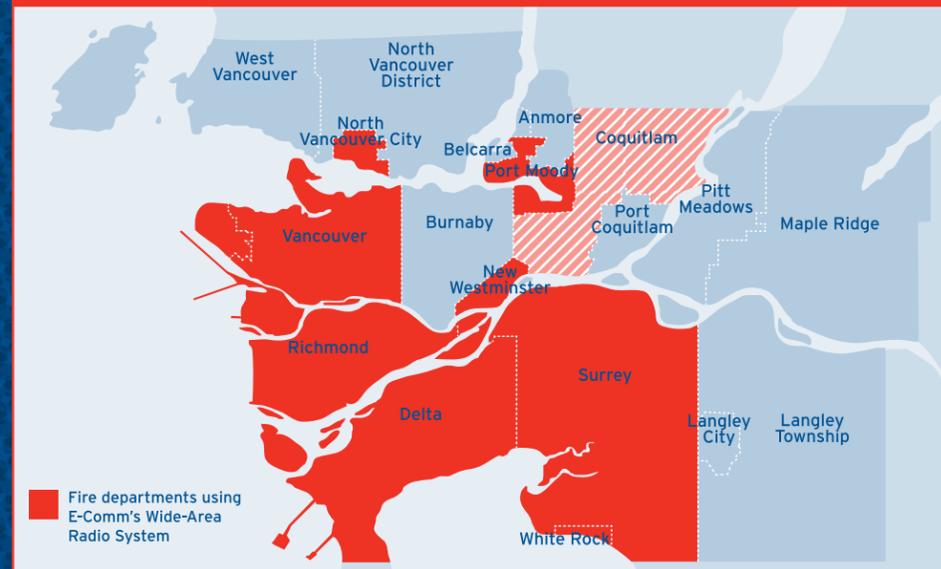


Coquitlam Fire & Rescue to Become Ninth Fire Department to Join E-Comm's Radio System

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 firefighting), and increased reliability and clarity.

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



Local Industry Knowledge Shared at APCO Conference

A few of E-Comm's own presented at the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) 2007 conference in Calgary. Jennifer Gjaltema, team manager in Operations, presented "Recruiting the Right People On Time," discussing E-Comm's new recruitment information sessions that help screen and hire staff in a hot and competitive job market. Ryan Lawson, team manager in Operations, presented "The Madness of Metrics: Running a 9-1-1 Centre with Lessons Learned from the Call-centre," reviewing how metrics are key to a 9-1-1 centre's staffing and managing call volumes.

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 against teams from all over the world. E-Comm supported Team Canada as a bronze level sponsor.



Members of the BCAS Team Canada practice before the competition.

9-1-1 Service Levels

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

October 30 - 2,253

October 31 - 3,195

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.



This newsletter is produced by E-Comm Corporate Communications. For more information on E-Comm or to comment on a story featured in this newsletter, contact Angela Wilson at:

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www.ecomm911.ca



EC300 Dec 07



Squamish Joins E-Comm 9-1-1

E-Comm welcomes Squamish dispatcher Grant Clark to their Operations team.

Responsibility for Squamish RCMP and Fire-Rescue dispatch, along with 9-1-1 service, successfully transitioned to E-Comm on October 16, 2007. The transition ran very smoothly due in no small part to the extensive planning by the E-Comm/Squamish transition team.

Squamish has been operating an independent 9-1-1 system since the mid-1970s. The move to E-Comm presents many operational benefits for Squamish RCMP and Fire-Rescue including increased communication capabilities with Whistler RCMP and Fire-Rescue, which are part of the E-Comm consolidated dispatch system. "We're working to enhance our services for the Sea to Sky Corridor," says Inspector Norm McPhail, RCMP officer in charge of the Sea to Sky Regional Police Services. "Part of that is to centralize dispatch and 9-1-1 for our region. E-Comm was the organization that could do that for us, providing specialized service and utilizing best practices in the emergency communications industry. It's invaluable to our officers and to the public to have a one-stop shop like E-Comm for access to emergency services."

E-Comm's consolidated dispatch operations enhance communication between the 23 police and fire service agencies that they dispatch for. "Having dedicated dispatchers for Fire is the most valuable benefit we've experienced in converting to E-Comm's services," says Squamish Fire Chief Ray Saurette. "Our dispatchers are no longer trying to handle everyone at the same time (9-1-1, police and fire). The ability to call other agencies for aid now happens seamlessly, which is important as it speeds up our access to resources."

The first Squamish 9-1-1 call received by E-Comm was a motor vehicle accident. The caller requested RCMP and an upon determining the incident involved injuries, E-Comm's call-taker created a combined event with the BC Ambulance Service and Fire-Rescue.

In total, 89 E-Comm staff participated in four trips to Squamish accompanied by E-Comm's trainers to ensure staff had complete and thorough training and knowledge of the geography.

E-Comm currently dispatches for 23 police and fire departments throughout Metro Vancouver, the Sunshine Coast, Whistler and now, Howe Sound.

OCTOBER 16 TRANSITION TIMELINE

- 1254 hrs; Transition authorized by Squamish RCMP
- 1255 hrs; Transition authorized by Squamish Fire-Rescue
- 1300 hrs; Transition confirmed to proceed by E-Comm
- 1304 hrs; TELUS confirmed the programming of the 9-1-1 lines was complete
- 1313 hrs; E-Comm RCMP Dispatch broadcast to all RCMP units on air to confirm the successful transition.
- 1315 hrs; E-Comm Fire Dispatch broadcast to all Fire-Rescue units on air to confirm the successful transition.
- 1510 hrs; First 9-1-1 call received for Squamish

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- BC Ambulance Service Temporarily Relocates
- 9-1-1 Campaign "Help us Help"
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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 dispatch.

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/Sasamat fire 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.

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BC Ambulance Temporarily Relocates

BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) call-takers and dispatchers also temporarily re-located 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. "E-Comm staff provided tremendous support for our move. The transfer of calls for ambulance took place transparently in both directions—to our staff at E-Comm and then back to the BCAS dispatch centre," says Maurice Girard, director of IT and telecommunications at BCAS.



BCAS staff at work in their designated back-up area at E-Comm.

The re-location was necessary to allow for maintenance on the BCAS power system and for TELUS to update the main telephone switch software. E-Comm radio technicians built new mobile dispatch stations and ensured that the radio system was prepared before BCAS arrived. The new mobile dispatch stations contain a Maestro console that enables the BCAS dispatchers to operate as usual while at E-Comm.

e-communicqué

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 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.

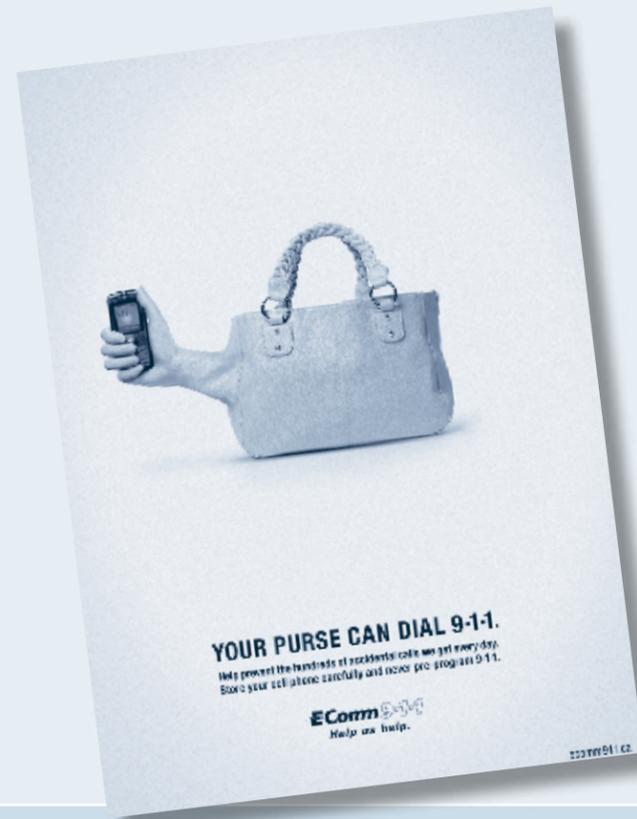
The campaign, comprised of both radio and print advertising, has received extensive media coverage, extending the message reach to more than 750,000 people. In addition, two collateral public education pieces have been created: a "9-1-1 tips" brochure and an information card that explains the difference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

"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. The response time can be even faster by knowing which language is needed.

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 (ecom911.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 5% 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, 374,848 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