



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee

Date: January 12, 2021

From: Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief

File: 99-Fire Rescue/2021-
Vol 01

Re: Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – December 2020

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – December 2020”, dated January 12, 2021, from the Fire Chief, be received for information.

Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

Att. 1

| REPORT CONCURRENCE | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER | |
| | |
| SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW | INITIALS: |
| | MO |
| APPROVED BY CAO | |
| | |

Staff Report

Origin

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #1 A Safe and Resilient City:

Enhance and protect the safety and well-being of Richmond.

Analysis

Emergency Response

Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) staff continue to support calls emanating from Health Orders issued by the Province to combat the COVID-19 pandemic as well as provide regular services to the community.

RFR's goal is to respond to events in a manner where loss of life, reduction of property damage and protection of the environment is mitigated. In December 2020 there were a total of 663 incidents, representing a 16 per cent decrease in calls from December 2019 (Attachment 1).

The average time on scene for RFR crews was 29 minutes, which was the same in 2019. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each call.

| Table 1a: Total Incidents - December 2020 | | | |
|--|---------------|--|--|
| | Totals | Percentage Change (December 2019) | Number Change (December 2019) |
| Alarm Active No Fire | 132 | -7% | -10 |
| Explosion | 0 | - | 0 |
| Fire | 31 | 72% | 13 |
| Haz-Mat | 11 | 38% | 3 |
| Medical | 311 | -22% | -86 |
| MVI | 72 | -21% | -19 |
| Public Hazard | 8 | -38% | -5 |
| Public Service | 64 | 3% | 2 |
| Response Cancelled/Unfounded | 32 | -41% | -22 |
| Specialized Transport | 2 | - | 0 |
| Tech Rescue | 0 | - | 0 |
| Totals | 663 | -16% | -124 |

In December 2020 there were 31 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 72 per cent increase from December 2019. The average figure for fires reported in December over the last five years is 29.

| Table 1b: Total Incidents - January to December 2020 | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| | Year to Date Totals | Percentage Change (2019 / 2020) | Number Change (2019 / 2020) |
| Alarm Active No Fire | 1,501 | -7% | -113 |
| Explosion | 2 | 100% | 1 |
| Fire | 433 | -2% | -7 |
| Haz-Mat | 105 | -9% | -11 |
| Medical | 2,360 | -45% | -1,952 |
| MVI | 709 | -36% | -403 |
| Public Hazard | 87 | -48% | -80 |
| Public Service | 766 | 1% | 8 |
| Response Cancelled/Unfounded | 426 | -54% | -502 |
| Specialized Transport | 21 | -49% | -20 |
| Tech Rescue | 2 | -60% | -3 |
| Totals | 6,412 | -32% | -3,082 |

RFR continues to experience decreases in medical responses due to the changes of the Provincial Health Orders and Medical Health Officer's direction. RFR continues to monitor all activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

RFR's emergency fire response goal is to contain the fire to the room of origin. The room of origin standard is especially important in terms of fire loss, which increases significantly once the fire leaves the room of origin.

Fire damage and property losses during December 2020 are estimated at \$1,016,120. This total includes \$774,500 for building/asset loss and \$241,620 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$219,732,920 and the total value preserved from damage was \$218,716,800. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 1); this is the same per cent protected value observed in 2019.

| Table 2: Fire Calls By Type and Loss Estimates - December 2020 | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Incident Type Breakdown | Call Volume | Estimated Building/Asset Value (\$) | Estimated Building/Asset Loss (\$) | Estimated Content Value (\$) | Estimated Content Loss (\$) | Estimated Total Value Preserved (\$) |
| Residential: Single family | 5 | 1,148,100 | 742,000 | 647,820 | 20 | 1,053,900 |
| Multi family | 7 | 48,110,000 | 1,500 | 188,900 | 2,000 | 48,295,400 |
| Commercial/Industrial | 5 | 78,378,000 | 10,000 | 91,000,000 | 500 | 169,367,500 |
| Outdoor | 8 | - | - | 235,100 | 235,100 | - |
| Vehicle/Vessel | 6 | 21,000 | 21,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | - |
| Totals* | 31 | 127,657,100 | 774,500 | 92,075,820 | 241,620 | 218,716,800 |

* 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).

