

e-COMMUNIQUE

E-Comm Newsletter Fall 2010, No. 30

E-Comm 9-1-1

Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

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ecomm911.ca



Britannia Beach Fire department, one of the four new fire departments E-Comm will soon dispatch for.

500 kilometres of response area to be covered by E-Comm dispatch

Fire response teams that protect both residents and massive land areas within the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) will soon be supported by E-Comm's fire dispatch service.

"Partnering with the SLRD to provide dispatch services that will enhance fire response is an honour," says Doug

Watson, E-Comm's vice-president of operations. "We're confident the level of dispatch expertise E-Comm provides will be viewed as an asset to public and responder safety."

E-Comm currently provides dispatch for fire departments in Squamish and Whistler and for police in those communities as well as Pemberton. With the addition of SLRD-South region to its fire dispatch roster, E-Comm will be the service provider for the entire Sea-to-Sky Corridor which will offer its emergency services enhanced coordinated communication capabilities. The transition of fire dispatch to E-Comm is targeted for completion by the end of November.

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Southern SLRD to be covered by E-Comm dispatch >> *continued from page one*

9-1-1 service coming soon to SLRD

The SLRD, E-Comm and TELUS are also working to implement 9-1-1 service into the region which should be completed in the coming months.

“This is big news for some residents in the southern half of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District who currently still use a 10-digit number from their landlines to access emergency services,” says Electoral Area C Director for the SLRD, Susan Gimse. “We’re excited to be partnering with E-Comm to deliver this essential service to thousands of residents and businesses that don’t presently have it.”

The implementation of 9-1-1 and transition of fire dispatch are complex projects that include training plans for E-Comm’s current fire dispatch teams. Programming the computer systems with geographical information and standard operating procedures, combined with training of staff, have been high on the priority list. Staff are already visiting communities to get an appreciation for this unique region and its many attributes:

- **Pemberton:** The Pemberton region, renowned for its wide valley and fertile farmland, is also distinguished by its sheer size, lively shopping district and smaller residential communities. Some of the more remote villages near Lillooet Lake are a four-hour drive for Pemberton Road Rescue first responders.
- **Furry Creek:** Named in the 1870s after Oliver Furry, a trapper turned prospector who discovered the enormous mining potential of the surrounding area, Furry Creek saw significant change in the 1990s with the construction of the Furry Creek Golf & Country Club and new housing.
- **Britannia Beach:** Although not large in size, Britannia Beach, just 50 kilometres from Vancouver, has a rich history. The community does not currently have a fire dispatch service but rather relies on digital pagers to summon responders to an emergency.
- **Duffey Lake:** Duffey Lake Road is marked by avalanche chutes, large down-slope mountainside pathways cleared of trees by repeated avalanche falls. These ribbons on the mountainsides are numbered along the roadway and used as location indicators which can be given to first responders when travelling the highway.

In addition to assuming fire dispatch duties and 9-1-1 call-answer, E-Comm will also assume call-taking duties for Pemberton’s public works division.

Technology and teamwork track suspect during police pursuit



Courtesy of WaiteWoodbeck-www.wtvo.ca

The swift and skillful actions of police in Surrey, Vancouver and Delta, combined with quick-thinking E-Comm call-takers and dispatchers, significantly minimized risk to the public during a police incident in June.

Multiple 9-1-1 calls from residents reporting 'shots fired' in Cloverdale also indicated a male suspect fleeing the scene. A cross-jurisdictional police pursuit was immediately launched. "Our staff were critical in ensuring the members responding were well supported and public safety protected," recalls Marc McAdam, team manager.

To support the police effort, E-Comm call-takers obtained Global Positioning Coordinates (GPS) from the suspect's cell phone provider as his vehicle sped through multiple municipalities. Our dispatchers also coordinated radio communications through E-Comm's interoperable radio system used by all police departments in Metro Vancouver.

