



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee

Date: September 13, 2023

From: Jim Wishlove
Fire Chief

File: 09-5140-01/2023-Vol
01




Re: Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2023

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2023”, dated September 13, 2023, from the Fire Chief, be received for information.

Jim Wishlove
Fire Chief
(604-303-2715)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER (ACTING) 	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #3 A Safe and Prepared Community:

Community safety and preparedness through effective planning, strategic partnerships and proactive programs.

Analysis

Emergency Programs

During August, staff supported the safety and security of the annual Richmond Maritime Festival, held on Saturday, August 26 and Sunday, August 27, by: contributing to the development of the event safety plan; supplying communications platforms; and coordinating emergency service support to the public.

In August, 2023, there were persons displaced who were provided with Emergency Social Support as shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Emergency Social Support incidents					
Date	Address	Volunteers Deployed	ESS Deployed	# of Evacuees	Services Delivered
Aug 1	Cook Road	Y	Y	Three families	No additional services required.
Aug 6	Patterson Road	N	Y	Three persons	Accommodation & food provided.

Public Outreach & Education

In August 2023, staff facilitated outreach events to provide educational opportunities to the community, including fire hall and vehicle tours for six organizations. Staff also participated in large community events for the Maritime Festival, Steveston Block Party and a Cambie Community event.

Internal Staff Training

In August 2023, staff organized training schedules, logistics, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and gear in preparation for the arrival of the new thirteen firefighter recruits in early September.

Emergency Response

One of the City’s emergency response goals is to arrive on scene in time and with enough resources to contain a fire to the room of origin. The room of origin standard is especially important in terms of fire loss and damage, which can be reduced when a fire is contained to the room of origin. Meeting this standard also assists in mitigating loss of life, reduction of property damage and protection of the environment. In August 2023, there were 1,063 reported incidents of all types, representing an overall increase of 5 per cent in incidents from August 2022 to August 2023 (Table 2).

Table 2: Total Incidents - August 2023					
	Incident Totals August (2023)	Incident Totals August (2022)	Number Change from August 2022 to 2023	Percentage Change from August 2022 to 2023	5 Year Average for August
Alarm Active - No Fire	177	159	+18	+11	145
Explosion	1	2	-1	-50	1
Fire	68	60	+8	+13	54
Hazardous Materials	13	10	+3	+30	10
Medical	537	523	+14	+3	389
Motor Vehicle Incident	77	83	-6	-7	74
Public Hazard	7	9	-2	-22	9
Public Service	93	107	-14	-13	93
Response					
Cancelled/Unfounded	87	59	+28	+47	65
Specialized Transport	2	3	-1	-33	4
Technical Rescue	1	0	+1	+100	0
Total	1063	1015	+48	+5	844

The average time on scene in August 2023 for emergency response crews was 30 minutes, which is lower than the number recorded in 2022: 33 minutes. The time spent on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

In August 2023, there were 68 fire incidents reported to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 13 per cent increase from August 2022. The average number of fires reported each August over the last five years is 54.

Fire damage and property losses during August 2023 are estimated at \$1,535,500. This total includes \$1,138,450 for building/asset loss and \$397,050 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk is estimated to be \$15,192,550 and the total value preserved from damage was \$13,657,050. These numbers translate to 90 per cent of value protected (Table 3), which is lower than the value observed in 2022: 99 per cent.

Table 3: Fire Incidents By Type and Loss Estimates - August 2023						
Incident Type Breakdown	Incident Volume	Estimated Building/Asset Value (\$)	Estimated Building/Asset Loss (\$)	Estimated Content Value (\$)	Estimated Content Loss (\$)	Estimated Total Value Preserved (\$)
Residential: Single family	4	2,146,400	50,050	-	-	2,096,350
Residential: Multi family	4	3,690,500	849,600	352,050	352,050	2,840,900
Commercial/Industrial	5	4,656,100	65,000	20,000	20,000	4,591,100
Outdoor	49	3,228,500	99,800	3,000	3,000	3,128,700
Vehicle/Vessel	6	1,074,000	74,000	22,000	22,000	1,000,000
Totals*	68	14,795,500	1,138,450	397,050	397,050	13,657,050

* The dollar losses shown in this table are preliminary estimates. They are derived from RFR's record management system and are subject to change due to delays in reporting and confirmation of actual losses from private insurance agencies (as available).