Training and Public Education

Fire Training staff facilitated multiple training activities during December including; Fire Ground Survival, Recruit Fire Prevention Office Orientation, First Responder Courses, Pool Officer Exams, Gas and Electrical Safety, Playbook drills and driver training.

During December, public education events remained on hold. Fire staff continued to create and post educational videos on the RFR Facebook and website pages for events including the lighting of the Hamilton Fire Hall and the annual charity tree chipping event.

Significant Events

Fire crews minimized harm and limited fires to the place of origin in these notable December 2020 incidents:

- **December 2 - Structure Fire on Petts Road.** RFR crews responded to a large house fire on Petts Road. First arriving crews reported the house was 75 per cent involved with fire. Crews worked to quickly manage the fire by deploying ladder trucks and using large volume water lines to assist with the extinguishment and protection of adjacent properties. RFR crews extinguished the fire and a Fire Investigator attended the scene and worked closely with RCMP as this fire appeared to be suspicious in nature. Due to the structure damage the building was unsafe to enter. RCMP attended the scene and secured the site. RFR Fire Prevention coordinated with the owner, the owner's insurer, a structural engineer and the RCMP investigators to establish a safety and investigation plan prior to any other work beginning. There were no reports of injury.
- **December 26 – Pedestrian struck on No 2 Road.** Upon arrival RFR crews blocked south bound traffic and assessed and initiated treatment on a female patient with serious injuries. BC Ambulance Services arrived on scene and RFR crews assisted BC Emergency Health Service (BCEHS) personnel with further patient care. RCMP attended the scene to investigate and RFR crews provided assistance to decontaminate the scene after the event, including PPE. Due to the nature of the incident RFR crews were provided with a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing session.
- **December 28 – Commercial fire on Leslie Road.** RFR crews responded to a building on fire. Damage was localized to the exterior of the building, including a door and a window. The fire was contained to the exterior of the building and no injuries were reported. The RCMP and a Fire Investigator attended to investigate the suspicious nature of the fire.
- **December 30 – Structure fire on Arcadia Road.** First arriving crews found a fire had occurred in one of the stairwells but was essentially out on arrival. There was significant smoke within the three floors of the building; and all residents were evacuated. RFR crews searched for other hot spots and began to ventilate the building. Residents reported suspicious activity prior to the fire event. RCMP and RFR investigators collaborated on scene to investigate the cause of the fire and its origin as the fire origin appeared suspicious.

There was only one minor injury reported; an occupant treated on scene for smoke inhalation by BCEHS personnel. Most residents returned to their units later that night.

Freedom of Information Requests

Over the last five years Freedom of Information requests received by RFR have continued to increase. However, in 2020 RFR saw a reduction. In 2020 there were 94 requests received, compared to 173 in 2019. In 2020, Freedom of Information requests, received by RFR accounted for over half of the overall City's requests.

Financial Impact

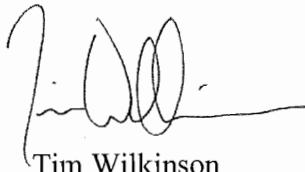
None.

Conclusion

During December 2020 and, since the start of the pandemic, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews have continued to experience impacts on all call volumes. For medical incidents, this is due to the decreases in medical responses emanating from the temporary changes by order of the Provincial Medical Health Officer in response to the pandemic.

The impacts of the pandemic, on call volumes, has resulted in RFR Management pivoting staff to learning, development and preparedness activities. Richmond Fire-Rescue staff remain ready to react and adapt to the ever changing pandemic situation.

Richmond Fire-Rescue has not experienced any negative impacts to emergency response and continues to monitor activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.



Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

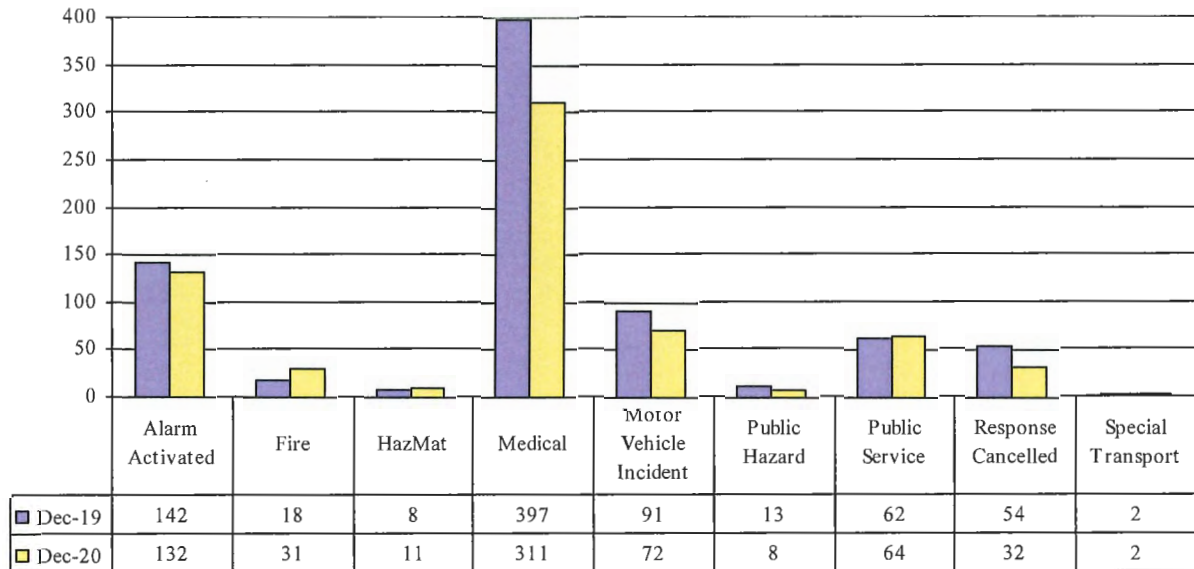
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of December's Fire, Medical and MVIs

Calls for Service Volumes

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in December 2020 and 2019. In December 2020, there were a total of 663 incidents, compared to 787 in December 2019. This represents a decrease of 16 per cent.

Table 3: December 2019 & 2020 Calls for Service Volumes



Call 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 45 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of December 2020. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for December 2019 and 2020 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 311 medical incidents in December 2020 compared to 397 in December 2019, a decrease of 22 per cent.

