



## E-Comm now first point of contact for 9-1-1 callers in Northern Interior

*RDFFG Director Kevin Dunphy (foreground) and Board Chair Art Kaehn get firsthand look at new 9-1-1 call-taking section as E-Comm CEO David Guscott (background) looks on.*

*"All 9-1-1 test calls have been successfully completed and we're now live."* And with those words, the official transition of 9-1-1 Public-Safety-Answer Point (PSAP) services for the Northern Interior to E-Comm was completed at 1025hrs October 7. Just three minutes later, the first 9-1-1 call, placed from Terrace, was received and transferred to RCMP dispatch.

Representatives from the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG), including Board Chair Art Kaehn and Director Kevin Dunphy (Chair, RDFFG 9-1-1 Committee)

were on hand to witness the transition. They referred to a number of benefits for residents of the regional districts of Fraser-Fort George, Cariboo, Kitimat-Stikine and Bulkley-Nechako as a result of the new partnership.

"The additional staffing resources that we don't have in the north, the expertise that is with this organization, and of course the \$365,000 we're going to save a year, are all big draws," explained Kaehn. "The service is not going to change, if anything, it's going to be better."

***"The service is not going to change, if anything, it's going to be better."***

**Art Kaehn,  
RDFFG Board Chair**

Continued inside >>>

# istrict partners



*“We remain committed to maintaining our excellent track record of swift and efficient 9-1-1 call-answer for our new partners in the north.”*

David Guscott,  
E-Comm President and CEO

9-1-1 caller

**E-Comm 9-1-1**

*“Do you need police, fire or ambulance?”*

Call is transferred to

**Police**

RCMP Operations communications centre in: Prince George

**Fire**

Fire dispatch centre in: Prince George

**Ambulance**

BC Ambulance Service dispatch centre in: Kamloops

**Annual Call Volume**

71,000

**Geographic Area**

240,000 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population**

230,000



E-Comm’s Corrie Okell welcomes new partners from the Northern Interior at 1025hrs October 7.

The approximately 71,000 emergency calls placed each year from the four regional districts will now be routed to E-Comm, where a substantial team of highly-trained 9-1-1 call-takers will quickly confirm which agency the caller requires and for which location. Calls will then be transferred to the same local dispatchers in Prince George and Kamloops who are currently dispatching police officers, firefighters and paramedics to emergency situations.

“We chose to relocate our service to E-Comm because it is able to deliver increased staffing during sudden influxes of high 9-1-1 call-volume, provide a robust infrastructure with many layers of redundancy for our residents, and provide the necessary expertise to satisfy current and future technical 9-1-1 requirements—all at a significant cost savings,” Dunphy added.

The success of the transition was a direct result of collaborative technical and operational planning, including the engineering, design and installation of new 9-1-1 infrastructure. Prior to the transition more than 540 hours of training was dedicated to familiarizing E-Comm staff with the geography and special attributes of the regional districts, including commonplace names. A comprehensive pre-transition test call schedule was also developed, in which 160 different calls were made

from both cellular and landline phones originating from a variety of locations across all four regional districts.

RDFFG General Manager Donna Munt and Chief Administrative Officer Jim Martin were also in the emergency communication centre for the cutover.

