Coquitlam Fire & Rescue to Become Ninth Fire Department to Join E-Comm's Radio System

E-Comm is pleased to announce that Coquitlam Fire & Rescue is joining E-Comm’s Wide-Area Radio System. The municipality of Coquitlam asked E-Comm to convert its Class B share for Fire to a Class A share—paving the way for an early 2008 transition.

By joining the radio system, Coquitlam Fire & Rescue will be able to communicate directly with police and ambulance personnel within Coquitlam, as well as with fire departments and other emergency responders, that use the E-Comm system in surrounding communities. This is critical for day-to-day operations, as well as in a major emergency or disaster where mutual aid is required. In addition, the E-Comm radio system offers enhanced personnel safety (emergency buttons), better in-building coverage (extremely important to communities. This is critical for day-to-day operations, as well as in a major emergency or disaster where mutual aid is required. In addition, the E-Comm radio system offers enhanced personnel safety (emergency buttons), better in-building coverage (extremely important to firefighting), and increased reliability and clarity.

BC Ambulance Paramedics Bring Home Silver in International Competition

Congratulations to the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) paramedics who formed Team Canada 2007 and won the silver medal (narrowly missing gold) at the Asia Pacific International Conference’s Out of Hospital Care Medical Competition in Melbourne, Australia. The four-person team carried out a number of timed paramedic simulations and exams from all over the world. E-Comm supported Team Canada as a bronze level sponsor.

9-1-1 Service Levels

Halloween was another busy night for all emergency responders and the call volumes on that night prove it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Calls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>2,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>3,195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That’s a 42% per cent increase in call volume from the previous day but service levels remained excellent. Ninety nine per cent of all 9-1-1 calls on Oct. 31 were answered in five seconds or less.

Local Industry Knowledge Shared at APCO Conference


E-Comm’s Wide-Area Radio System: Fire Departments

E-Comm currently dispatches for 23 fire departments using E-Comm’s Wide-Area Radio System. These include: Metro Vancouver, the Sunshine Coast, Whistler and now, Howe Sound.

Visit our website: www.ecomm911.ca
Calling For Back-Up
E-Comm Assists Port Moody Police with Dispatch

Port Moody Police contacted E-Comm on September 24 to advise that they did not have staff to call-take or dispatch that night due to unforeseen circumstances. E-Comm immediately offered to assume command of its dispatch from 1900 hrs, September 24 to 0700 hrs, September 25. “It was such a relief that E-Comm had the capability to help us in this crisis,” says Sheldon Boles, office manager for Port Moody Police. “The inability to collect and dispatch 9-1-1 calls directly impacts the safety of our community.”

E-Comm’s call-takers temporarily managed all 9-1-1 calls and radio communications for police members. An on-duty Port Moody Police officer managed non-emergency calls, as well as the Anmore/Snuneeetmí first paging system.

The temporary transition went extremely well and had minimal impact on E-Comm’s regular operations. “Although we gave E-Comm fairly short notice, they were extremely helpful and accommodating, with a smooth and transparent transition for our members and the general public,” adds Boles. Call volume was relatively low but a lot of planning and preparation went into the transition. Radio functionality, phone processes, phone lines and back lines were all prepared and tested, as well as staff directives were created and distributed for each E-Comm work group. Port Moody was so impressed with E-Comm’s professionalism and expertise that E-Comm was asked to cover Port Moody on Sunday, Oct. 21st when they were left again without available staff.

BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) call-takers and dispatchers also temporarily relocated to E-Comm on October 14 from 0400 hrs – 1800 hrs. Approximately 20 BCAS call-takers, dispatchers, and a supervisor worked out of the E-Comm training room that day. To decrease these misdials, which tie up resources for both E-Comm and partner agencies, we are asking the public to not pre-program 9-1-1 and to stow their cell phones carefully to prevent accidental calls.

The campaign, comprised of both radio and print advertising, has received extensive media coverage, extending the message reach to more than 750,000 people. In addition, two collateral public education pieces have been created: a “9-1-1 tips” brochure and an information card that explains the difference between an emergency and a non-emergency, produced in English, Chinese and Punjabi.

E-Comm will also be reaching out to non-English speaking residents to increase awareness of interpretation services and to provide important tips for calling 9-1-1.

9-1-1 Campaign “Help us Help”

E-Comm launched its first public education initiative in October to encourage the community to “help us help.” The campaign’s first phase, which runs until the end of the year, focuses on accidental 9-1-1 calls from cell phones. At present, approximately 50% of 9-1-1 calls are placed from cell phones, with hundreds of misdialed calls each day. To decrease these misdials, which are sent to both E-Comm and partner agencies, we are asking the public to not pre-program 9-1-1 and to stow their cell phones carefully to prevent accidental calls.

The campaign, comprised of both radio and print advertising, has received extensive media coverage, extending the message reach to more than 750,000 people. In addition, two collateral public education pieces have been created: a “9-1-1 tips” brochure and an information card that explains the difference between an emergency and a non-emergency, produced in English, Chinese and Punjabi.

E-Comm will also be reaching out to non-English speaking residents to increase awareness of interpretation services and to provide important tips for calling 9-1-1.

“Helping the public use 9-1-1 effectively is vitally important to our mission,” says E-Comm’s Communications Director, Jody Robertson. “We want people to call 9-1-1 when they need emergency services. Our campaign is designed to inform people that 9-1-1 is available for emergencies, and to not call when they don’t need one.”

The response time can be even faster by knowing which language is needed. E-Comm has developed interpretation services that can generally get an interpreter on the line in under a minute. “It’s important for us to get the message out that help is available to all people, not just those who speak English,” says E-Comm Director of Communications Jody Robertson. “In addition, we want to provide helpful tips that can speed up the communication process, such as learning the English word for the language that the caller speaks and other simple words like ‘police, fire, ambulance.’” E-Comm call-takers have direct access to an interpretation service with more than 170 languages. They can generally get an interpreter on the line in under a minute.

As E-Comm’s public education program progresses it will address other issues that affect day-to-day call volumes and response times, such as location information, and when to call 9-1-1 and when to call non-emergency. Along with the launch and a new public education section on E-Comm’s Web site, E-Comm’s Web address has changed to make it easier for people to find (ecomm911.ca).

For more information or to view the public education information please visit www.ecomm911.ca.

About cell phone use in Canada
- More than six million 9-1-1 calls a year are received from mobile phones in Canada
- Two-thirds of Canadian households have at least one cell phone
- About 3% of households in Canada rely solely on cell phones for their home phone service

9-1-1 cell phone calls to E-Comm
- E-Comm is the regional 9-1-1 answer point for Southwest British Columbia, handling more than 1.1 million calls each year
- Between January and September of this year, 374,846 cell phone calls have been placed to 9-1-1
- In September of this year, the number of calls from cell phones exceeded those from landlines