Significant Events

Emergency response crews minimized harm, limited damage and stopped fire spread from the place of origin and performed life-saving interventions in these notable August 2023 incidents:

- **August 1, 2023 – Commercial Building Fire on Hammersmith Way.** Emergency crews responded to an industrial warehouse roof fire. On arrival, a working fire was declared and crews performed a quick attack to extinguish the fire. Once extinguished, crews checked that there was no extension to the fire. The fire appeared to have started in the motor of a roasting hopper, which had resulted in a high volume of white smoke coming from the roof of the building. There were no injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 1, 2023 – Structure Fire on Cook Road.** Crews responded to a report of a multi-townhouse complex fire on Cook Road. The first arriving officer reported the fire was through the roof in the common attic space and declared a working fire. Crews aggressively attacked the fire and managed to contain the fire to one unit with some extension to a second unit. The fire was extinguished and crews checked for hot spots and performed overhaul. There were no injuries to occupants or RFR personnel but, unfortunately, one family pet was declared deceased. An Emergency Programs Duty Officer was contacted to provide on-scene support for Emergency Support Services needs. At least two families were not able to re-enter the complex due to significant smoke and fire damage. A Fire Investigator attended.

- **August 6, 2023 – Residential Fire on Patterson Road.** Crews attended a kitchen fire which had been extinguished prior to their arrival. Unfortunately one of the occupants had suffered burns to their arm. The patient was attended to by BC Emergency Health Services crews and was transported to Richmond General Hospital. The home had multiple tenants who were displaced due to the fire. Emergency Social Services were requested to provide support to the displaced tenants. There were no other injuries to occupants or RFR personnel reported. Security was requested to attend to secure the building and Emergency crews remained at the scene until security arrived to ensure scene continuity. There were no injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 11, 2023 – Residential Property Fire on Smith Crescent.** Crews attended to the scene of a structure fire involving a single storey residential home. The fire was quickly extinguished. Two tenants, who had evacuated the home, were displaced and Emergency Social Services were activated to provide assistance. There were no injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended. BC Hydro and Fortis Gas attended to secure the scene.
- **August 13, 2023 – Water Rescue near Williams Road.** First on scene crews were met by RCMP, who informed crews that the patient was located in the river offshore. RFR personnel donned technical water rescue PPE and entered the river utilizing the RFR inflatable rescue boat. The technical rescue teams were successful in making contact with the patient and were able to bring them to shore. Onshore, the patient was assessed by BC Emergency Health Services staff and transported to the hospital for further assessment. No other injuries were reported to the public or RFR personnel. A private civilian boat and crew assisted in locating the patient for RFR crews and supporting the rescue. Contact information was provided to the Fire Chief who recognized the individual.
- **August 15, 2023 – Outdoor Fire on Beckwith Road.** Emergency crews responded to reports of a fire in the trees behind a nearby home. Once on scene crews reported heavy flames in the brush on fire on Beckwith Road. Due to the location and the difficulties faced in accessing the property, it was necessary to relocate two fire apparatus units to Bridgeport Road to access a water supply. This resulted in requiring RCMP to temporarily close Bridgeport Road underneath the Oak Street Bridge. Once access was made it was discovered that there were two outbuildings approximately 10ft by 10ft on the south side of the property. One building was fully involved with fire along with extension to the trees surrounding the property. The fires were extinguished and crews began breaking down equipment and demobilizing operations on Bridgeport Road so it could be reopened in time to support the morning commute. Crews performed overhaul. There were no injuries reported for the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 20, 2023 – Structure Fire on Douglas Street.** Emergency crews responded to a structure fire on Douglas Street. Upon arrival, crews discovered a detached garage at the back of the address on fire. Crews established command, declared a working fire, and initiated a defensive attack. There was some fire spread to an empty grass lot to the east of the property. All fires were extinguished along with any hot spots. Utilities were not required as the house was empty, boarded up and already disconnected. No occupants were in the building and there were no injuries to the public or RFR personnel. Overnight security was arranged for the site. A Fire Investigator attended.