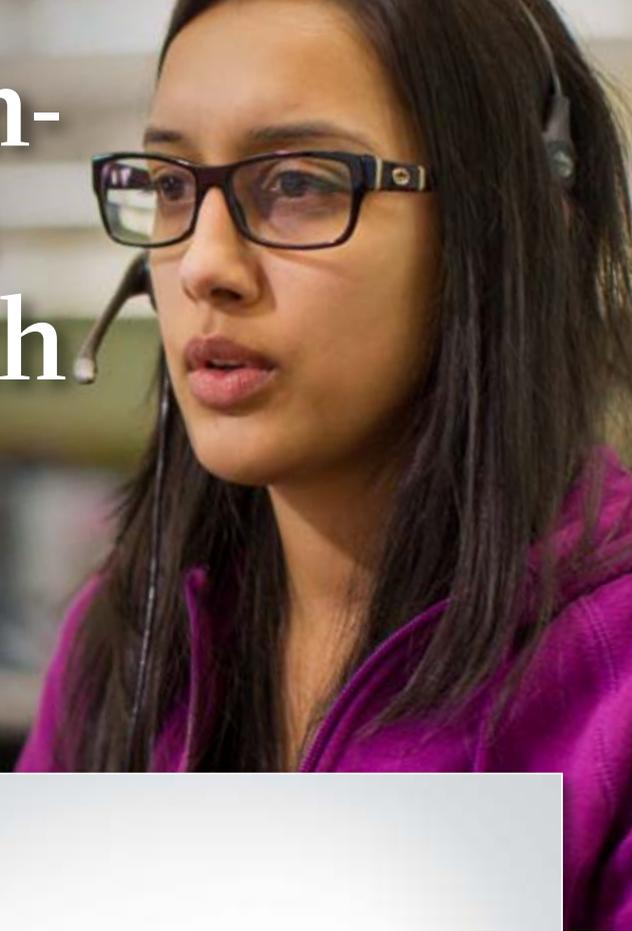
“I really want to thank E-Comm and the people that I have worked with over the past seven months,” said Munt during a small ceremony that followed. “Everyone has been so welcoming and we really do appreciate it.”

E-Comm has managed more than 14-million incoming 9-1-1 calls in its 15-years of service, according to President and CEO David Guscott. “We remain committed to maintaining our excellent track record of swift and efficient 9-1-1 call-answer for our new partners in the north. Our focus is on safer communities in B.C., whether you live in Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace or Richmond,” he added.

As the largest 9-1-1 call centre in B.C., E-Comm also provides 9-1-1 call-answer services to the Metro Vancouver, Sunshine Coast, Whistler and Squamish areas. By the end of the year, an additional 15 regional districts (Northern Vancouver Island, Central and Southern Interiors) will also move their 9-1-1 call-answer services to E-Comm.

E-Comm call-takers now first point of contact for 9-1-1 callers in the Northern Interior.

“Don’t let non-emergencies compete with real ones.”



**SOMEONE  
SLASHED  
MY HAND**

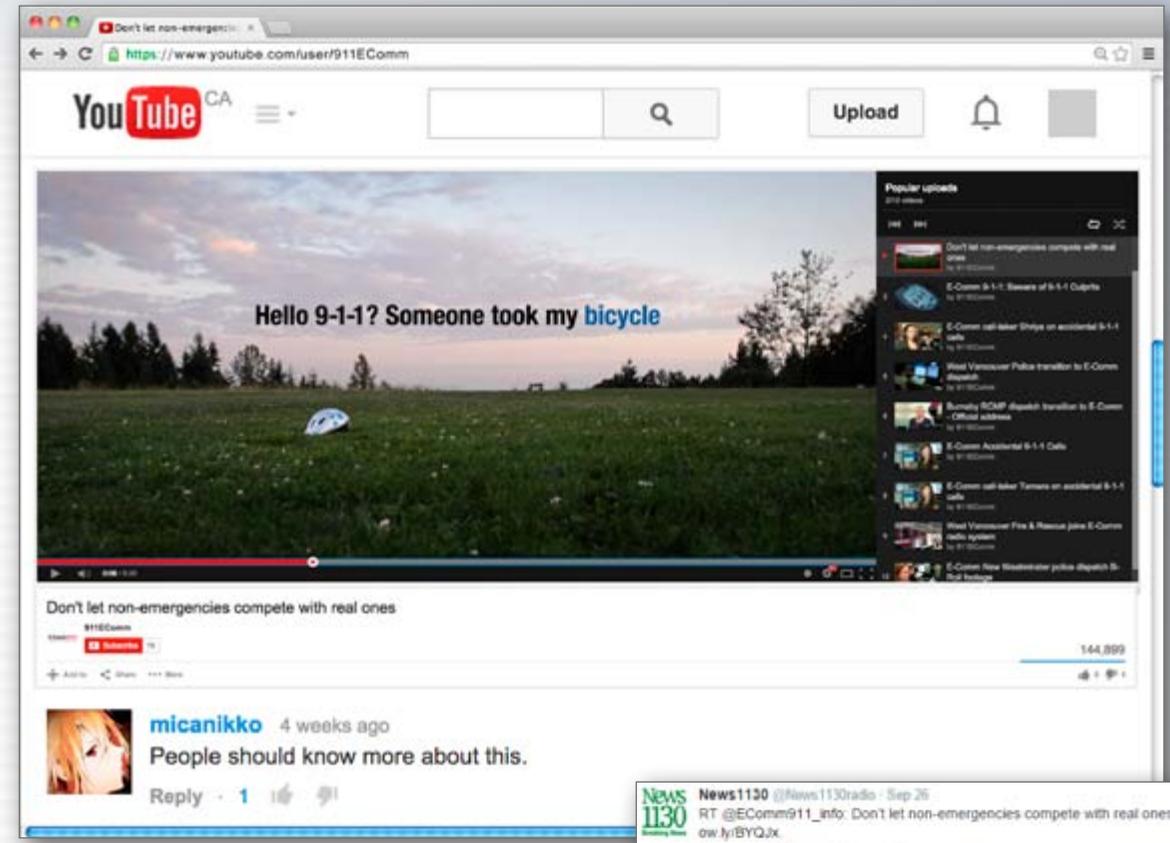
**Don't let non-emergencies compete with real ones.**  
Your slashed tire is important, but 9-1-1 is for emergencies where health, safety or property is in immediate jeopardy or there is a crime in progress. Find your non-emergency number and learn more at [nonemergency.ca](http://nonemergency.ca)