Table 4a: December 2019 & 2020 Medical Calls by Type

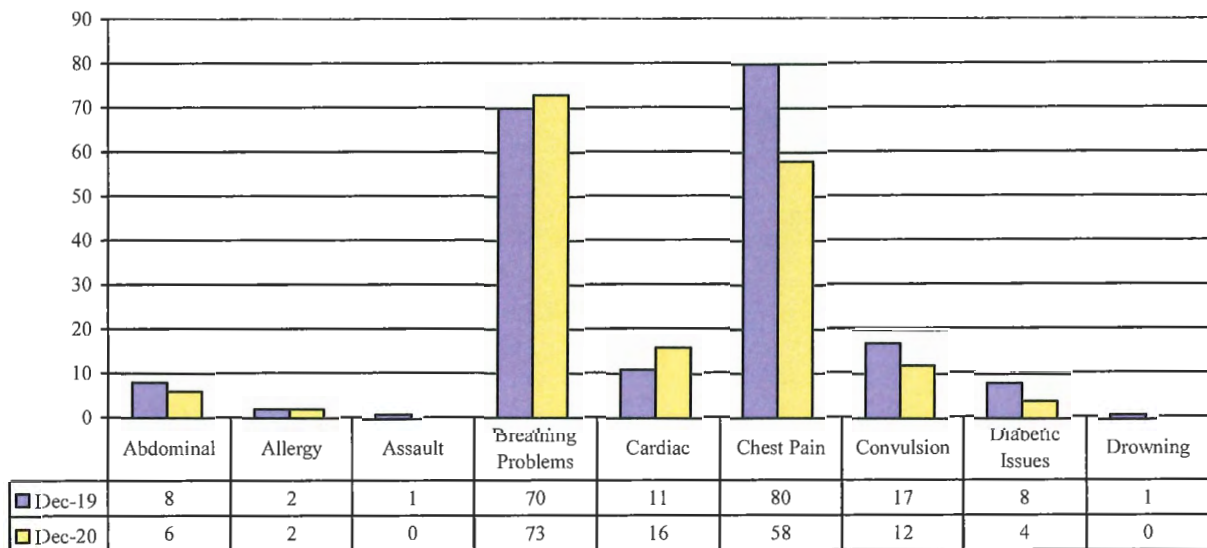
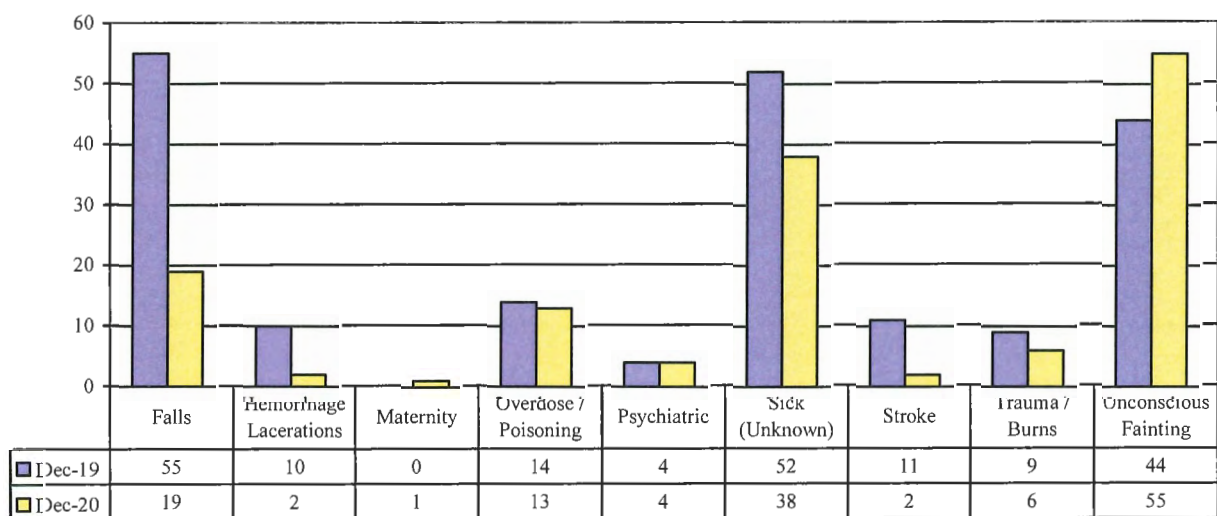


Table 4b: December 2019 & 2020 Medical Calls by Type



Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for December 2020 are listed below:

| Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – December 2020 | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | Suspicious | Accidental | Undetermined |
| Residential - Single-family | 1 | 4 | - |
| Residential - Multi-family | 1 | 6 | - |
| Commercial/Industrial | - | 4 | 1 |
| Outdoor | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Vehicle | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Totals | 6 | 21 | 4 |

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 6: HazMat Calls By Type – December 2020 | |
|--|----------------|
| | Details |
| Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small) | 9 |
| Unclassified | 1 |
| Flammable / Combustible Liquids | 1 |
| Totals | 11 |

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in December 2020 (total 31)