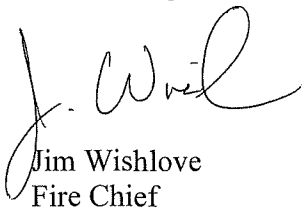
- **August 24, 2023 – Boat Fire near River Road.** Emergency crews responded to a reported boat explosion at the marina near River Road. On arrival, crews were met by an employee who indicated there was an explosion after fueling a boat. The boat was not on fire and had been secured away from the fuel source. There were two victims with injuries and two employees with no apparent injuries. Crews updated dispatch and had an ambulance stand-by. Crews carried out an investigation and confirmed no residual heat or flame and that there was no sign of fire or smoke. BC Emergency Health Services crews responded to the patients for assessment and transport to them to hospital. The boat involved began to drifting in the water and a passing boat pulled the damaged boat back to the dock. The vessel did not take on water but sustained serious damage. Minor damage to the dock and building was reported. There were no other injuries to the public or RFR personnel reported. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 26, 2023 – Hazardous Materials on Alexandra Road.** Emergency crews responded to a Hazardous materials call. On arrival crews were met by employees of a hotel who stated they were feeling the effects of a strange odor on the 4th floor. Crews established command and investigated the odour in full PPE gear. Crews confirmed that bear spray had been released in a suite and was the cause of the odour. The bear spray was contained and bagged. All employees affected were assessed and indicated no adverse affects from the spray. No other injuries to the public or RFR staff on scene, and RCMP attended.
- **August 28, 2023 – Fire on No. 1 Road.** Emergency crews responded to a report of fire and smoke coming from a service access hole on No. 1 Road. The fire had involved a portion of a nearby property. First on scene crews established command and investigated. Crews notified BC Hydro who stated there were no electrical vaults in the immediate area. The fire was located in a storm drain and was extinguished. The accelerant had been consumed by the fire, which negated any environmental concerns. Witnesses noticed a youth leaving the scene carrying a jerry can and the RCMP were notified. There were no injuries to the public or RFR personnel reported.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Richmond Fire-Rescue continues to monitor activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.



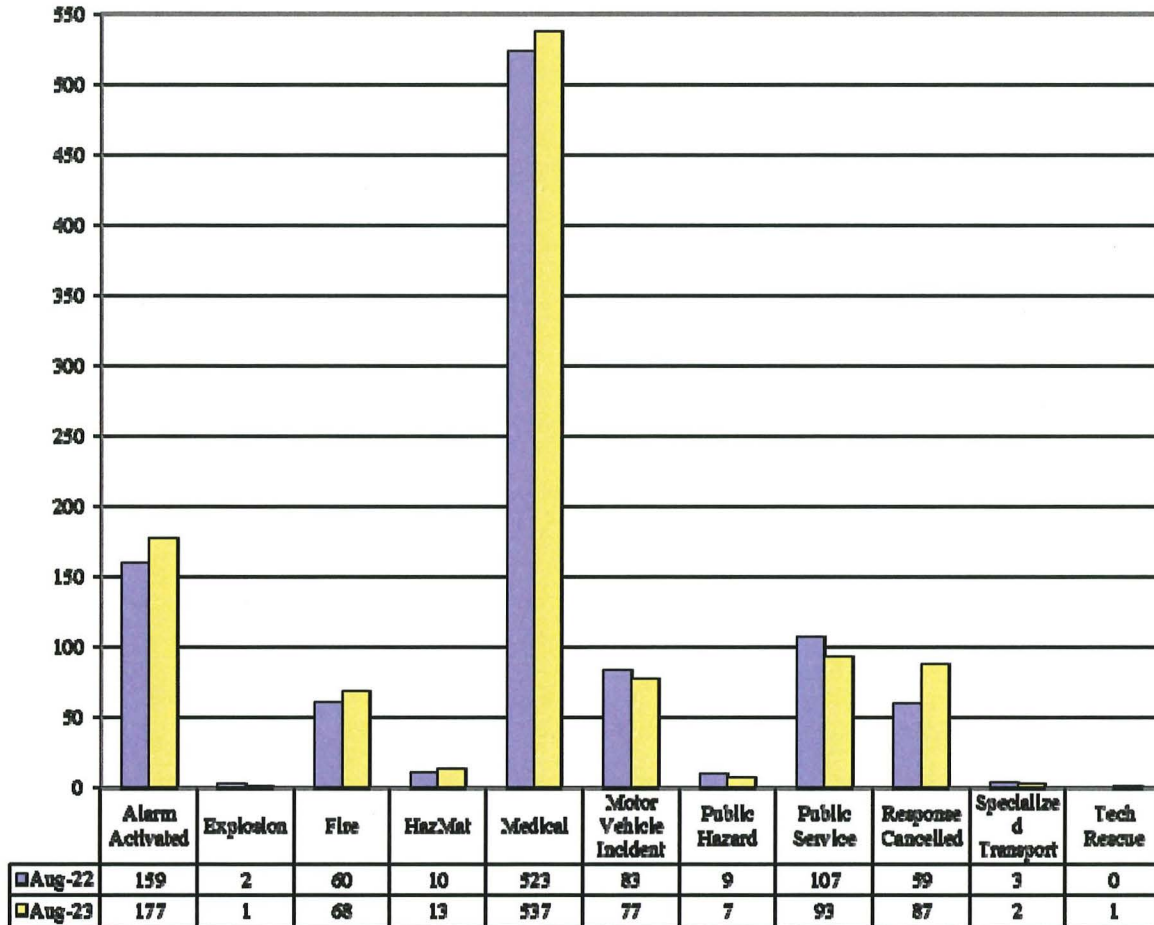
Jim Wishlove
Fire Chief
(604-303-2715)

Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of August's Fire, Medical and MVIs

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month-to-month comparison regarding incidents occurring in August 2022 and 2023. In August 2023, there were 1,063 incidents, compared to 1,015 in August 2022. This represents an overall increase of 5 per cent.

Table 4: August 2022 & August 2023 Incident Volumes



Incident Type Legend:

HazMat: includes fuel or vapour; spills, leaks, or containment

Medical: includes: cardiac arrest, emergency response, home or industrial accidents

Public Hazard: includes: aircraft emergency, bomb removal standby, object removal, or power lines down

Public Service: includes: assisting public, ambulance or police, locked in/out, special events, trapped in elevator, water removal

First Responder Totals

Medical first responder incidents comprised 51 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of August 2023. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for August 2022 and 2023 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were 537 medical incidents in August 2023 compared to 523 in August 2022, an increase of 3 per cent.

Table 5a: August 2022 & August 2023 Medical Calls by Type

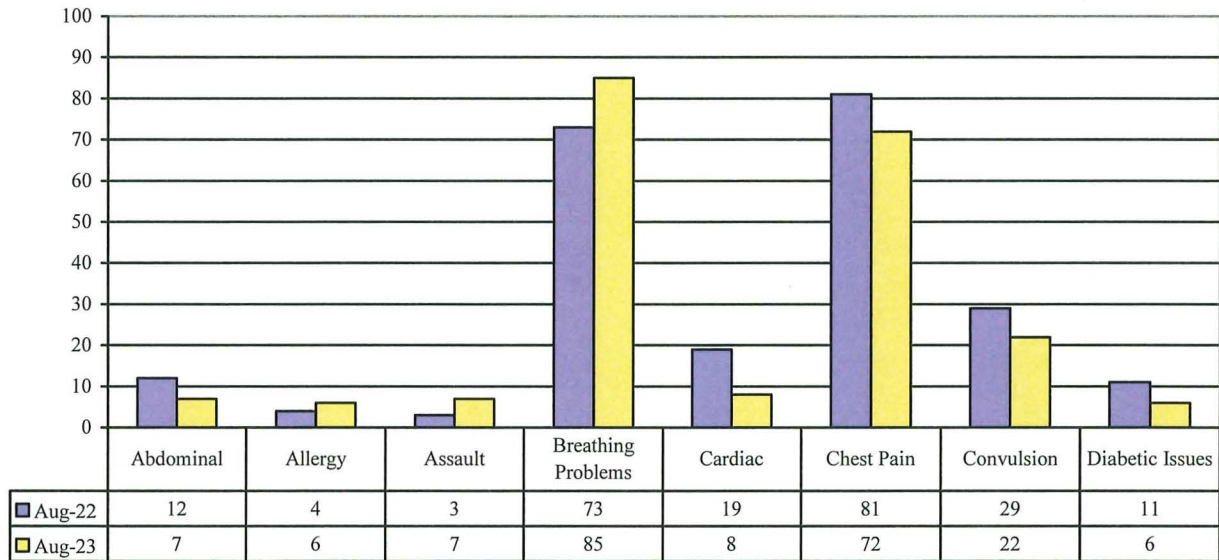
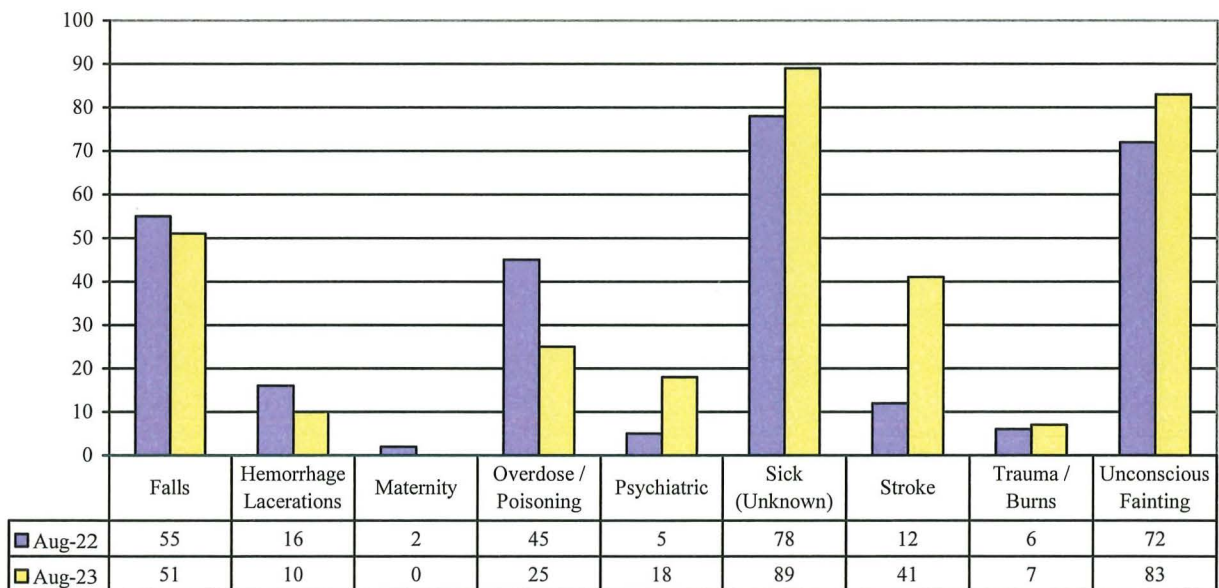