Wireless Phase II cell phone technology was used to provide police helicopter Air One with general location information while the suspect moved through each municipality. Several call-takers worked with the cell phone company to provide continuous location updates for the suspect using latitude and longitude coordinates. Both E-Comm's radio and Wireless Phase II technologies, combined with the resourcefulness of our staff, played a critical role in supporting public safety.

"Ten years ago this level of communication and cooperation between different agencies and jurisdictions was not available," says Peter Gauthier, director of E-Comm's wireless services division. "Knowing how much our radio system can help in a pursuit like this one makes it easy for me to come to work every day; it makes us terribly aware of how important radio communication, skilled dispatch and policing are to public safety."

Both E-Comm's radio and Wireless Phase II technologies, combined with the resourcefulness of our staff, played a critical role in supporting public safety.

E-Comm dispatch supports firefighters' battle of Gibsons blaze



Photograph: Alan Ferguson

An estimated 1,500 Gibsons residents were left without power as a blaze destroyed two waterfront landmarks.

The Sunshine Coast community of Gibsons suffered the loss of two waterfront landmarks when a heritage building and marine diesel repair shop went up in flames June 4. E-Comm's fire dispatch team played a key role in helping the volunteer fire departments in the area manage the high-profile event.

E-Comm received the first 9-1-1 call about the blaze at 1520 hrs, after which several more flooded in due to the event's high-traffic location. Gibsons Volunteer Fire Department extinguished the fire almost five hours later, with help from the Roberts Creek Volunteer Fire Department, Sunshine Coast RCMP, BC Hydro and Terasen.

"We're very fortunate that no one lost their life in this fire."

***Sgt. Russ Howard,
Sunshine Coast RCMP***

during the fire. "I have to commend the fire department for the amazing job the volunteers did in fighting this fire. It was due to their quick efforts that we only lost the two buildings. We're very fortunate that no one lost their life in this fire."

Further investigation lead to the arrest of a male suspect in connection with the arson.

Gibsons experiences less than 15 reported structure fires on average each year and its fire department is made up of all volunteer members.

Fireworks erupt in the sky, not in the crowd



Photograph: Blair Kent

A strong police presence and outstanding situational awareness meant no major incidents marred the 2010 Celebration of Light events in July and August. That said, the four evenings were incredibly busy for the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), E-Comm's call-takers and dispatchers, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services and the BC Ambulance Service.

The fabulous weather drew enormous crowds resulting in more than 1,900 liquor pour-outs, numerous fights and a number of incidents that resulted in arrests. However, the evenings went extremely well thanks to pre-planning and well-trained resources.

**E-Comm technology
allowed emergency
responders to effectively
collaborate and react to
incidents as they arose.**

E-Comm's major events plan for the Celebration of Light was finessed this year based on our experience during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. "Things went very well," reports Cindy Defazio, operations manager. "Operational changes to radio talk-channels made the signing on of more than 350 officers each night much smoother."

E-Comm's award-winning public safety and emergency response application, Emergency Event Map Viewer (E²MV), was deployed throughout the festival by the City of Vancouver Emergency Operations Centre to provide real-time data to emergency responders. "The technology gave police officers, firefighters and paramedics a complete view of incidents in Vancouver's West End," says Kevin Wallinger, City of Vancouver director of emergency planning. "An enhanced situational awareness and consistent data sharing allowed emergency responders to effectively collaborate and react to incidents as they arose."

Tips for the public that will “Help us help”

Our newest 9-1-1 advertising campaign builds on previous campaigns by providing the public with clear calls to action as well as emphasizing the partnership between 9-1-1 callers and the call-takers who handle their emergencies. The campaign will run in 25 community newspapers September through to November.

“We’ve combined dramatic images and headlines with a friendly tips approach to help engage the public,” explains Jody Robertson, director of corporate communications. “Most people want to do the right thing; giving them some tips to follow makes it easy for them to do so.”

E-Comm staff are featured in the new ads to emphasize that managing 9-1-1 calls is a partnership.