**E-Comm 9-1-1**  
Help us help.

Non-emergency campaign posters displayed at bars and restaurants throughout Metro Vancouver and animated for display online.

Non-emergency calls to 9-1-1 tie up important lifelines for people who require immediate help from police, fire and ambulance personnel. With approximately 25% of 9-1-1 calls to E-Comm actually being non-emergency calls, the organization’s latest public education campaign focuses on increasing awareness on the difference between emergency and non-emergency calls.

The core message ‘don’t let non-emergencies compete with real ones’ is dramatically illustrated in a 20-second video and online animated advertisements that overlay two situations—one emergent and one not. The campaign is also supported by the introduction of [nonemergency.ca](http://nonemergency.ca), a new URL where the public has access to local non-emergency numbers and provides detailed information on the difference between a 9-1-1 and non-emergency call.



Campaign messages were shared on social media channels including Facebook and Twitter.

“The objective of the campaign is to draw attention to non-emergency calls competing for precious 9-1-1 resources,” explained Jody Robertson, director of Corporate Communications. “While non-emergency calls such as stolen property are important police matters, we want to encourage the public to use their local non-emergency line when there is a time delay, there’s no suspect on scene or there are no injuries. We created [nonemergency.ca](http://nonemergency.ca)

to help make it easier for people to find their number to do so.”  
The first few weeks of the five-week campaign has already seen more than 145,000 views of the 20-second video on E-Comm’s YouTube channel: [youtube.com/user/911EComm](http://youtube.com/user/911EComm).  
To see all aspects of the campaign visit [ecom911.ca](http://ecom911.ca).

# Pocket dials ‘hot button’ topic for police chiefs



Pocket dials to 9-1-1 are an ongoing problem that put a significant drain on 9-1-1 resources and police operations across the country. Some estimates suggest between 10-20% of 9-1-1 calls in British Columbia (approximately 200,000 9-1-1 calls) are abandoned calls; pocket dials, hang-ups, misdials. With almost 70% of abandoned 9-1-1 calls originating from cellphones and the ever-increasing use of mobile phones, the impact on

