
Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department 60th Anniversary Celebration

The Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department (CHVFD) celebrated 60 years of dedication and service of the department and its members to the Coombs-Hilliers area earlier today. Many past and current CHVFD members, other local fire departments members, Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) elected officials, members of the Coombs-Hilliers community and other RDN residents joined to recognize and acknowledge the firefighters' rich history and commitment to the community's safety, as well learn about fire and emergency services in their community.

History of Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department

- The CHVFD was formed in 1965, and Isaac Neden was elected as the first chief.
- A 1952 ladder-pump fire truck was purchased for \$1,000, becoming fire truck No.1 at CHVFD.
- For most of the 60 years, the CHVFD was operated, and services provided by, the Coombs-Hilliers Fire Department Society. The RDN has operated the CHVFD since 2022.
- Over the past 60 years since the fire department began providing services, there have been over 100 men and women that have proudly served the community and residents of Coombs-Hilliers as firefighters.

Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department in 2025

- The CHVFD have practices every Wednesday. The firefighters practice for about two hours, with practices including vehicle extrication, fire hose deployment, water supply, rope rescue and first responder scenarios.
- From its beginnings of one fire truck, the CHVFD fleet now includes:
 - Two fire engines
 - Two fire tenders
 - One rescue truck
 - Two command vehicles
- The CHVFD has 19 members whose service ranges from a few months to 40 years. Like most fire departments in the region, the CHVFD is actively recruiting new members to join to help protect their community. No experience is required, and all training is provided. For more information, call 250-752-2144, email chvfd@rdn.bc.ca or drop by the firehall at 3241 Alberni Hwy.
- The CHVFD is proud to work closely with its neighboring departments when the need arises. This includes automatic aid agreements with Qualicum Beach Fire Rescue, Nanoose Volunteer Fire Department, Bow Horn Bay Fire Department, Parksville Fire Department, Errington Volunteer Fire Department and Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department and a mutual aid agreement with the Port Alberni Fire Department.

Get Involved RDN!

To learn more about the Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department, including the members, fire hall, apparatus, safety tips and more, visit rdn.bc.ca/coombs-hilliers-volunteer-fire-department. To learn more about fire services in the RDN, including the 16 fire departments that operate 24 fire halls in the region, visit: rdn.bc.ca/fire-services.

Quotes

“Congratulations to the Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department and its members for 60 years of serving and protecting our community. Whether getting called to a structural fire, a motor vehicle accident or other incident, they show up with the same commitment to serving those in need at all hours of the day, every day of the year. My sincerest gratitude to every firefighter for their dedication and service to our community.”

Leanne Salter, Electoral Area F Director

“I am honoured to serve our community as Community Fire Chief of the Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department. I thank all our past and current firefighters for their unwavering commitment to serving those in need throughout our 60-year history. Most of our firefighters work fulltime and so generously give of their personal time to serve. Without them, and the support of their families, we could not provide the level of service that we do. We’re proud to carry on the legacy of those who served before us and to give our best to the community we live in and appreciate being a part of.”

Ron Schildroth, Community Fire Chief

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