The topics covered by E-Comm’s public education program are based on the most pressing operational issues facing 9-1-1 centres including accidental calls, knowing your location and the distinction between an emergency and non-emergency call. In a recent Ipsos Reid poll, Lower Mainland residents also overwhelmingly identified these areas worthy of public education efforts.

“Most people want to do the right thing; giving them some tips to follow makes it easy for them to do so.”

Jody Robertson

Some kids call 9-1-1 by accident.
Some kids call 9-1-1 for real.
Can be hard to tell the difference
over the phone.

Help prevent the hundreds of accidental calls we get every day.
Please don't pre-program 9-1-1 into any of your phones. ecomm911.ca

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

911 Teach children how to use 9-1-1 properly. 911 Store your cellphones carefully to prevent accidental dialing. 911 If you dial by accident, stay on the line so we can ensure you're okay.

Is there silence on the line
because you called us by mistake?
Or because someone's in the house?

Help prevent the hundreds of accidental calls we get every day.
Please don't pre-program 9-1-1 into any of your phones. ecomm911.ca

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

911 Always store your cellphone carefully. 911 Don't "test" 9-1-1 to see if it's working. 911 If you dial by accident, stay on the line so we can ensure you're okay.

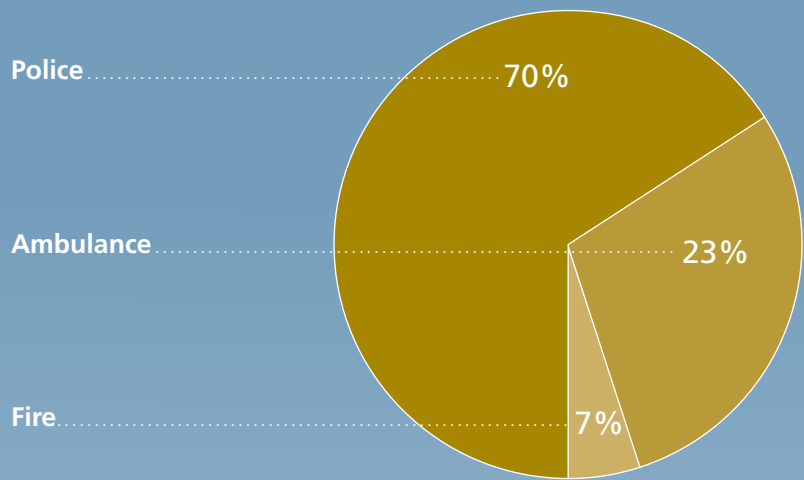
9-1-1 service levels

July – September 2010

9-1-1 calls placed to E-Comm		Service level*
July	94,509	95%
August	92,472	96%
September	88,155	96%
Total	275,136	96%

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

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



Technology

9-1-1 Uptime: 100%

Number of 9-1-1 calls from landlines and cell phones

Landline Telephones			Cellular Telephones	
July	41,895	44%	52,614	56%
August	40,616	44%	51,856	56%
September	38,028	43%	50,127	57%
Total	120,539	44%	154,597	56%

Wide-Area Radio system

July – September 2010

System grade of service and availability

2010	System Air Time (secs)	Transmissions (#)	System Availability	System Queuing
July	35,658,747	9,340,213	99.9952%	0.01%
August	34,211,096	8,961,975	99.9946%	0.00%
September	35,192,156	9,157,461	99.9979%	0.00%

System grade of service average*

Target: <3.00% **Actual:** 0.003%

**Grade of service represents the ability of the radio system to handle radio traffic volume. Industry Canada sets the standard for the public safety community, which is 3%. This means at the radio system's busiest times, there cannot be more than 3% queuing (responders waiting to speak). The E-Comm radio system is well within this standard.*

System availability average

Target: 99.99% **Actual:** 99.9959%

E-Comm mission

To provide emergency personnel and the public with exceptional communication services that help save lives and protect property.

E-Comm values

Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Collaboration

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This newsletter is produced by E-Comm Corporate Communications. For more information on E-Comm or to comment on a story, contact:

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