



2025 Annual Report

January 1 to December 31

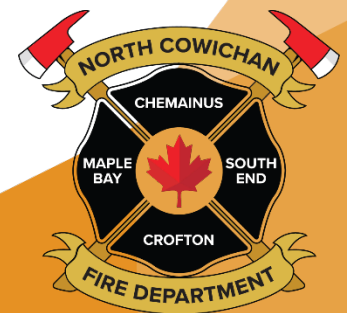
North Cowichan Fire Department

March 4, 2026

Regular Council Meeting

Fire Services Administration

- Fire Services business planning was completed in preparation for the 2026-2030 Operating and Capital Budget.
- Staff continue to implement recommendations from the 2024 Tim Pley & Associates Ltd. report, *North Cowichan Fire Department Review and Strategic Work Plan*. Long-term recommendations will require budget approvals before adoption of the recommendations.
- Crofton Fire Station construction was completed. Firefighters have moved into the new section with the open house ceremony held on May 3, 2025.
- Recruitment drive (2026) was completed with 22 applications; testing will take place in Q1 2026, new recruits hired will be for the South End, Chemainus, Crofton, and Maple Bay fire stations. Ongoing training program will be in place for all new recruits selected; training will meet the minimum training standards set by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.



Fire Services Administration continued

- A used ladder fire apparatus was purchased for Chemainus Station and will be placed into service (Q1 2026) once crews have been trained in its operations. This apparatus will be replacing the aged-out Ladder 16 which will be disposed of through Council's Capital Asset Policy.
- Two used Fire Administration Pickup trucks were purchased to support fire operations and the Fire Services Admin office.
- New Fire Engine 47 was delivered and is in service at the South End station.
- North Cowichan Fire Department (NCFD) delivered retired Engine 28 to the Penelakut Island Fire Department with training to First Nations members for operating the fire apparatus.



New Ladder 16



Fire Services Administration continued

- The new Assistant Chief, Fire Inspector, hiring process was completed. The successful candidate Assistant Chief David Lowes started in September 2025, who is making good progress in designing a system and completing fire inspections.
- NCFD responded to a request from BC Wildfire Service for crews to assist with the Mount Underwood wildfire (near Port Alberni).
- Staffing of fire apparatus continues to be a challenge. Crofton, Chemainus, and Maple Bay fire stations have very low turnout numbers during the daytime hours.
- The NCFD has 111 personnel; 107 in service and 4 on leave of absence. There are 14 females (13%) and 97 males (87%) in various ranks.
- North Cowichan Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) was received late fall with a report to Council in Q1 2026. The FUS provides fire insurance grades for insurance rates.



Fire Services Administration continued

- South End fire station has now completed the addition to the fire station for the storage of the South End's antique fire truck.
- Fire contract negotiations will take place in the early part of 2026 between CUPE 358 and the District of North Cowichan.
- Fire Services staff were awarded a grant through the 2025 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund grant program under the Volunteer and Composite Fire Department Equipment and Training funding stream for wildland personal protective equipment and wildland firefighting equipment, the project was completed in Q4 2025.
- Fire Services staff were awarded a grant administered by the Union of BC Municipalities on behalf of the Ministry of Citizens' Services in the 2025 Next Generation 911 application-based Funding program. This grant funding is for mobile data technologies equipment for the NCFD. Equipment has arrived and installation will be completed in Q1 2026.