Table 5b: August 2022 & August 2023 Medical Calls by Type



The following chart provides the overdose / poisoning incident volume breakdown for August 2023.

Table 5c: Overdose / Poisoning Incidents By Type – August 2023	
	Details
Opioids	8
Other Miscellaneous Drugs	3
Alcohol	2
Unknown (No patient contact / BC Emergency Health Services staff on scene)	11
Totals	25

In August, out of 25 total overdose / poisoning calls, 19 were located outdoors and 6 were located in a commercial property or residence.

The following charts provide total incident volumes on a year-to-year comparison in August from 2014 to 2023.

Table 5d: Total Fire Calls for Service in August from 2014 to 2023

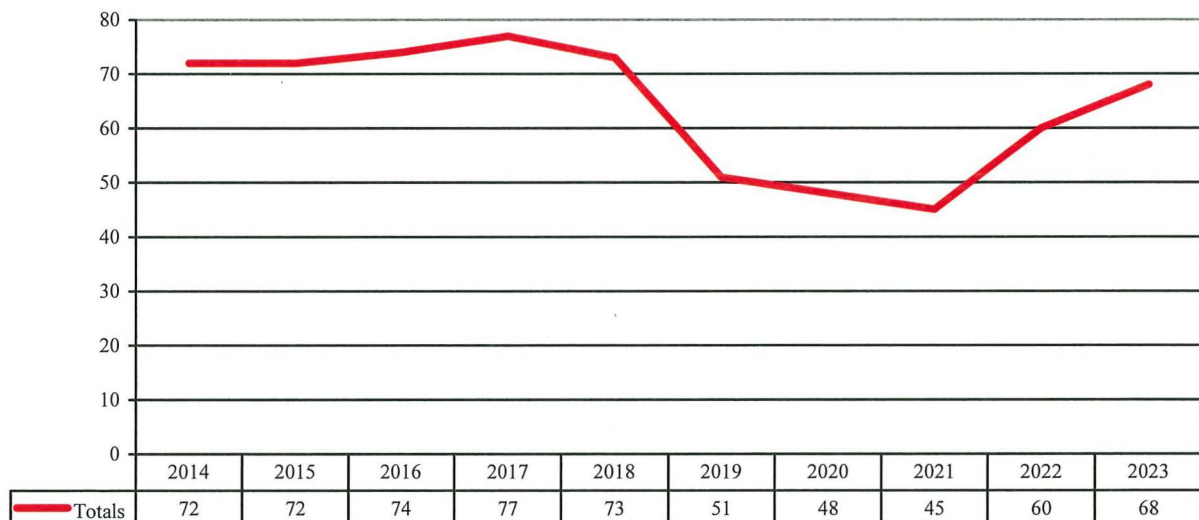


Table 5e: Total Medical Calls for Service in August from 2014 to 2023



Changes to BC Emergency Health Services Clinical Response Model dispatch system (2017-2018)