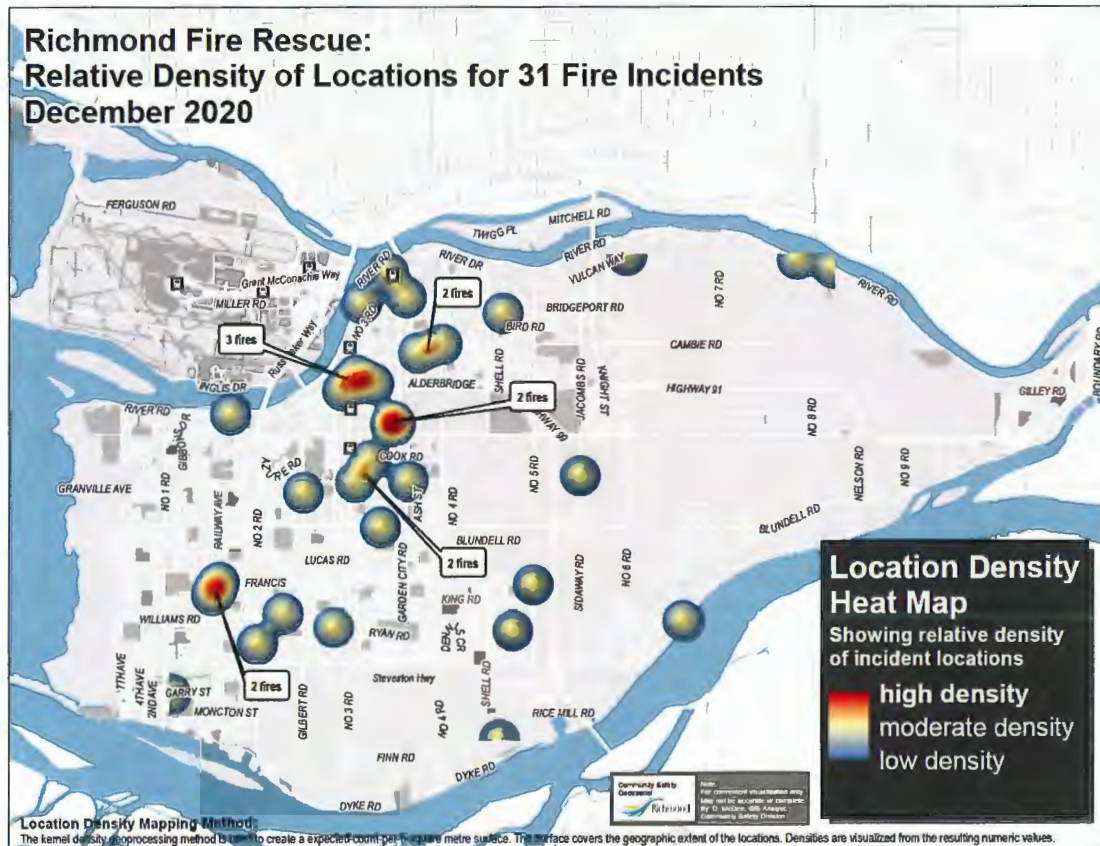
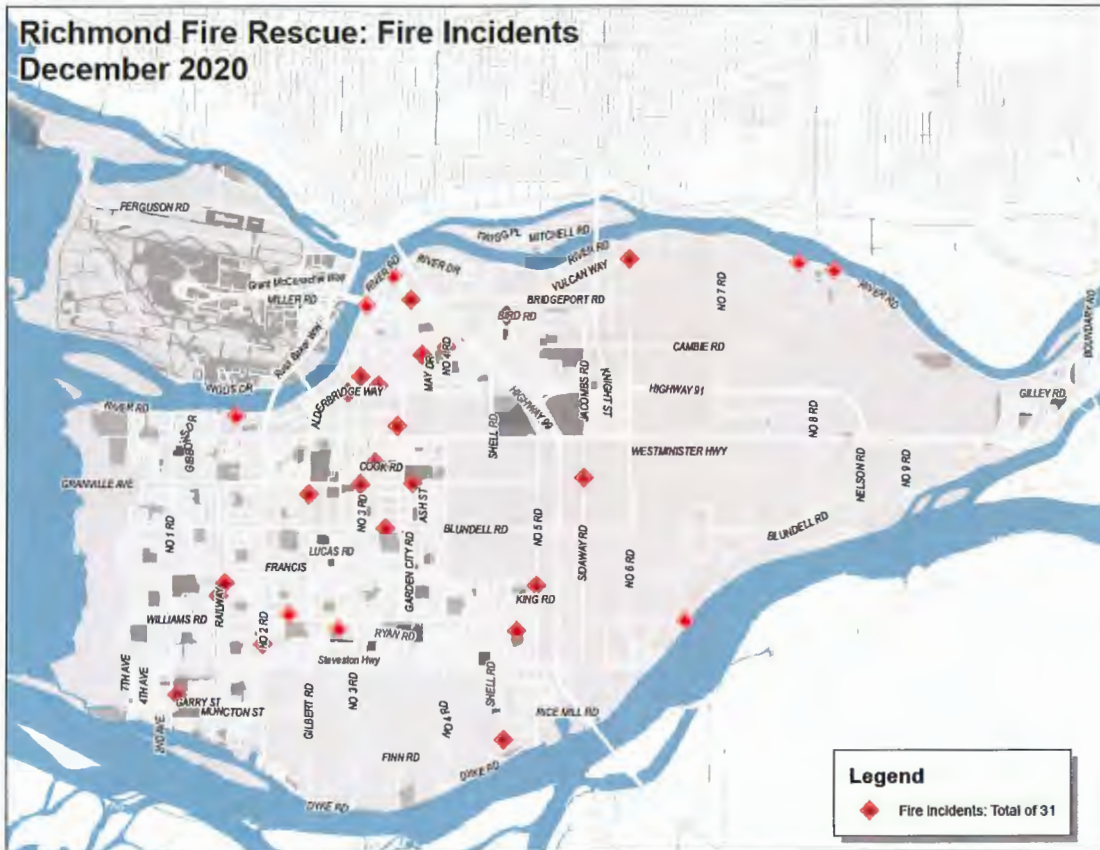


Figure 2: Location of medical calls in December 2020 (total 311)

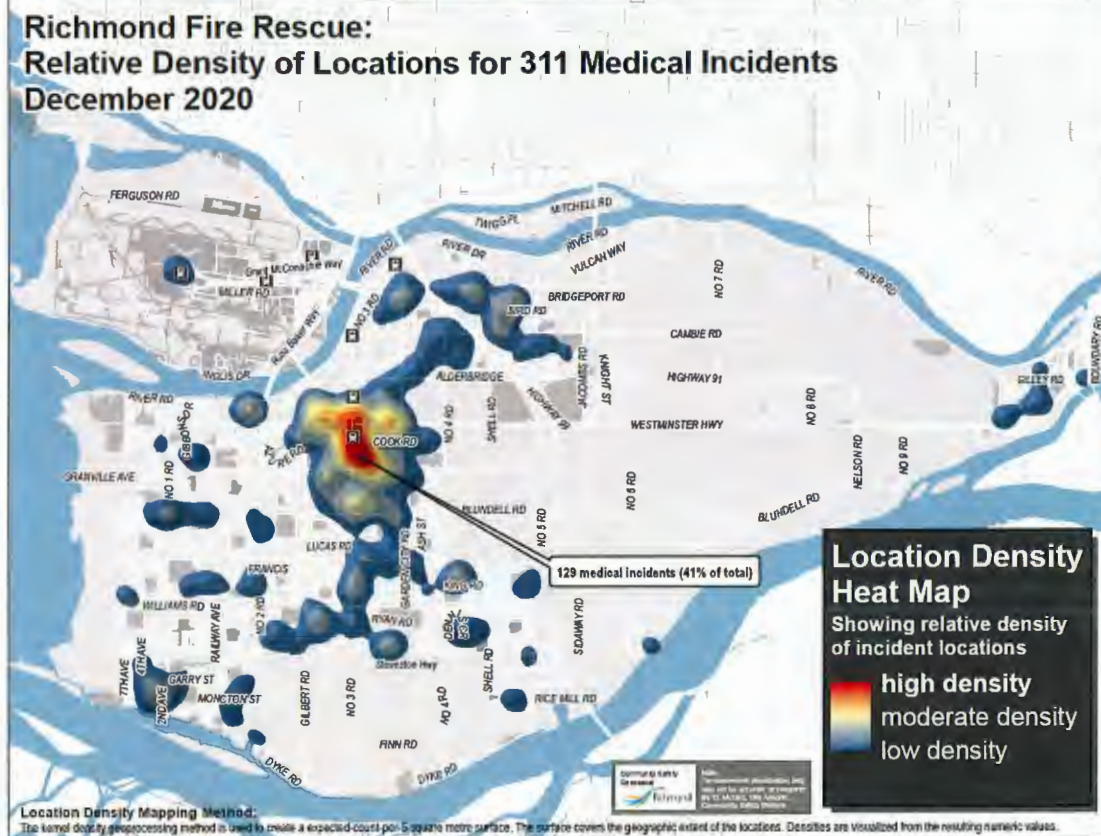
