



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee **Date:** March 13, 2023
From: Jim Wishlove **File:** 09-5140-01/2023-Vol
Fire Chief 01
Re: **Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – February 2023**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – February 2023”, dated March 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 	
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

On February 8, 2023, staff facilitated a local, Richmond-specific practice during the B.C. Provincial Exercise, "Coastal Response – 2023". Representatives from the RCMP, Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR), Corporate Communications and Engineering and Public Works participated in the joint table-top practice and ran through the primary, alternate, contingency and emergency communication plans, and provided an overview of the current emergency response planning process. The end state was a consensus on establishing lines of communication as a priority, immediately following a disaster, to enable a coordinated response facilitated by an established emergency operation centre.

Staff completed an exercise with the City of Vancouver emergency management department to practice using the web-based Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) application and software. This exercise focussed on supporting the Emergency Support Services (ESS) program. A high value outcome in using a Web EOC for ESS activations allows the City to track and document reporting metrics with greater accuracy and provides increased coordination with the Canadian Red Cross, as well as a more efficient and improved service delivery.

In February 2023, staff coordinated the following community engagement events:

- Staff created a "Home Hazard Hunt" handout guide, which will assist Richmond residents to mitigate risks within their home, particularly in regards to earthquakes. This home guide will be released to the public this month.
- Staff supported the kick-off for the "Engaging Artists in the Community" project with the City public art team, Ferris Elementary School, and a local artist. This project provides context for local and resident artists to use emergency preparedness as a theme in designing art programs for school age children.
- Staff conducted four public engagement sessions covering emergency management topics for youth groups, parents and school classes.

Internal Staff Training and Public Outreach & Education

In February 2023, staff delivered in-house fire-training, educational activities and programs including: Cancer Prevention & Awareness Education, Fire Service Leadership, Incident Command and Violence Prevention & Awareness and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Training.

Staff facilitated outreach events to provide educational opportunities to the community, including a career presentation and hall tour to students at Richmond Christian School. Hall tours were also given for students from the Az-Zahra Islamic School, the Island Discovery Homeschool, the local Air Cadets and Special Olympic athletes.

The online Kindergarten fire and life-safety education program continued with four classes from General Currie Elementary completing the program in February. Staff attended the school to present certificates of completion, take group photos, provide a turnout gear demonstration and give a fire truck tour.

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 significantly managed 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 February 2023, there were 904 reported incidents of all types, representing an overall increase of 32 per cent in incidents from February 2022 to February 2023 (Table 1).

Table 1: Total Incidents - February 2023

	Incident Totals February (2023)	Incident Totals February (2022)	Percentage Change from February 2022 to 2023	Number Change from February 2022 to 2023	5 Year Average for February
Alarm Active - No Fire	159	109	+46	+50	134
Explosion	0	1	-100	-1	0
Fire	37	27	+37	+10	26
Hazardous Materials	9	6	+50	+3	10
Medical	490	353	+39	+137	345
Motor Vehicle Incident	57	57	0	0	64
Public Hazard	15	6	+150	+9	9
Public Service	86	81	+6	+5	75
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	48	40	+20	+8	49
Specialized Transport	3	3	0	0	2
Technical Rescue	0	2	-100	-2	1
Total	904	685	+32	+219	715

The average time on scene in February 2023 for emergency response crews was 31 minutes, which is the same number recorded in 2022. The time spent on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

In February 2023, there were 37 fire incidents reported to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 32 per cent increase from February 2022. The average number of fires reported each February over the last five years is 26.

Fire damage and property losses during February 2023 are estimated at \$368,265. This total includes \$293,105 for building/asset loss and \$75,160 for content loss. The total building/asset

and content value at risk is estimated to be \$298,773,260 and the total value preserved from damage was \$298,404,995. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 2), which is higher than the value observed in 2022; 97 per cent.

Table 2: Fire Incidents By Type and Loss Estimates - February 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	2,279,000	60,000	471,280	74,280	2,616,000
Multi family	4	115,791,000	-	800	800	115,791,000
Commercial/Industrial	11	178,288,600	35,100	30	30	178,253,500
Outdoor	14	1,740,000	5,000	50	50	1,735,000
Vehicle/Vessel	4	202,500	193,005	-	-	9,495
Totals*	37	298,301,100	293,105	472,160	75,160	298,404,995

* 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 medical interventions in these notable February 2023 incidents:

- **February 3, 2023 – Vehicle Fire on River Road.** Emergency crews responded to a tractor trailer unit that was on fire at the rear of a large vehicle storage lot. The fire involved only the tractor, which was fully involved when the first crews arrived. Due to the distance of the fire from the nearest water source, crews used relay pumping methods to get enough water flow onto the fire. Once they were able to secure enough water onto the fire, the fire was extinguished quickly. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.
- **February 6, 2023 – Residential Fire on 4th Avenue.** Emergency crews responded to a fire in a first floor suite of a house. Crews performed a quick attack and extinguished the fire, limiting the damage to the suite. A fan was used to expel smoke from the structure. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.
- **February 8, 2023 – Commercial Property Fire on No. 3 Road.** Emergency crews responded to smoke in a building on No. 3 Road. Upon arrival, the response was upgraded to a first alarm response and declared a fire. First in crews conducted an attack of the fire and were able to extinguish the fire quickly. Searches of the building were all clear. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. The RCMP initiated an investigation and Public Works personnel assisted in securing the building.

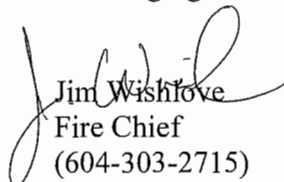
- **February 10, 2023 – Commercial Vehicle incident on Knight Street.** Emergency crews responded to an incident involving a commercial vehicle going southbound on Knight Street that failed to clear the overpass. Crews secured the vehicle that was in the middle lane, protected the scene from further issue and ensured there was no risk of fire or explosion. RFR crews also assisted with traffic control. The RCMP attended the scene, took over scene control and blocked all south-bound traffic. There were no reported injuries to the driver, the public or RFR personnel.
- **February 12, 2023 – Gas leak on Smith Road.** Emergency crews responded to a vehicle incident, which had ran into a building and struck a gas meter. Crews arrived and secured the scene and evacuated the building involved. The RCMP arrived and blocked any traffic from entering the area. Crews remained on scene until Fortis gas arrived and shut down the gas line. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.
- **February 17, 2023 – Residential Fire on Ash Street.** Emergency crews responded to a report of heavy smoke from a townhouse. The fire had done significant damage to the kitchen and was progressing upstairs to the third floor area. Crews extinguished the fire quickly and ensured no further spread to the remainder of the townhouse. Crews searched all of the floors and found no one in the residence. A Fire investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. The Fire Investigator coordinated with Public Works to secure the residence until the resident had returned home.
- **February 21, 2023 - Motor Vehicle Incident on Highway 99.** Emergency crews responded to a motor vehicle incident on Highway 99, involving a tractor trailer and a small one-ton truck. The one-ton truck was lodged into the back of the semi trailer, causing the cab to be crushed between both vehicles. The driver of the one-ton truck was pronounced deceased on scene by BC Emergency Health Services staff. The coroner and the RCMP's traffic scene reconstruction unit attended the scene. Once the RCMP and Coroner had completed their initial work, RFR crews were re-dispatched to the scene for the extrication of body. Staff who were involved in the scene were provided with a Critical Incident Stress management debriefing. The body was left in the custody of the RCMP and the Coroner. All RFR units were cleared and conducted decontamination processes.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

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

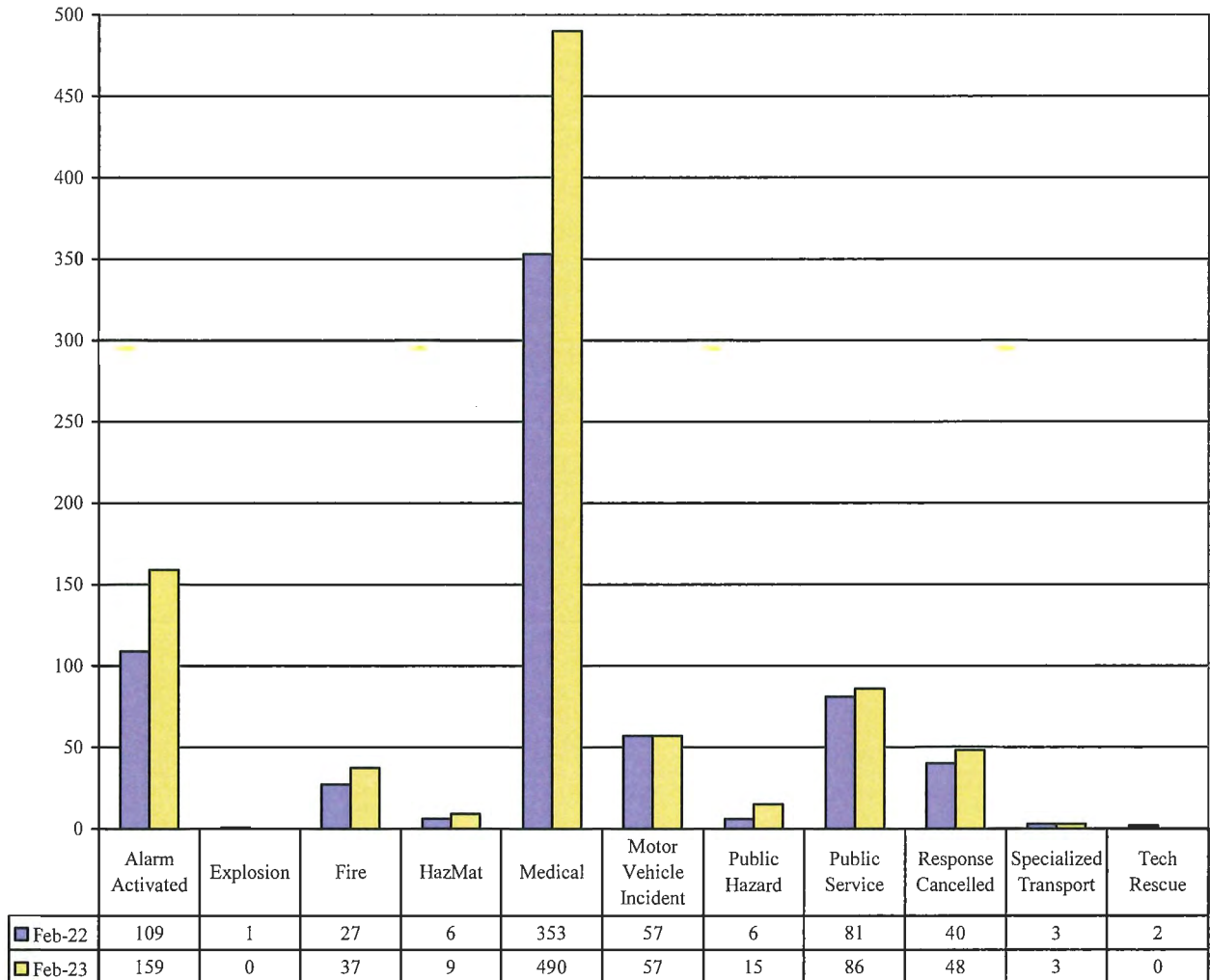

Jim Wishlove
Fire Chief
(604-303-2715)

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

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month-to-month comparison regarding incidents occurring in February 2022 and 2023. In February 2023, there were 904 incidents, compared to 685 in February 2022. This represents an overall increase of 32 per cent.

Table 3: February 2022 & February 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 54 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of February 2023. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for February 2022 and 2023 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were 490 medical incidents in February 2023 compared to 353 in February 2022, an increase of 39 per cent.

Table 4a: February 2022 & February 2023 Medical Calls by Type

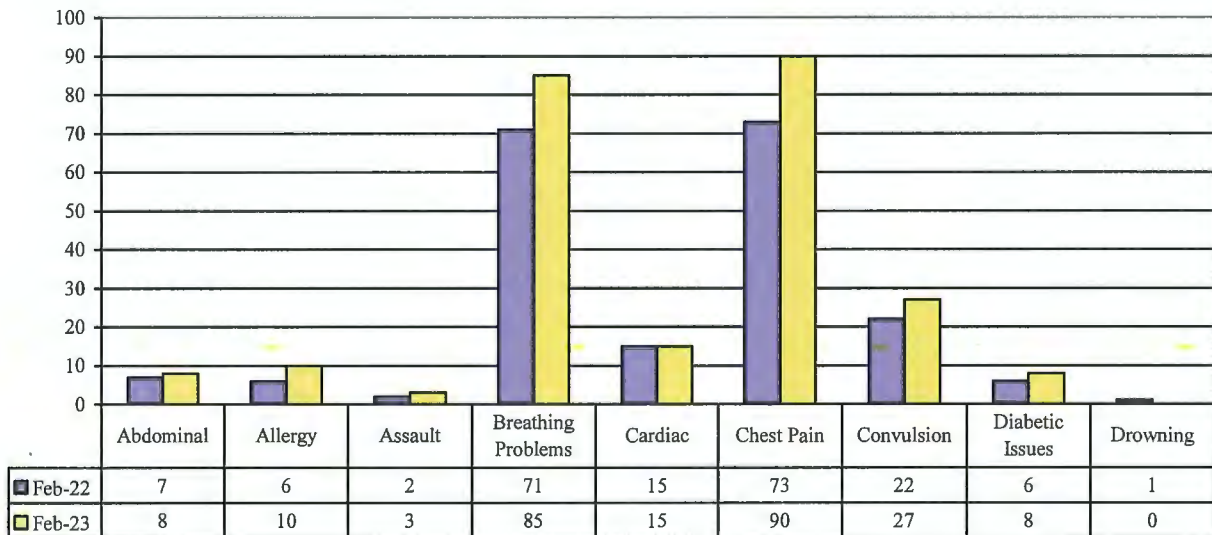
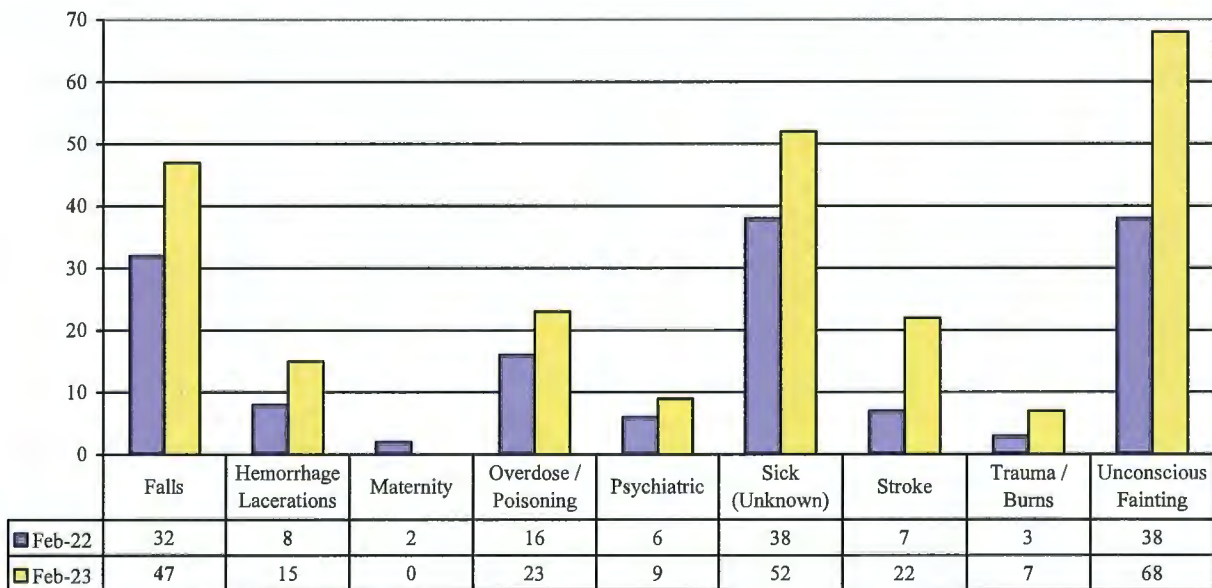


Table 4b: February 2022 & February 2023 Medical Calls by Type



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

Table 4c: Total Fire Calls for Service in February from 2014 to 2023

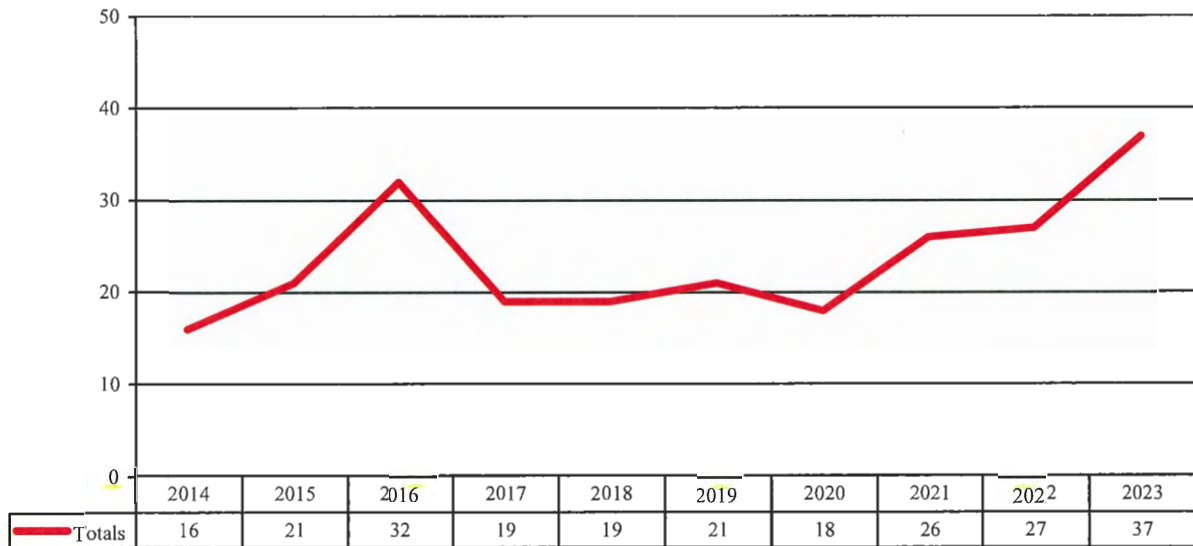
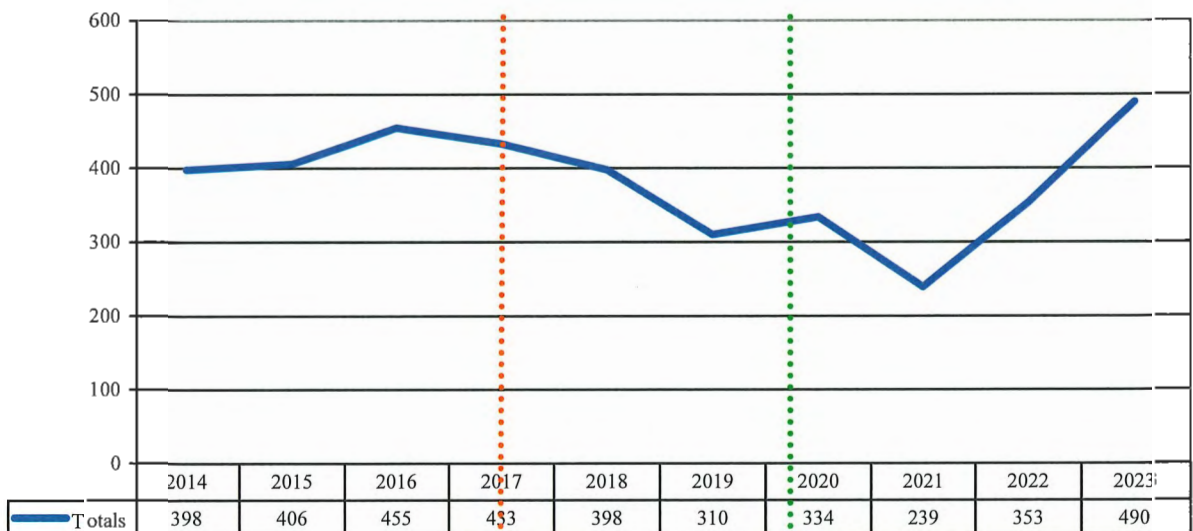


Table 4d: Total Medical Calls for Service in February from 2014 to 2023



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

Start of pandemic

Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for February 2023 are listed below:

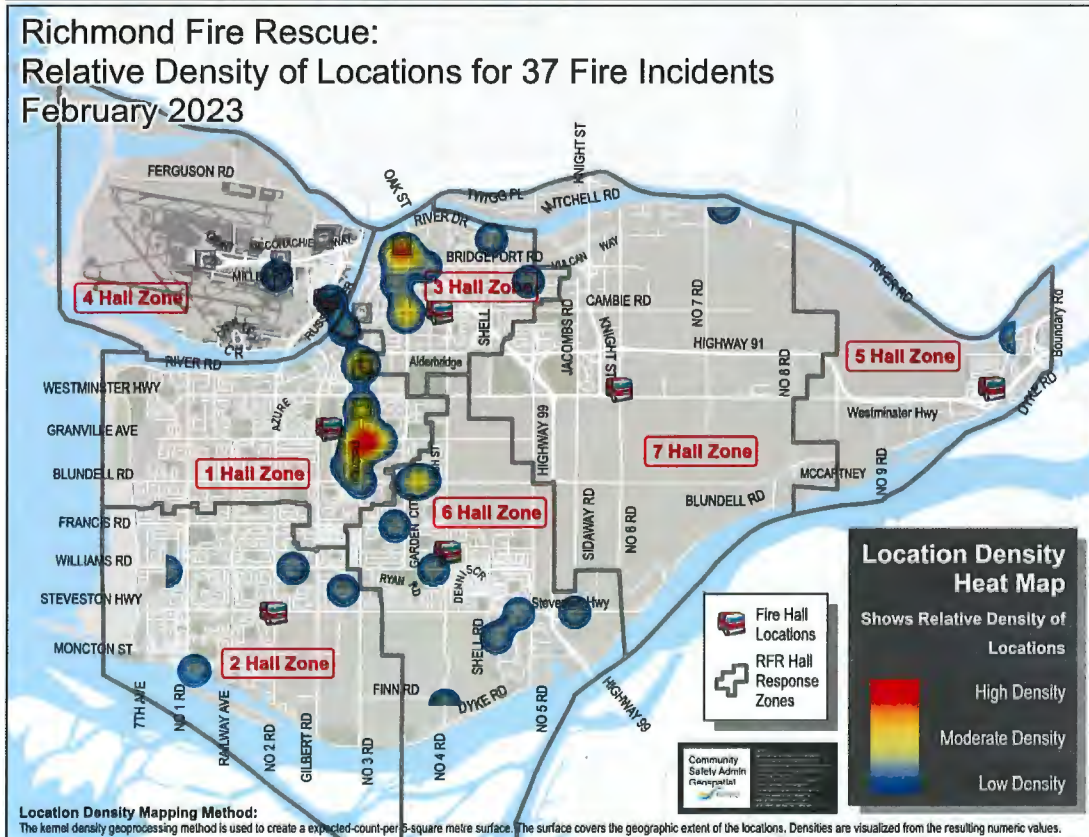
Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – February 2023			
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential - Single-family	-	4	-
Residential - Multi-family	-	4	-
Commercial/Industrial	4	5	2
Outdoor	7	6	1
Vehicle	-	3	1
Totals	11	22	4

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

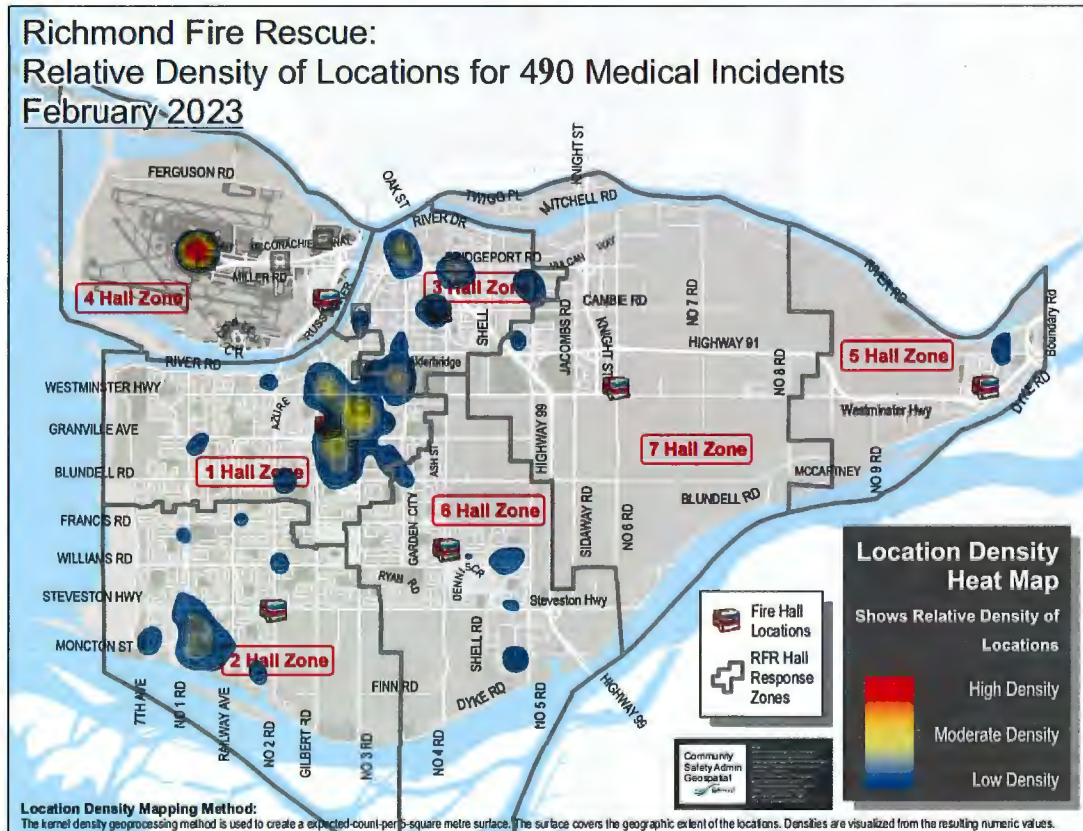
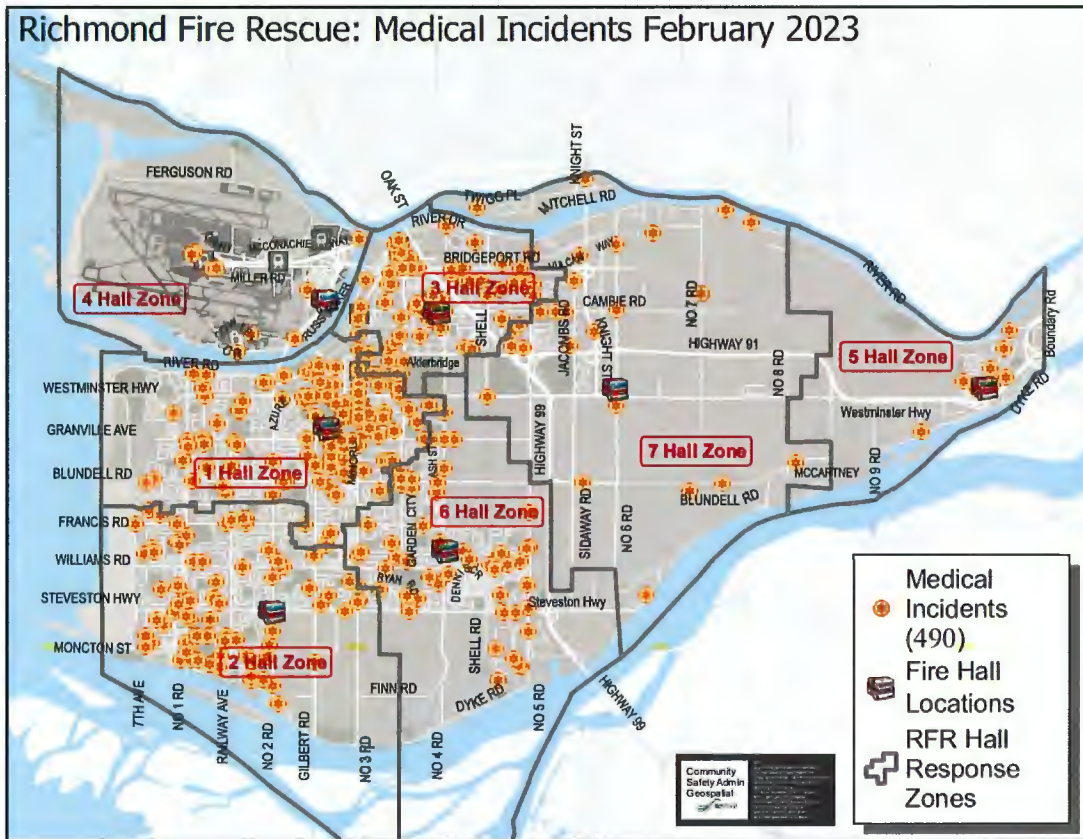
Table 6: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – February 2023	
	Details
Gasses (Natural / Propane)	8
Unclassified	1
Totals	9

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in February 2023 (total 37)



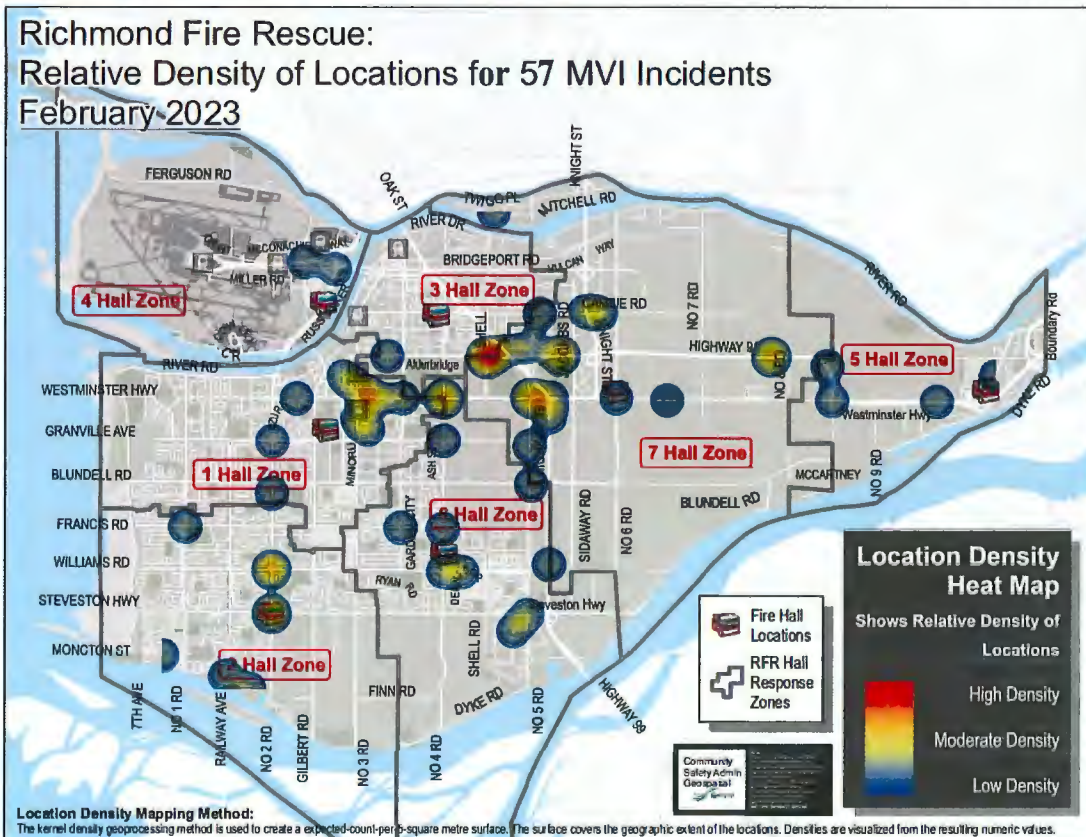
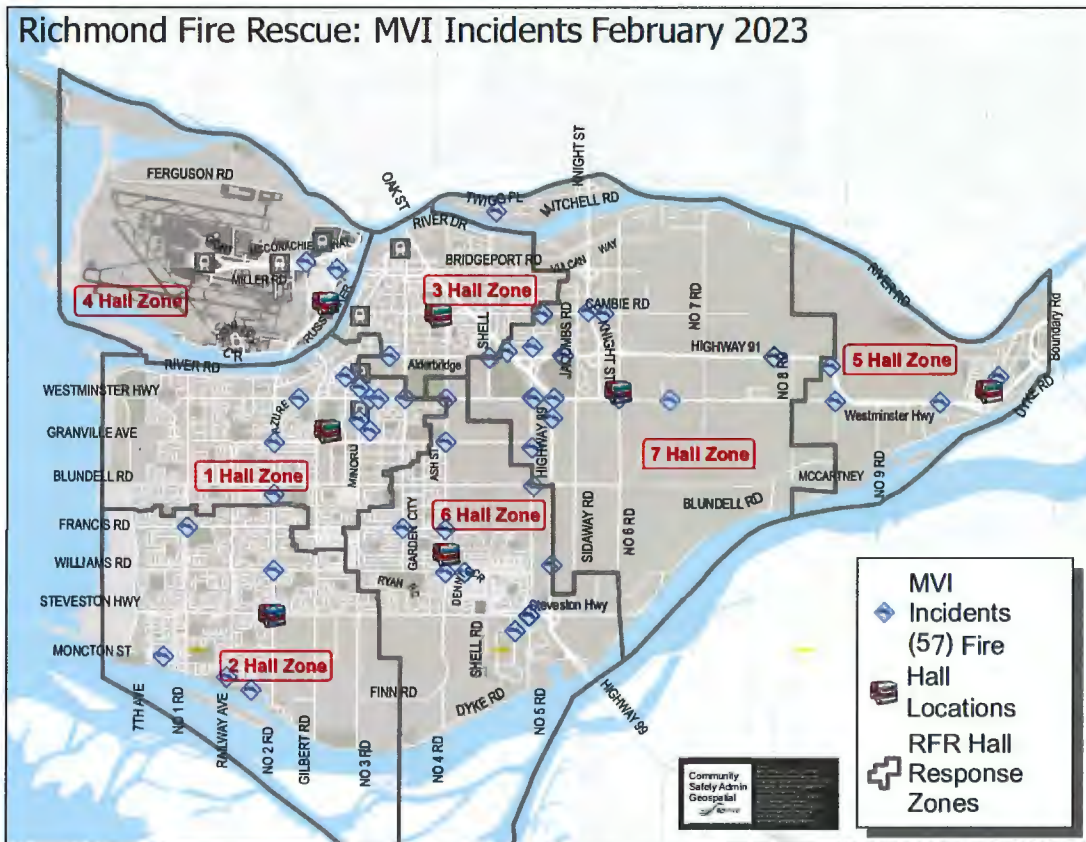
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Figure 2: Location of Medical Incidents in February 2023 (total 490)



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Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in February 2023 (total 57)



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