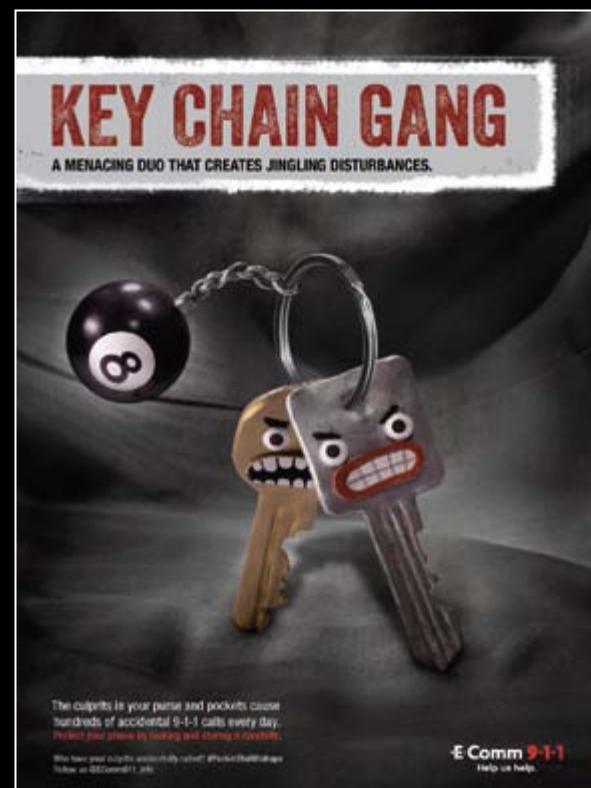
emergency services is not wavering. This issue proved to be a hot topic during the recent Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP) conference, where a resolution was passed calling on the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and Industry Canada to address the sale of cellphones in Canada with single buttons that can directly call 9-1-1—a feature that contributes to pocket dials and impacts 9-1-1 efficiency.

As part of the resolution, various 9-1-1 call centres (including E-Comm) and police agencies throughout the province and the country partnered with the Victoria Police Department to provide statistics relating to accidental 9-1-1 calls in order to raise awareness and develop better safeguards to prevent these types of calls. The resolution also discussed the various outreach programs and strategies being used to address the issue of pocket dials, which included recognition for E-Comm’s “pocket culprits” public education campaign launched earlier this year.

“We’ve done research through different provinces and the amount of calls that we’re getting in our dispatch centres from people accidentally dialing 9-1-1 is causing us concern,” explained newly appointed CACP president Clive Weighill in a statement to media.

“Pocket dials continue to be the biggest drain on 9-1-1 resources and any safeguards and efforts in place to increase awareness of the problem can help reduce the impact from these highly preventable calls,” added Doug Watson, E-Comm Operations vice-president of Operations.

The resolution was brought forward at the annual Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police conference which took place in Victoria, August 24-27. Additional information can be found at [cacp.ca](http://cacp.ca).



A poster from E-Comm’s “Pocket Culprits” campaign.

## Turning up the heat on fire-safety planning

From October 5-11, fire agencies across Canada reached out to the public during Fire Prevention Week to increase awareness about the importance of working smoke alarms. If installed properly, smoke alarms are one of the best defences in the event of a fire and dramatically reduce the number of deaths and injuries.