Start of pandemic

Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for August 2023 are listed below:

Table 6: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – August 2023			
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential - Single-family	-	3	1
Residential - Multi-family	-	3	1
Commercial/Industrial	1	3	1
Outdoor	11	29	9
Vehicle	-	3	3
Totals	12	41	15

Richmond Fire-Rescue investigators report all suspicious fires to the RCMP, while working alongside RCMP staff to address potential risks to the community.

Hazardous Materials

Table 7: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – August 2023	
	Details
Corrosive	1
Flammable/Combustible Liquids	2
Gasses (Natural / Propane)	9
Miscellaneous	1
Totals	13

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in August 2023 (total 68)

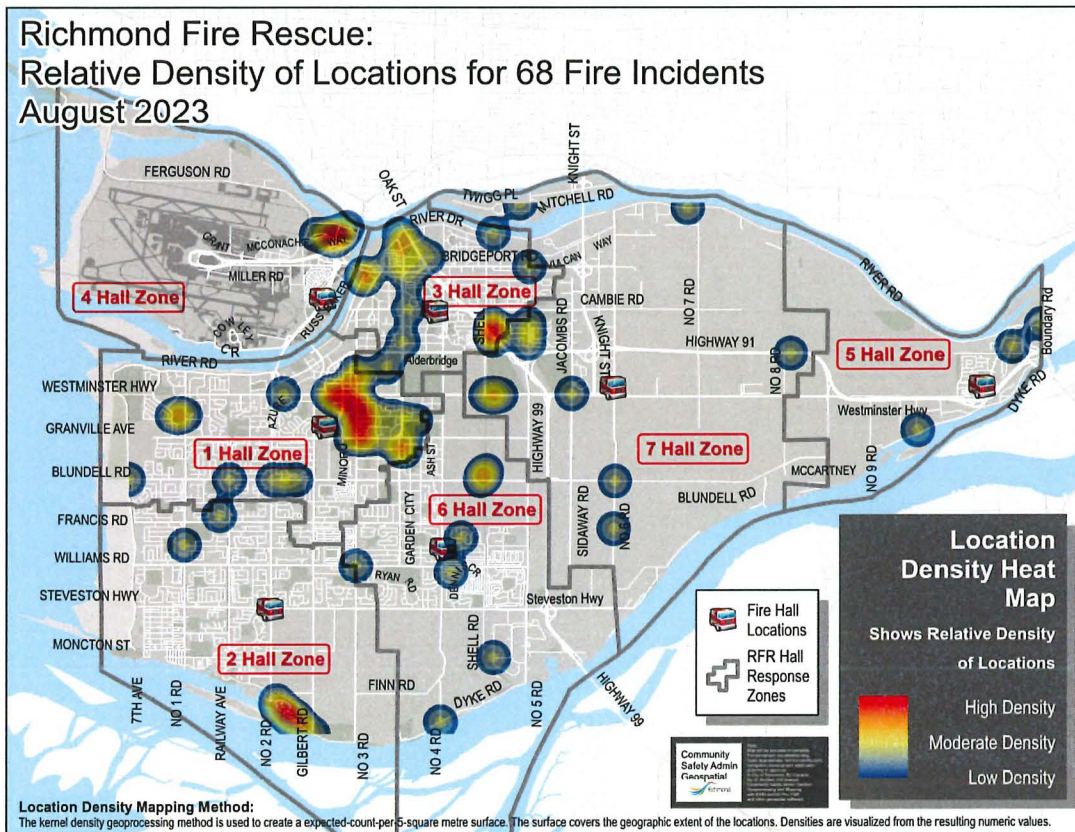
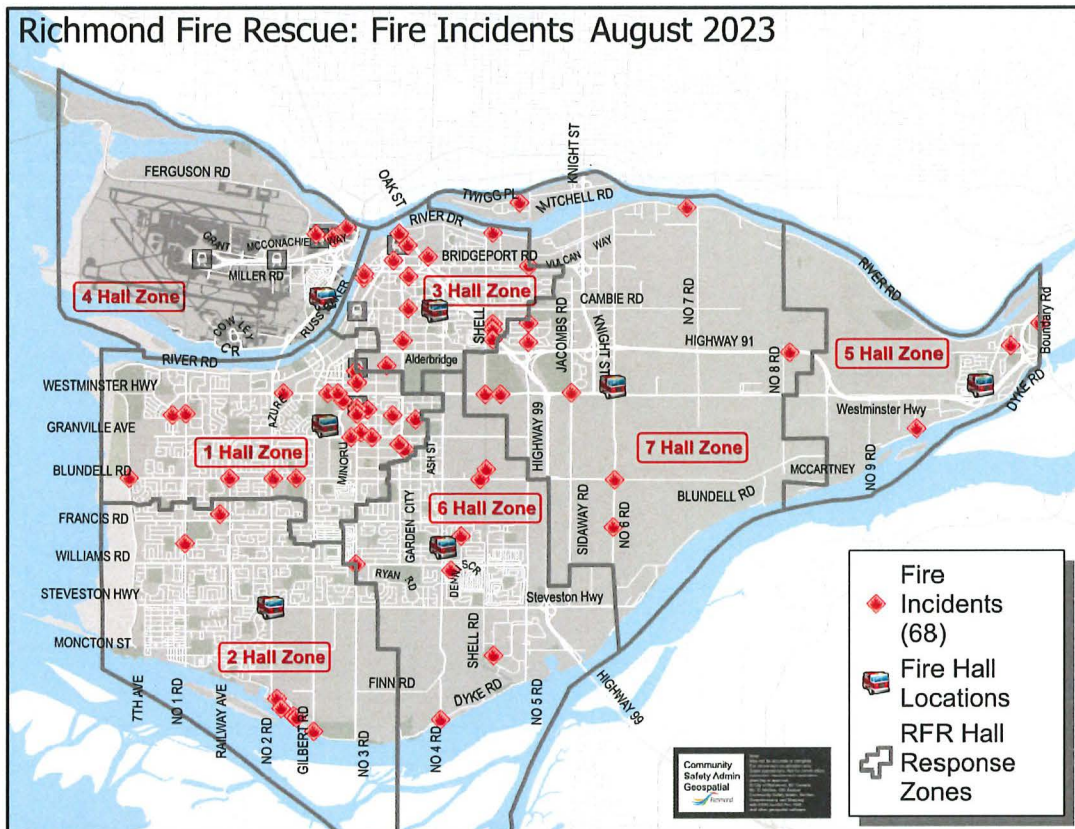


