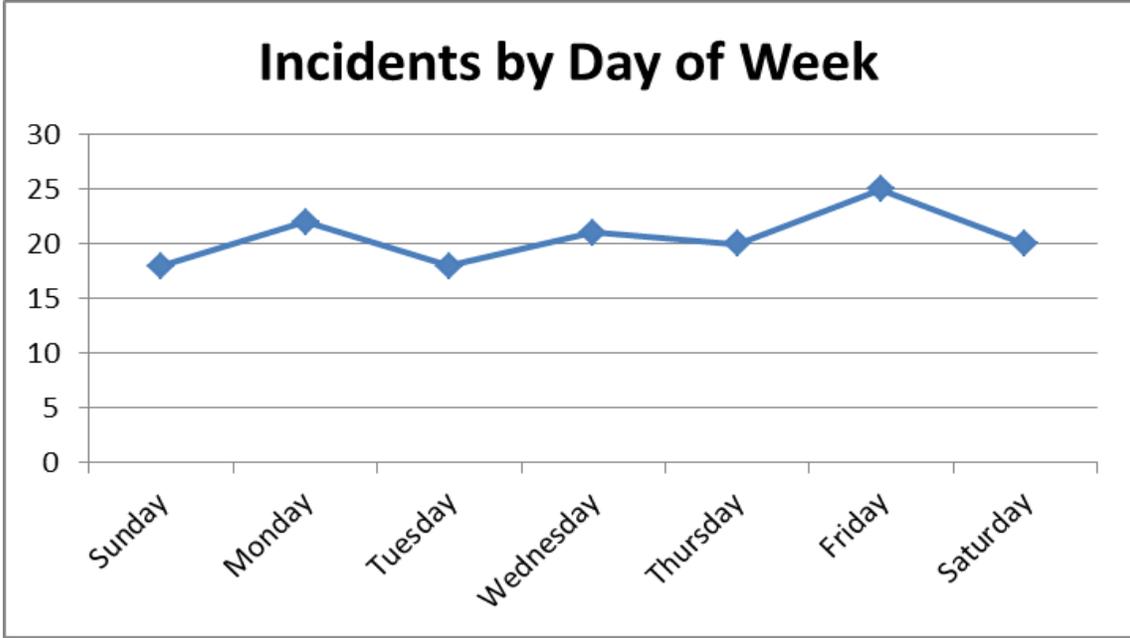
There has been a 5.9% decrease in call volume, 9 less calls than the previous year. Fire calls are still the single largest category of calls at 38%. First Response calls are the second largest category of calls at 33.0%.

Firefighter man hours for all incidents in the year totaled over 695.

Break down by percentage:

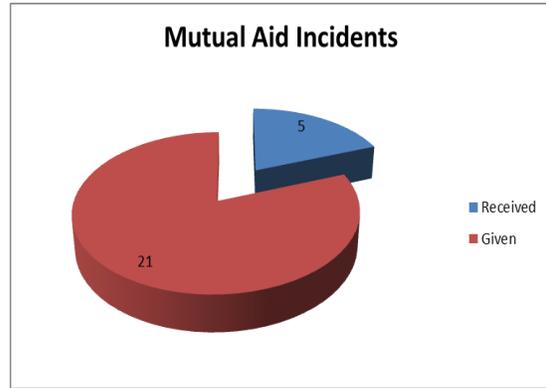


The following chart shows the distribution of incidents over the days of the week.



Of all incidents attended to by our department, 67% occurred between the hours of 6:00 am and 6:00 pm.

During the year Otter Point received assistance 5 times from our Mutual Aid partners and provide assistance 21 times.



ADMINISTRATION

- This past year there was a total of 201 (2016 - 162) permits issued. There were 46 (2016 - 41) Class A burn permits, 143 (2016 - 121) Class B burn permits and 12 High Risk Activity Exemption permits.
- There were 2 warning tickets issued this year for violations under Bylaw 3452 Fire Regulation Bylaw No. 1, 2007.
- Our mutual aid partners include Sooke, Shirley, East Sooke and Metchosin fire departments. The chiefs and a few other senior officers continue to meet every month or two in order to identify and discuss common issues. There has been extensive work undertaken with these mutual aid partners on interoperability regarding response protocols, common terminology, accountability systems, Rapid Intervention Team protocols and radio communications. The goal is to standardize those protocols under which we would be working together so that fire fighters from the various departments may seamlessly and safely work together during mutual aid operations. Each year sees further progress towards our goals of safe and efficient interoperability.
- Our officers hold regular meetings on a separate evening, to discuss issues and plans regarding operations and training. During some of these officer meetings, time is used to further officer training.
- This year, officers and some senior members reviewed and updated a number of Operational Guidelines in order to ensure that the OGs are relevant to today's changing requirements.
- We attended a number of meetings with the Capital Regional Emergency Services Telecommunications (CREST) group to keep abreast of changes coming to our radio and paging systems and equipment in the next few years and how that may impact our department.
- Records management is a daily task to not only keep up with our record keeping, but to keep up with the changing requirements for due diligence.
- There is ongoing research and consultation with others in the fire service to identify changes in current industry best practices and legislation.
- This year we were able to enhance our members' benefits by adding a Member and Family Assistance Program that provides coaching, counselling and support to our member insurance plans.
- Superior Tender Shuttle Accreditation was obtained by Sooke Fire Department with the assistance of Otter Point Fire Department. We are working to see if it will be recognized for parts of Otter Point close to Sooke.

MEMBERSHIP

- This year we held a recruitment campaign, principally through social media. This resulted in 4 applications and 4 recruits welcomed to our ranks in June. Unfortunately one had to drop out, leaving us with three new enthusiastic members.
- During 2017, membership has averaged 17 members and we currently have 17 active members. Our number of members has been stable this past year with the three new members to replace 3 others who departed.
- In the past, the average service of our members was close to 20 years. However, with a number of our senior members retiring over the previous few years and being replaced with new members, the average service of our current membership is 15 years. However, 9 of our members have less than 7 years and 8 have over 20 years
- Recruitment and retention has been getting harder and harder as time goes on. This is a problem plaguing a lot of volunteer fire departments in North America. The demands of our lives in today's society leaves less and less time for community volunteering.

MEMBER TRAINING

In order to be ready at a moments notice in an emergency, a large portion of our time is spent in training. A special acknowledgement and appreciation to our Training Officer, Assistant Chief John McCrea, for a well-coordinated and comprehensive training program.

2017 has been another good year for Training in the Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department. Today we find ourselves at the highest level of training that our Fire Department has ever attained.



The Office of the Fire Commissioner released the “Playbook” in September of 2014. The Playbook identifies both the Standard and the minimum levels of training required to be qualified as an Exterior; an Interior; or a Full Service Firefighter. As mentioned earlier in this report, Otter Point has declared an Interior Operations Service Level.

The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department has always trained our members to the NFPA 1001 Standard which exceeds the level specified in the Playbook for an Interior Operations Service Level and we will continue to maintain a high standard of training for our members.

In order to maintain this high standard of training, we continue to make as many opportunities as possible available for each individual to train at his or her own pace.

- Opportunities for extra weekend training have been made available for more advanced courses such as Live Fire 1 training; Residential Command (team leader training); Driver and Pump Operator training; First Responder Level 3 training; Emergency Scene Traffic Control training; and NFPA 1001 practical evaluations.
- Chief Brehart and Assistant Chief McCrea, Training Officer, have also freed up time during the week when individuals had the time to come in and do NFPA 1001 Practical Evaluations.
- Fire Fighter Dave Gollmer has also contributed many hours of his time to facilitate Otter Point Fire Departments driver training program with considerable progress being made this year.
- The Otter Point Fire Department has made more funds available for individuals to take outside training courses (usually 1 or 2 day weekend courses) to further advance the training of our members.

Thanks to our Volunteers for stepping up their individual training and increasing their commitment to the Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department!

The following is a summary of the training hours and the accomplishments of this past year.

52 practice nights available (Thursdays)
6 nights for Association Meetings
2 nights for Levi and Christmas week
44 practices completed (2.5 hrs each)

Average Membership available for practice nights: 17
44 sessions X 2.5 hrs X 17 members = 1870 possible training person hours
Actual logged training hours –1425 training person hours
% of available training person hours actually logged – 76%

Over 235 additional person hours of training time on weekends and/or other evenings were logged by our members.

In early 2008, for the first time in our history, two of our members received NFPA 1001 Level 2 certification. As of this date 11 of our 17 members have attained this level of recognized certification!

All of this has been accomplished while the Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department has continued to remain up to date with the latest scientific studies that show us the safest and most effective methods to fight fires, control flow paths and maximize the chances of a successful rescue efforts in a modern day residential structure fire.

The level of dedication and commitment to the Otter Point Fire Department Training Program has truly been amazing to witness. Thanks again to our volunteer firefighters.

Highlights of Extra Training Completed in 2017

Courses and Conferences	Length	Attended
Emergency Decision Making - Blind Spots	1 day	2 members
LGMA - Effective Fire Service Administration	2 days	1 trustee
Critical Incident Stress Management - Comms	2 days	1 member
Emergency Vehicle Driving	1 day	2 members
Fire Chiefs Assn of BC Conference	5 days	1 member
Fire Service Instructor I	3 days	1 member
Hazmat Operations	4-5 days	2 members
Incident Safety Officer	1 day	1 member
JI Fire Service Evaluator	1 day	1 member
JI Fire Service Evaluator - recert	1 day	2 members
JI NFPA 1001 Written & Practical Evaluations	1 hour	multiple
NFPA 1001 Fire Fighter I & II completion	Many	3 members
Occupational Health and Safety	2 days	1 member
PET Oxygen	2 hours	6 members
Principles of Modern Fire Attack	1 day	9 members
Start Plus – RIT and Self Rescue	1 day	1 member
Strategies and Tactics	2 days	5 members



Saturday Live Fire Training Session

EQUIPMENT

- All of our trucks received regular servicing and inspections and are in good serviceable condition.



- The tender (2200 imperial gallon tank truck) is over 22 years old and plans should be made towards its replacement.



- All tools and equipment have been serviced, inspected, tested and maintained in good operating condition.
- Most equipment used by the fire service has a regulated life span regardless of usage or wear and tear. This requires a continuous replacement plan in order to keep current. Each year a few items are replaced on a rotating schedule in order to even out the cost burden.

Equipment purchased this year includes some:

- New Air Compressor
- Hose
- SCBA Bottles
- Upgraded all SCBA packs
- RIT pack
- Station Boots
- Portable tank 2500 gal
- Photocopier
- Whos Responding TV
- Misc equipment



BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- Regular building and grounds maintenance continued throughout the year.
- Electrical upgrades to the buildings and site have continued this year. Over the next few years the roofing, siding and some areas of the driveway will also need attention. These upgrades were added to the budget beginning in the 2016 budget year.
- This year a number of our members with some spare time came and worked on maintaining the buildings and grounds. Such jobs as looking after the grass, cutting back the brush and cleaning the outsides of structures on the property. Work on replacing the outer cladding of the building started this year. This not only improves the appearance of the site within the community, but also helps to prolong the life and usability of our facilities.



Aerial view of fire hall/training centre property

TRAINING CENTRE

The Training Centre, located behind the fire hall, is operated by the Otter Point Volunteer Fire Fighters Association independently of the fire department. This allows the association to apply for operating grants from BC Lotteries/Gaming.

Ground was initially broken for the construction of an accessible and affordable training facility for the lower Island in the summer of 2001. With continuous effort

on the part of our members over the last 16 years, the site now has the facilities to train for fires involving vehicles, dumpsters, propane tanks, fuel spills and structures. Also auto extrication and search and rescue. Our facility has been used by both volunteer and career fire fighters from all over Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and Bowen Island. This has greatly enhanced the quality of the



training for the Otter Point department with considerable savings in travel costs that would be incurred in going to either Maple Ridge or Comox.

- We hosted a number of Justice Institute accredited Live Fire Level I (1) and Live Fire Level II (2) courses this year with students from the regional area fire departments such as East Sooke, Highlands and Sidney.
- During the past year, the following area Fire Departments used our training facility ranging from one to three days each; Sooke, Colwood, Sidney, Central Saanich, Willis Point and Pender Island. These departments spent a total of 12 days training at our site.
- We co-hosted a joint Regional Training weekend with Sooke, Metchosin and East Sooke Fire departments. We held a Live Fire Level II course here at our Training Centre. This course had fire fighters from Cowichan Bay, East Sooke, Oak Bay and Shirley Fire Departments.
- Again, we received a Direct Access Gaming Grant from the BC Lottery Commission of \$15,000 for this past year to help with the cost of operations of the center. We have already applied for another Direct Access Gaming Grant of \$15,000 from the BC Lottery Commission for next year.

A big thank you goes to those of our members, who helped to operate the training centre during these activities. The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department and Training Centre is well known throughout BC.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Thanks to our firefighters and their families for the sacrifice and service they provide to our community of Otter Point.
- Thanks to the Training Officer for the extraordinary amount of hard work, commitment and dedication that has been evident over the past year.
- Thanks to the officers for the hard work, commitment and dedication that they have demonstrated over the past year.
- Thanks to the Commission members for another excellent year of cooperation and service to the Otter Point Fire Department.
- Thanks to the Kemp Lake Water District for the excellent working relationship that we continue to share.
- Thanks to those individuals and companies that have been generous with their time and resources.
- Finally thanks to the taxpayers of Otter Point who support this small but very progressive fire department.

*Thank
You*