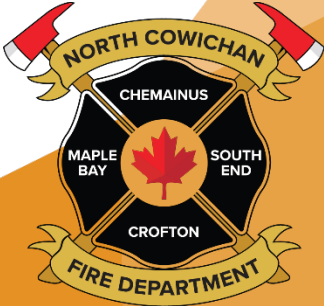
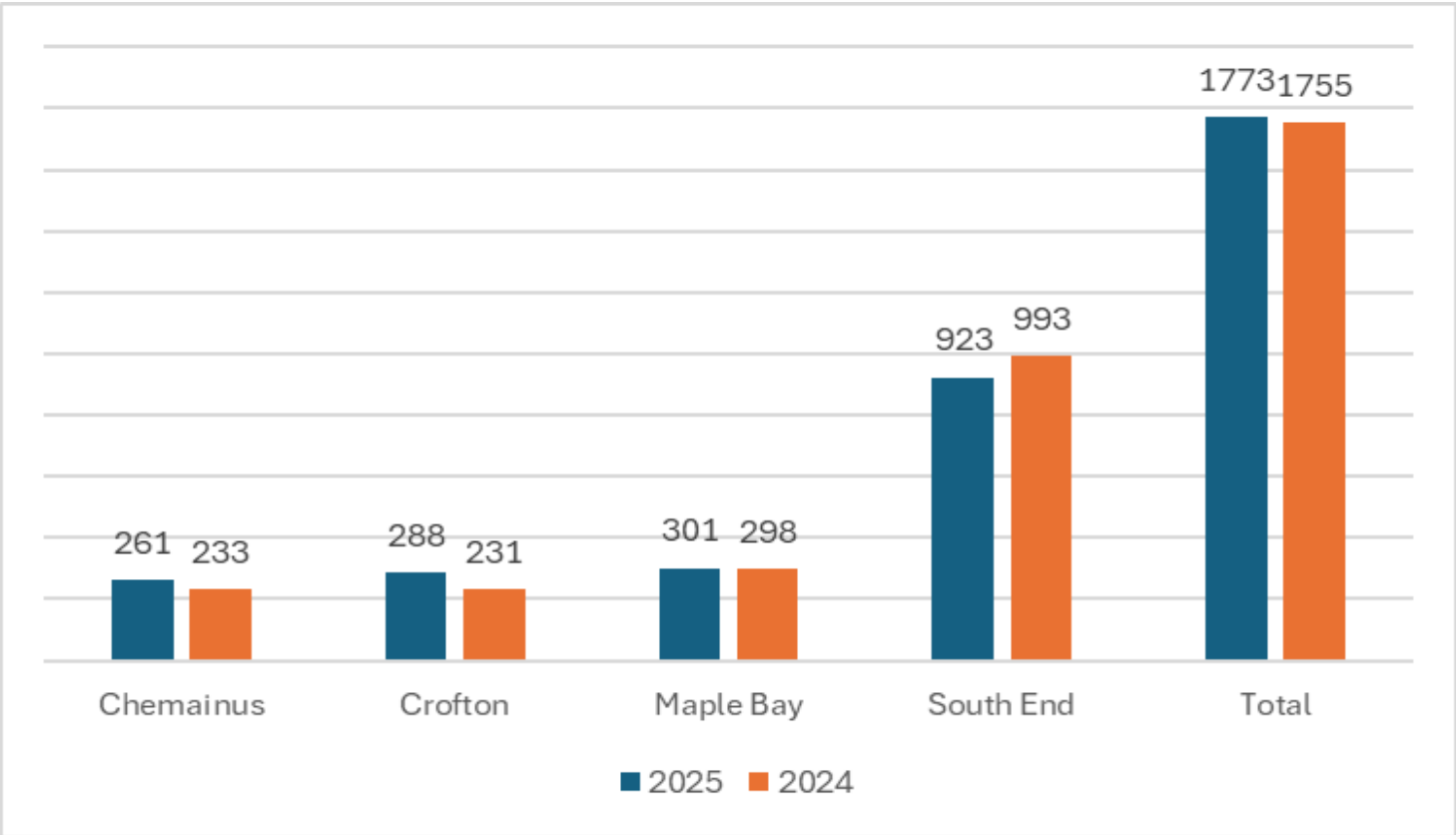