Figure 2: Location of Medical Incidents in August 2023 (total 537)

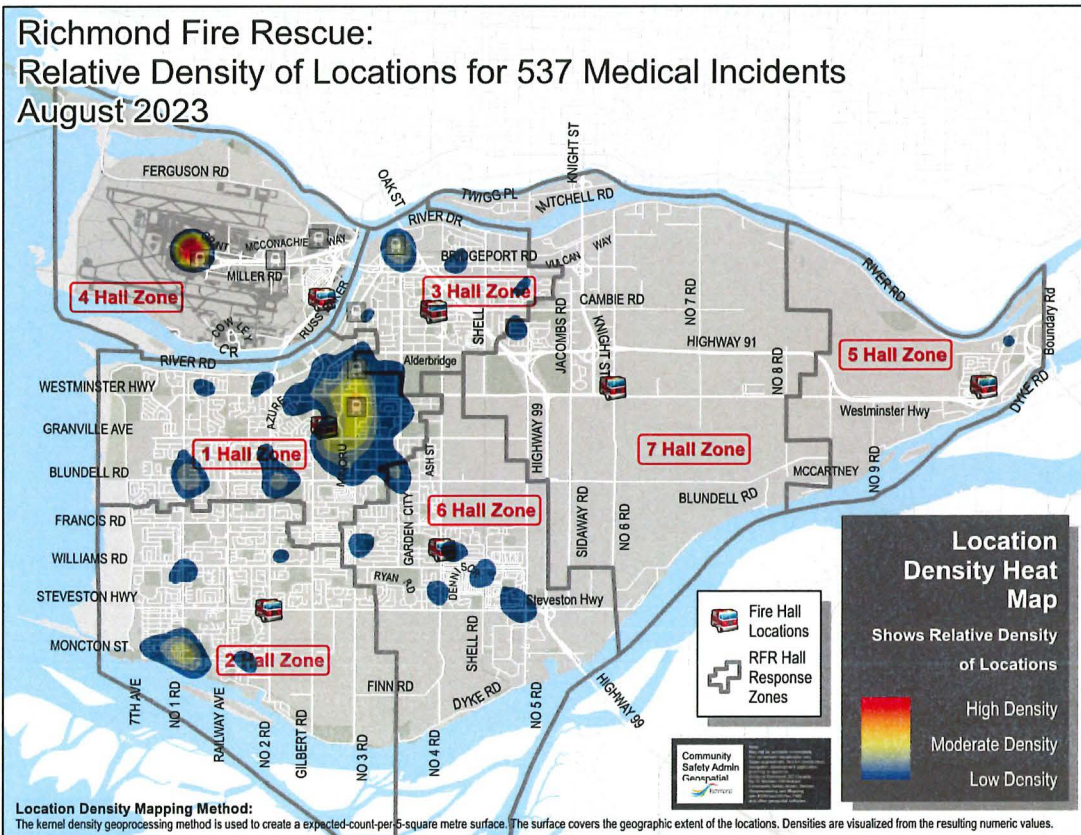
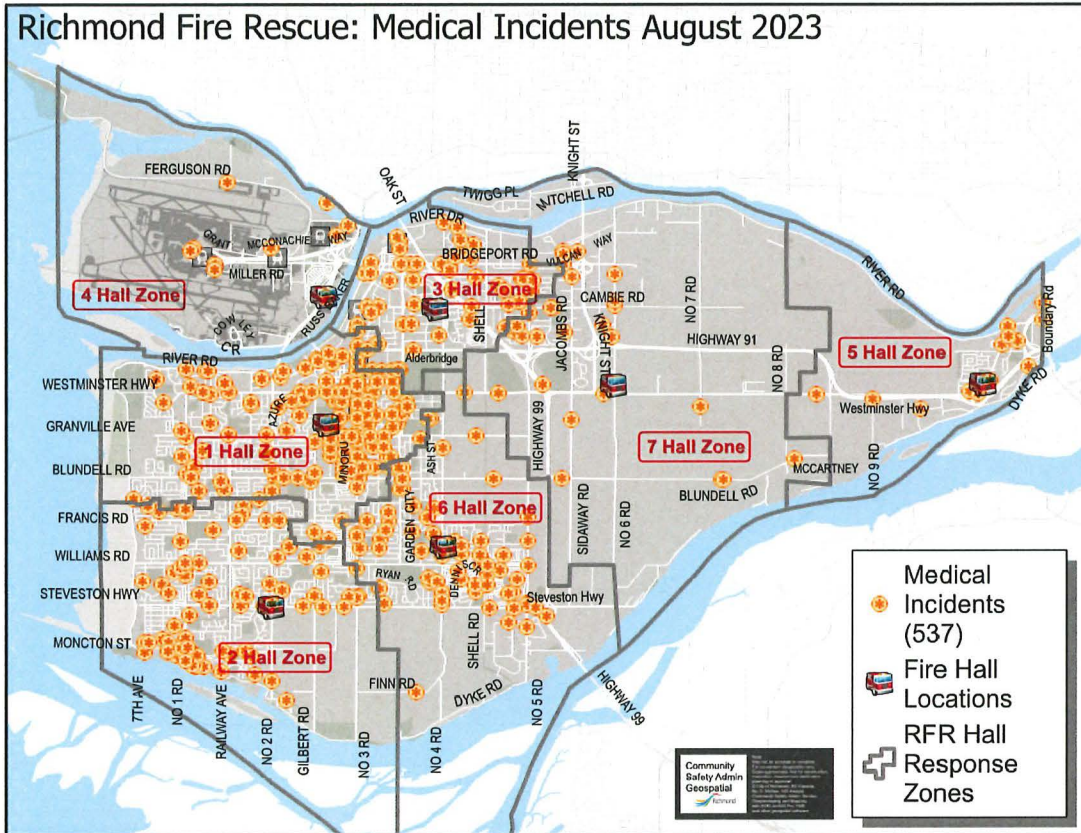


Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in August 2023 (total 77)