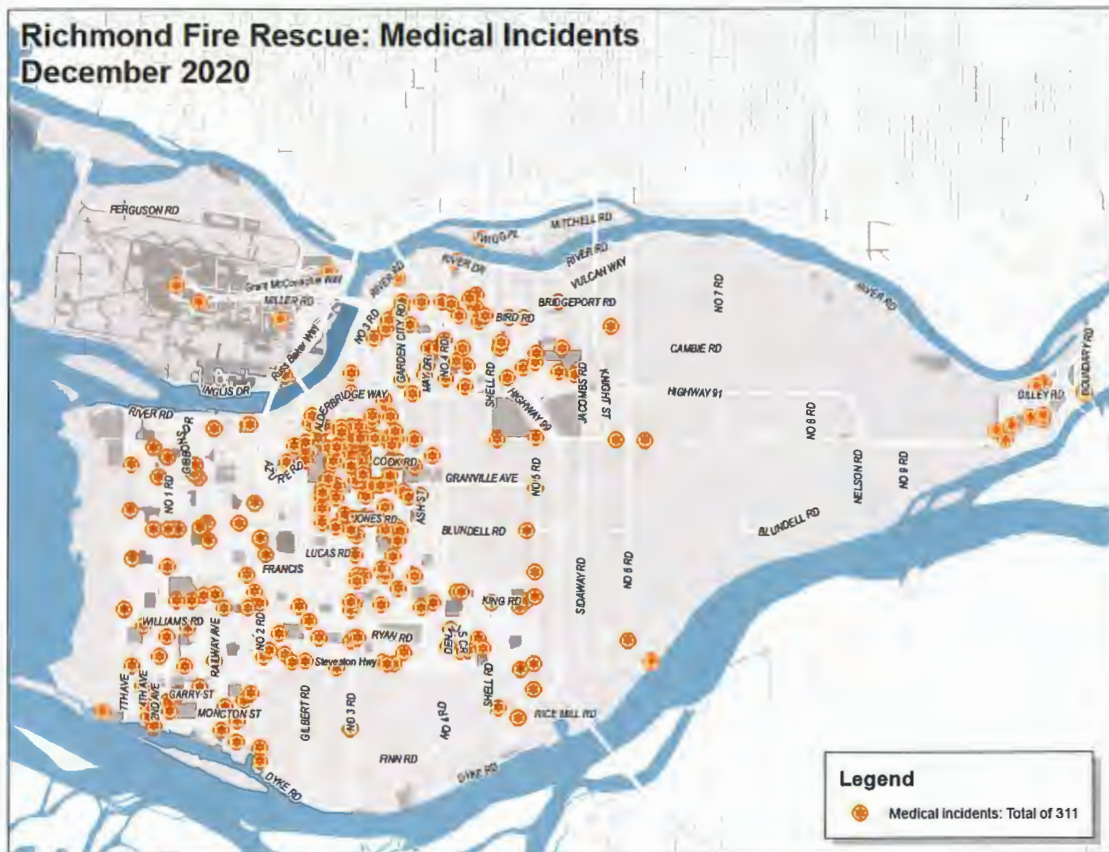


Figure 3: Location of MVI calls in December 2020 (total 72)