2025 Budget Pressures

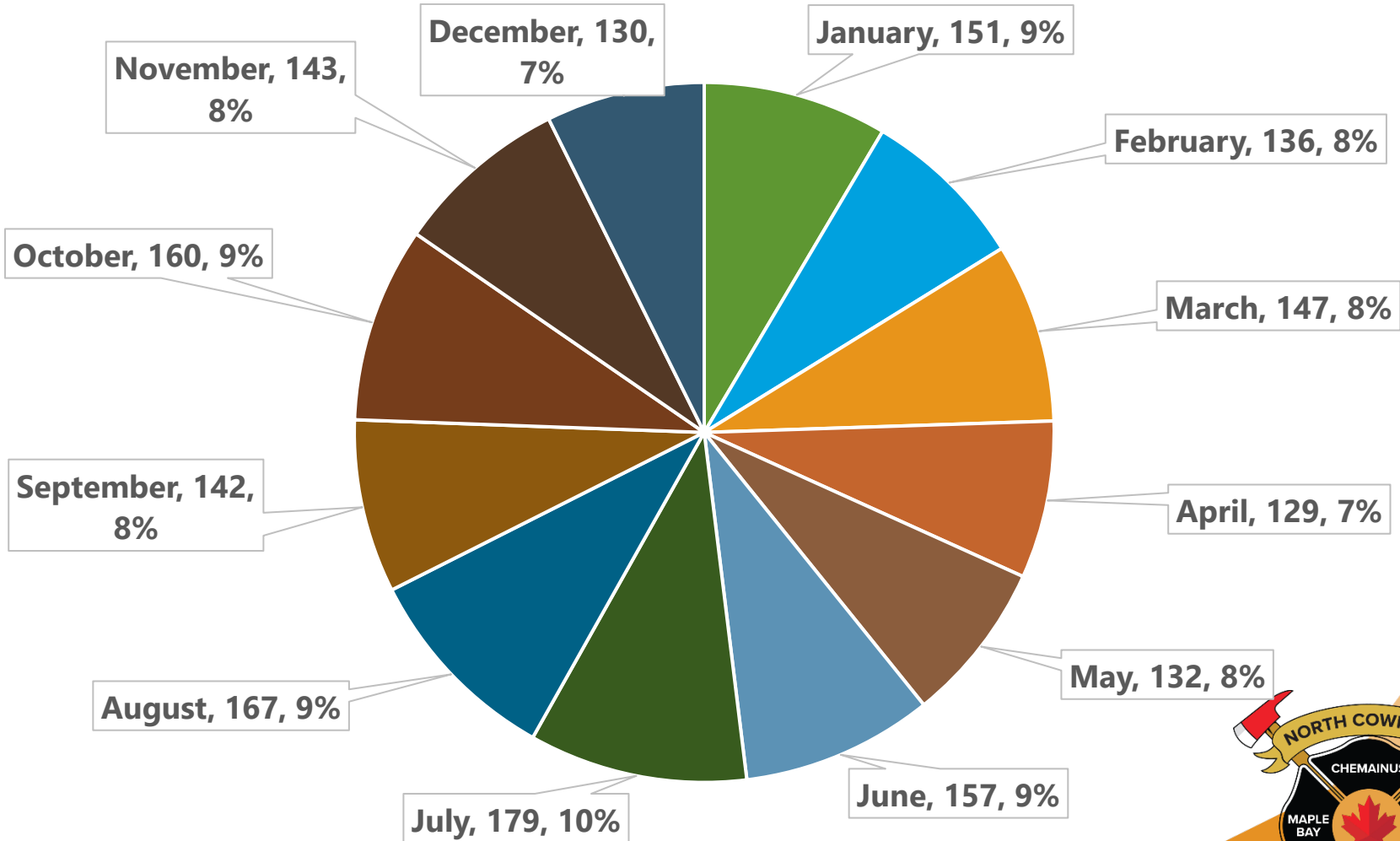
- Apparatus repairs and maintenance costs for 2025 increased by 34% over 2024. The NCFD maintains 28 vehicles & apparatus, which are on a scheduled maintenance program to insure 24/7 response availability. The NCFD fleet consists of new and aging vehicles which tend to require an increased number of repairs and maintenance costs.
- Response to large fires including 34 residential, 5 commercial, and 43 wildland responses. The time to manage fires has an impact on the annual operating budget. For example, the wildland fire located off Gibbins Road was approximately \$19,000 in direct response costs.
- Provincially-mandated training costs increased to meet the requirements of BC Emergency Health Services' Emergency Medical Assistant First Responder training and program standards with increased scope and service levels. The new course will need to be completed for all personnel which has a direct impact on the operations and training budget.



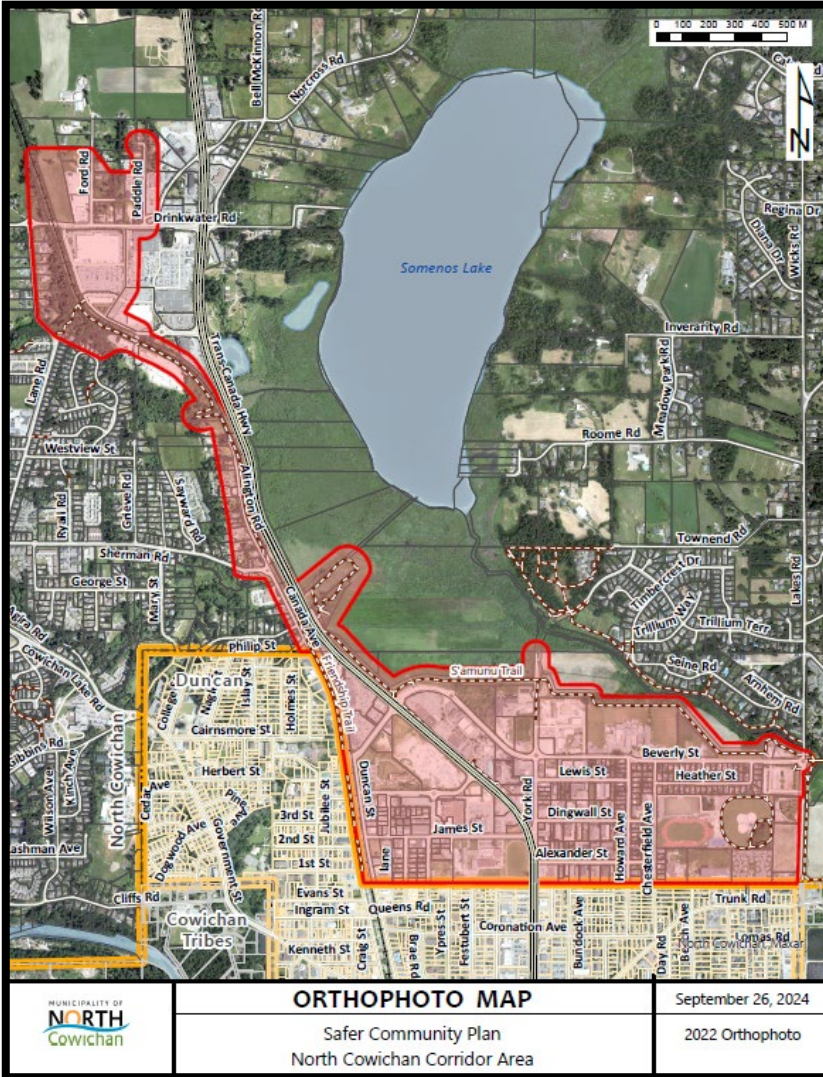
Incident calls by fire station annual comparison



2025: Incident call totals by month



2025: Monthly corridor response comparison



Month	2024	2025	% Change
January	32	42	31%
February	32	30	-6%
March	36	30	-17%
April	42	29	-31%
May	41	14	-66%
June	35	17	-51%
July	35	30	-6%
August	42	22	-31%
September	37	27	-16%
October	26	34	6%
November	40	25	-22%
December	43	31	-28%
Total	441	331	-25%



2025: Medical calls by station

Called in as	Chemainus	Crofton	Maple Bay	South End	Total for department
First Responder	16	146	148	36	346
Assist Emergency	25	6	9	34	74
Total by station	41	152	157	70	420



2025 July-December: False alarm calls

- 14 warning letters have been sent to property owners and occupants in relation to the False Alarm Bylaw 3861.
- 12 letters have been sent to property owners and occupants to have their alarm systems serviced.
- 12 levies have been sent to property owners and occupants in this time frame.

Called in as	Chemainus	Crofton	Maple Bay	South End	Total for department	2025 year total
Alarms Commercial	11	2	6	52	71	142
Alarms Residential	19	7	19	35	80	162
Alarms Non-Emergency	8	0	1	6	15	27
Total by station	38	9	26	93	166	-
2025 year total	66	23	45	197	332	-



False alarm calls comparison

Called in as	2025	2024
Alarms Commercial	142	178
Alarms Residential	162	169
Alarms Non-Emergency	27	24
Warning Letters Issued	35	50
Levies Issued	16	34
Service System Letters Issued	26	N/A



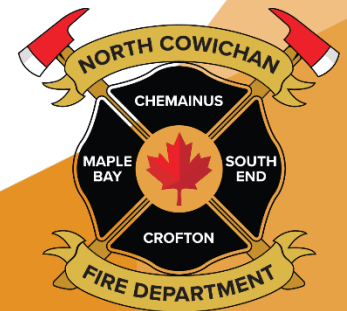
2025: Operations Division

Courses and training completed by North Cowichan Fire Department personnel

- Auto Extrication
- Class 5 Air Brake Endorsement
- BC Hydro Safety
- Basic Life Support CPR training
- First Responder
- First Responder Train the Trainer
- Pleasure Craft Operator
- Swiftwater Awareness
- Live Fire Level 1 & 2
- Technical Rope Roadside Rescue Operations
- Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations
- Fire Service Instructor 1
- Fire Leadership 2
- Emergency Scene Traffic Control
- Emergency Scene Management 1
- Emergency Scene Management 2
- BCWS – Wildland Structure Protection(WSPP-115)
- BCWS – Wildland Firefighter (WSPP-FF1)
- Incident Command System 100 & 200
- Live Fire – Fixed Facility Instructor

2025 training hours

Type	# of sessions	Session hours	Firefighter hours
Special training	326	1,395.50	7,421.50
Practice	200	408.00	8,773.00
Totals	526	1,803.50	16,194.50



2025: Fire Prevention Division

Inspections	154
Referrals/Reviews	227
Fire Investigations	231
Public Education events	33
Total	645



2025: Referrals/reviews & comparison

Type of referral/review	2025	2024
Development Referral reviews	76	45
Special Event reviews	25	32
Fire Safety Plan reviews	32	19
Assistance (comfort letters, codes, etc.)	94	64
Total	227	160



2025: Fire investigations & comparison

Type of fire	2025	2024
Structure fires	39	23
Outdoor fires	178	252
Vehicle fires	14	17
Total	231	292



2025: Public education events & comparison

	2025	2025	2024	2024
Type of event	Qty	Participants	Qty	Participants
Community displays	10	4,070	3	300
Fire and Life Safety Tours, Sessions & Fire Prevention Week Activities	31	2,062	32	1,895
North Cowichan staff fire extinguisher training	1	12	-	-
OFC Smoke Alarm Campaign (Crofton)	1	60	-	-
Totals	43	6,204	37	2,195