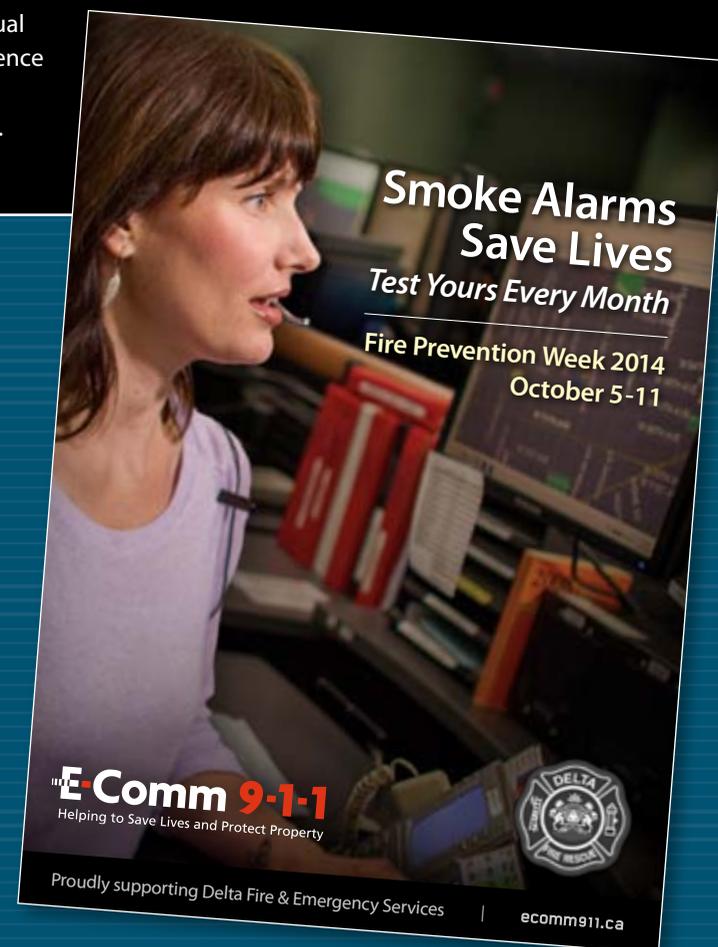
The theme for this year, *Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives: Test Yours Every Month*, was highlighted via a wide-range of activities including open house events held at fire halls and public outreach on social media. In partnership with Vancouver Fire and

Rescue Services, E-Comm produced a short video featuring tips on fire safety and the importance of regular testing of smoke alarms—a key part of any home escape plan. E-Comm also worked with its fire dispatch partners in Delta, Richmond, New Westminster, Port Moody, the Sunshine Coast, Squamish and Whistler to place public service announcements in local newspapers.

“There’s a good chance you will hear the smoke alarm before you smell or see smoke, which means escaping earlier and potentially avoiding devastating circumstances,” explained E-Comm Fire Dispatcher

Jeanine Gibson. “Smoke spreads fast where there is fire, and working smoke alarms provide a critical early warning so you can get outside quickly.”

Fire Prevention Week is a national initiative to promote fire safety through education. It strives to bring awareness to the dangers of fire and ways we can protect ourselves that include checking smoke alarms regularly and planning escape routes. For more information on Fire Prevention Week, visit [fpoa.bc.ca](http://fpoa.bc.ca).



# E-Comm

## IN THE COMMUNITY



E-Comm walked alongside our Vancouver Police partners at the 2014 Vancouver Pride Parade on August 3.



E-Comm attended this year's Burnaby RCMP Open House on September 27.

# E-Comm service by the numbers

July – September 2014

## 9-1-1 service levels

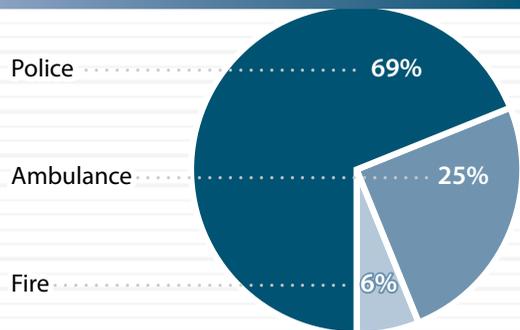
9-1-1 calls placed to E-Comm	Service level achieved*
246,126	98%

\* Service Level Target: 95% of all 9-1-1 calls answered in five seconds or less.

## Number of 9-1-1 calls from landlines and cellphones

Landline	Cellular
75,737	170,389
31%	69%

## 9-1-1 calls directed to police, fire and ambulance



## Technology

9-1-1 availability	100%
Radio network availability average	99.97%
Radio transmissions (#)	32,624,464
Radio system air time (seconds)	125,502,305

## E-COMM MISSION

To deliver exceptional emergency communication services that help save lives and protect property, and to advance public-safety partnerships.

## E-COMM VISION

Safer communities in British Columbia through excellence in public-safety communication.

## E-COMM VALUES

Respect • Accountability • Integrity • Service • Collaboration

For more information on E-Comm or to comment on a story, contact [corpcomm@ecomm911.ca](mailto:corpcomm@ecomm911.ca)

Please contact us if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically.