



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Community Safety Committee

**Date:** September 16, 2019

**From:** Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief

**File:** 09-5000-01/2019-Vol 01

**Re:** Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2019

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2019”, dated September 16, 2019, from the Fire Chief, Richmond Fire-Rescue, be received for information.

Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief  
(604-303-2701)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 
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

#### Community Involvement

Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) advances public safety awareness, education and community connections by providing valuable training activities, participation in community events and social media updates. During August staff engaged with adults, while continuing to develop effective interagency relationships and partnerships within the community.

August 2019 community events included the East Richmond Annual Community Night with approximately 500 people in attendance.

#### Prevention

The RFR smoking campaign titled "*the world is not your ashtray*" runs between June and September. In August 2019 there were 17 cigarette related fires in Richmond, a reduction from 54 reported fires in July 2019 (Attachment 2).

RFR staff provided onsite risk management and assisted with event pre-planning for the World Festival at Minoru Park.

#### Emergency Response

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 August 2019 there were a total 811 incidents, representing a 4.2 per cent increase in calls from August 2018 (Attachment 1).

The average time on scene for RFR crews was 27 minutes; this is a decrease over the 83 minutes in 2018. This is due to the nature and severity of each call which included the large bog fire of 2018.

In August 2019 there were 51 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner; representing a 30 per cent decrease from August 2018 as a direct result of the smoking campaign. The average figure for fires reported in August over the last five years, is 69. RFR continues to monitor fire activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

RFR's emergency fire response goal is to maintain the fire to the room of origin. The room of origin standard is especially important in terms of fire loss, which increases some ten-fold once the fire leaves the room of origin. Fire damage and property losses during August 2019 are estimated at \$870,310. This total includes \$770,300 for building/asset loss and \$100,010 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$60,555,100 and the total value preserved from damage was \$59,684,790. These numbers translate to 98 per cent of value protected (Table 1); this is the same as the 98 per cent protected value observed in 2018.

<b>Incident Type Breakdown</b>	<b>Call Volume</b>	<b>Estimated Building/Asset Value (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Building/Asset Loss (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Content Value (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Content Loss (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Value Preserved (\$)</b>
Residential: Single family	2	3,010,600	75,000	744,000	50,010	3,629,590
Multi family	8	56,230,100	175,000	40,100	40,000	56,055,200
Commercial/Industrial	5	500,000	500,000	10,000	10,000	-
Outdoor	30	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicle/Vessel	6	20,300	20,300	-	-	-
<b>Totals*</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>59,761,000</b>	<b>770,300</b>	<b>794,100</b>	<b>100,010</b>	<b>59,684,790</b>

\*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

Fire crews minimized harm and limited fires to the place of origin in these notable August 2019 incidents:

- **August 6 – School fire on Smith Drive.** Crews responded to black smoke coming from the roof of a school. Crews aggressively attacked and extinguished the fire. The RCMP and Richmond School Board attended to review any damage caused by the fire. There were no injuries to staff, and the school was unoccupied at the time. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 8 – Residential fire on Minoru Boulevard.** Multiple RFR crews responded to a fire in a high rise. RCMP, Emergency Programs, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS), Translink and Fortis Gas attended to provide assistance. Crews successfully extinguished the fire and completed two full searches, finding no victims or injured parties. Damage was limited to one suite on the 14th floor. All occupants apart from two residents, who elected to remain in their suites, were evacuated. RFR Fire Investigators attended. There were no reports of injuries to occupants or RFR staff. RFR would also like to note that Cadillac Fairview (Richmond Centre Mall) staff came to the site to deliver bottled water and muffins to the evacuated residents while they were waiting to re-enter their suites.
- **August 9, 2019 – Vehicle fire on Twigg Place.** Multiple RFR crews responded to a car fire which had spread to nearby offices. RFR crews attacked and extinguished the fire and, once the majority of the fire had been extinguished, began to check for hot spots. There were no injuries reported. RCMP were on-scene to support traffic handling. A building inspector and structural engineer were requested to attend the scene. A security company remained on scene to secure the premises.

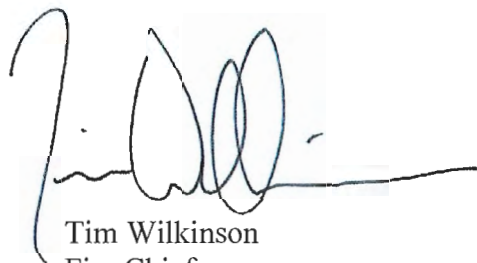
- **August 13, 2019 – Hazardous materials incident on Ackroyd Road.** RFR crews responded to reports of multiple patients experiencing dizziness, nausea and abnormal breathing, including a pregnant mother who had also been affected. The call was being treated as a potential chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear defense (CBRN) event. BCEHS and a large RCMP presence were also on scene. Upon arrival RFR assumed command and crews were tasked to gather information. Crews evacuated the remainder of the building to carry out a primary search to determine if there were any others patients. None were found, except a team of dentists performing an oral surgery, were protected in place on the 6th floor and allowed to continue their work. BCEHS crews attended to provide medical assistance. RCMP were onsite securing the block area and evacuated occupants were held in the parking lot across the street and on the second level parking area. RFR crews conducted sweeps of the building using gas and PID detection equipment. No issues were found. On investigation it was noted that several patients had eaten from a box of cookies which had been handed over to the RCMP for further investigation.
- **August 21, 2019 – Commercial property fire on No 9 Road.** RFR crews responded to a conveyor belt fire at a commercial property. On arrival power has been locked out to the belt and crews managed to extinguish the fire using a fire extinguisher. There were no injuries reported to any employees or RFR members.
- **August 21, 2019 – Hazardous materials incident on Sexsmith Road.** RFR crews responded to a large diameter natural gas line which had been impacted by construction. RFR crews evacuated local residents and protected others in-place, while monitoring for gas levels in the immediate area. Fortis Gas responded to repair the leak. RCMP and Public Works staff were onsite supporting road blockages in the immediate area. Once the leak was stopped by Fortis work crews, RFR performed a final gas check in the affected buildings with Fortis crews. Evacuated residents were allowed to re-occupy their homes.
- **August 24, 2019 – Structure fire at commercial property on Twigg Place.** RFR emergency crews responded to Twigg Place on Mitchell Island to a report of a structure fire. On arrival, crews rescued two occupants who were trapped on an exterior second floor balcony. Crews then began to attack the fire in the building. The two occupants were assessed by BCEHS crews. No RFR personnel sustained injuries and there were no further victims. The fire was extinguished and the incident commander was directed to fully secure the site until a RFR Fire Investigator could attend.
- **August 25, 2019 – Fire at commercial property on No. 9 Road.** RFR crews responded to a report of a fire in a fuel hopper. On arrival crews were directed to a 10' X 10' metal hopper with fire burning inside. An alternate recycling product was burning inside the hopper. RFR crews took command and extinguish the fire. There were no reported injuries and damage was limited to the fuel material and the metal hopper. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **August 31, 2019 – Residential Fire on Cathay Road.** RFR responded to a fire with challenging heavy smoke. Crews extinguished the fire and ensured that there was no fire extension. A Fire Investigator attended due to the size, value and smoke damage to the home. Emergency Programs staff provided assistance to the occupant who was displaced. There were no injuries reported to the public or RFR staff.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Conclusion**

RFR's "*the world is not your ashtray*" smoking campaign continues to be successful. In 2019 the summer average of fires caused by cigarettes was 44%, a reduction over the 55% in 2018. RFR continues to monitor activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Wilkinson', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief  
(604-303-2701)

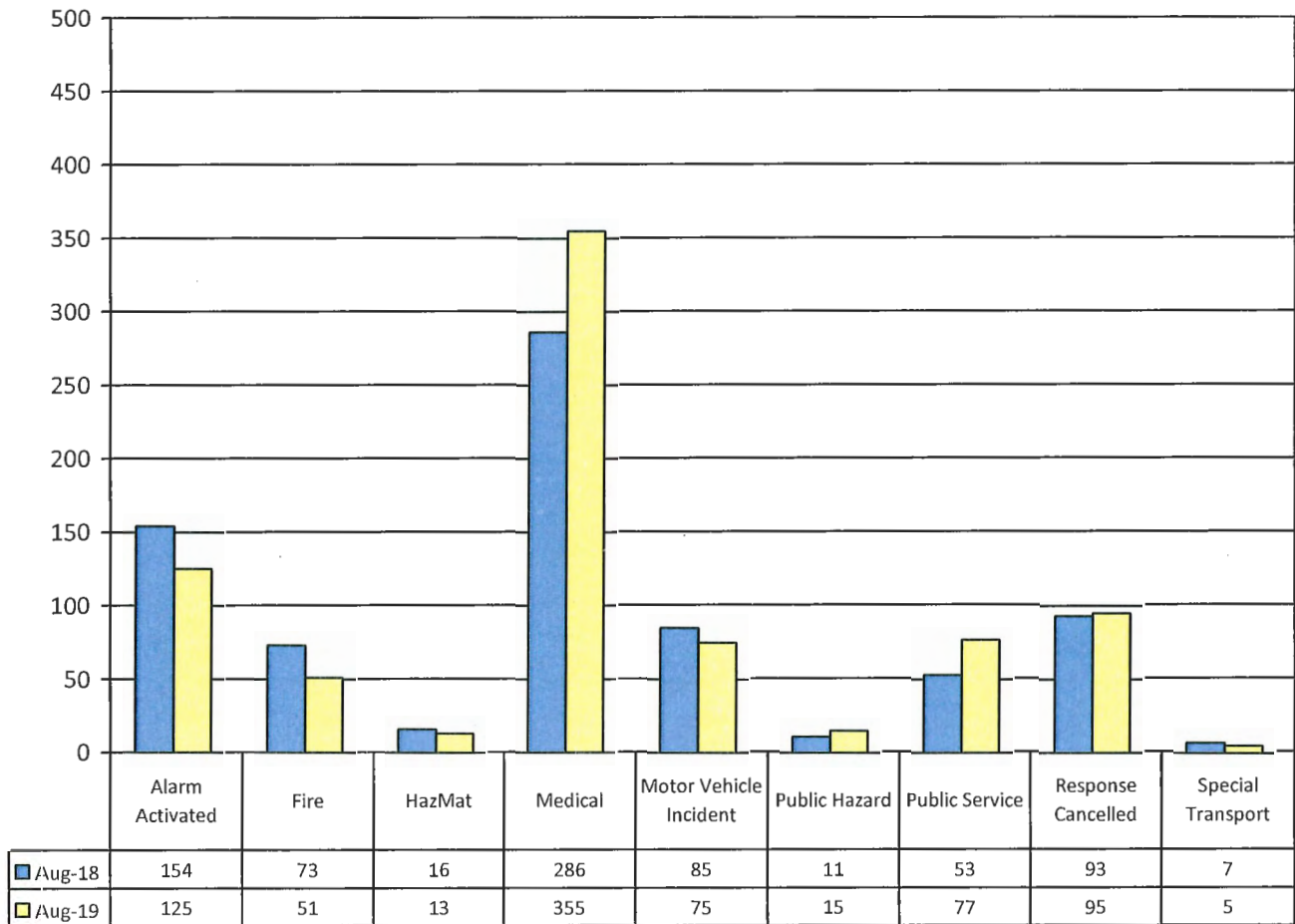
TW:js

- Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of August's Fire, Medical and MVIs  
2: Cigarette Fire Statistics – August 2019

**Calls for Service Volumes**

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in August 2018 and 2019. In August 2019, there were a total of 811 incidents, compared to 778 in August 2018. This represents an increase of 4.2 per cent.

**Table 3: August 2018 & 2019 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

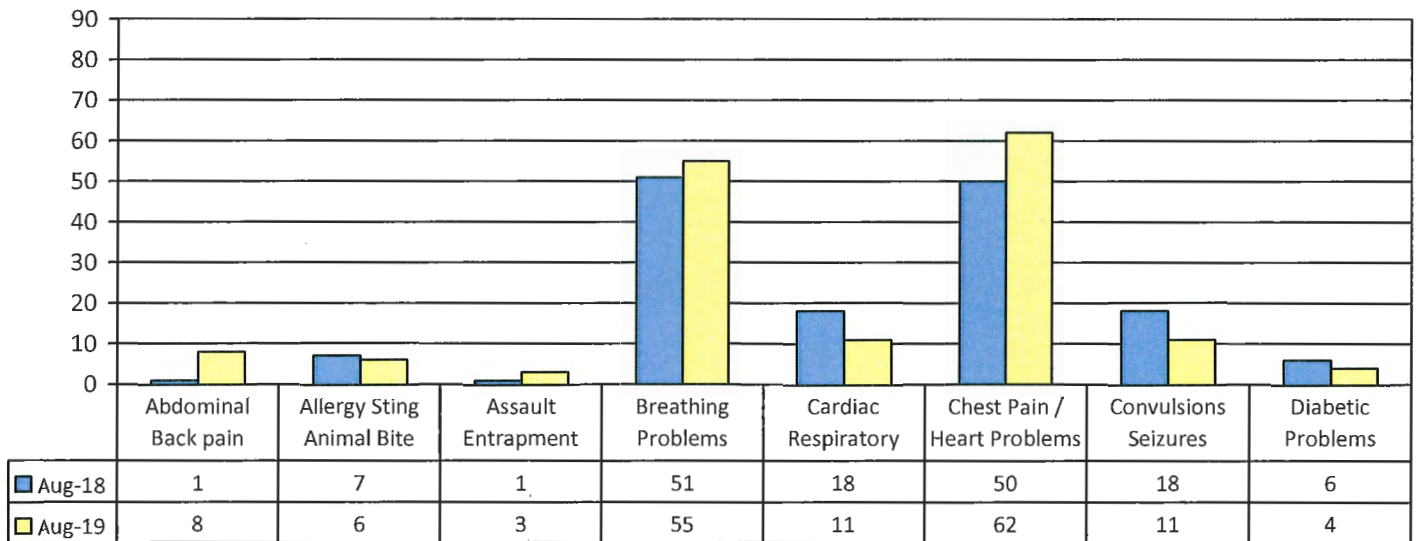
*Public Hazard* includes: aircraft emergency, bomb removal standby, object removal, or power lines down

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

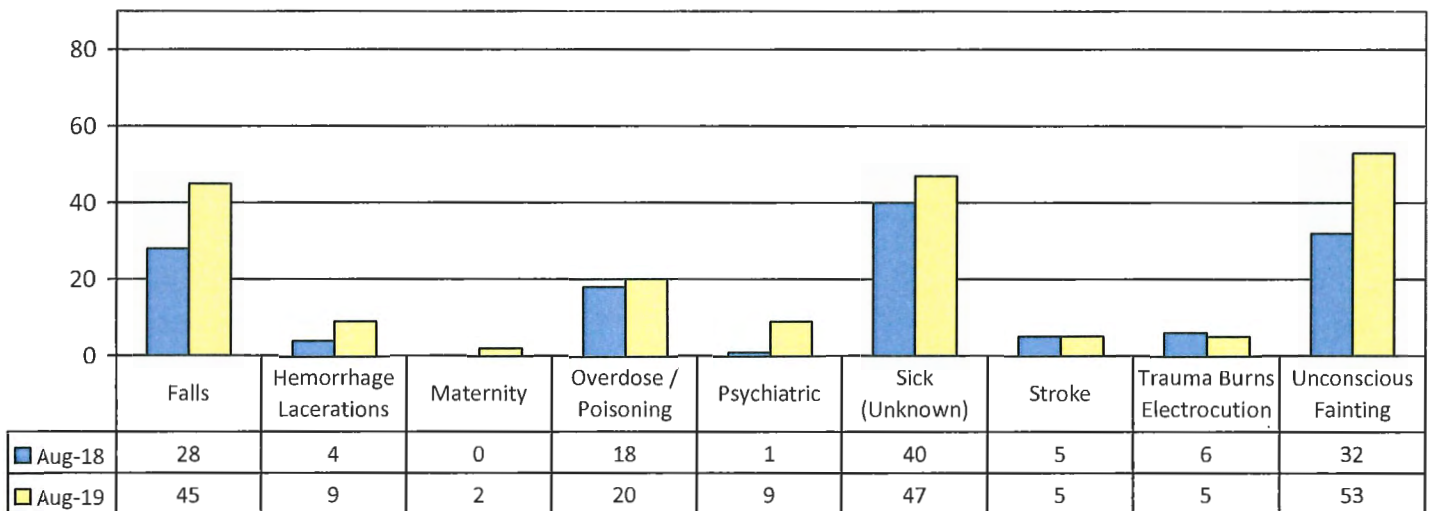
**First Responder Totals**

Medical first responder incidents comprised 44 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of August 2019. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for August 2018 and 2019 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 355 medical incidents in August 2019 compared to 286 in August 2018, an increase of 24 per cent.

**Table 4a: August 2018 & 2019 Medical Calls by Type**



**Table 4b: August 2018 & 2019 Medical Calls by Type**



## Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for August 2019 are listed below:

<b>Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – August 2019</b>			
	<b>Suspicious</b>	<b>Accidental</b>	<b>Undetermined</b>
Residential - Single-family	1	2	-
Residential - Multi-family	-	5	2
Commercial/Industrial	-	3	2
Outdoor	3	23	4
Vehicle	-	3	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>

RFR investigators report all suspicious fires to the RCMP, while working alongside RCMP staff to address potential risks to the community.

## Hazardous Materials

<b>Table 6: HazMat Calls By Type – August 2019</b>	
	<b>Details</b>
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	10
Unclassified	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13</b>



Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in August 2019 (total 51)

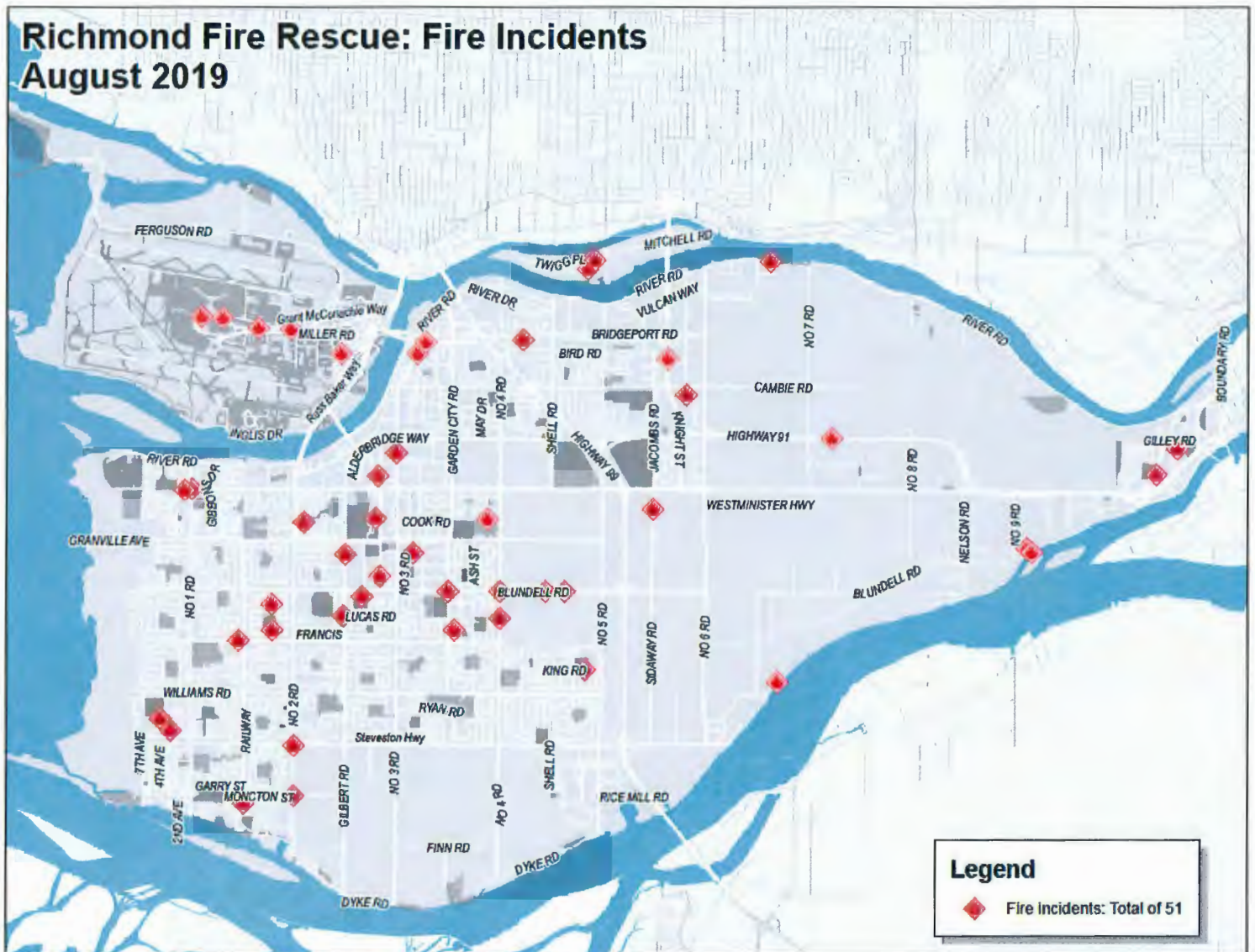


Figure 2: Location of medical calls in August 2019 (total 355)

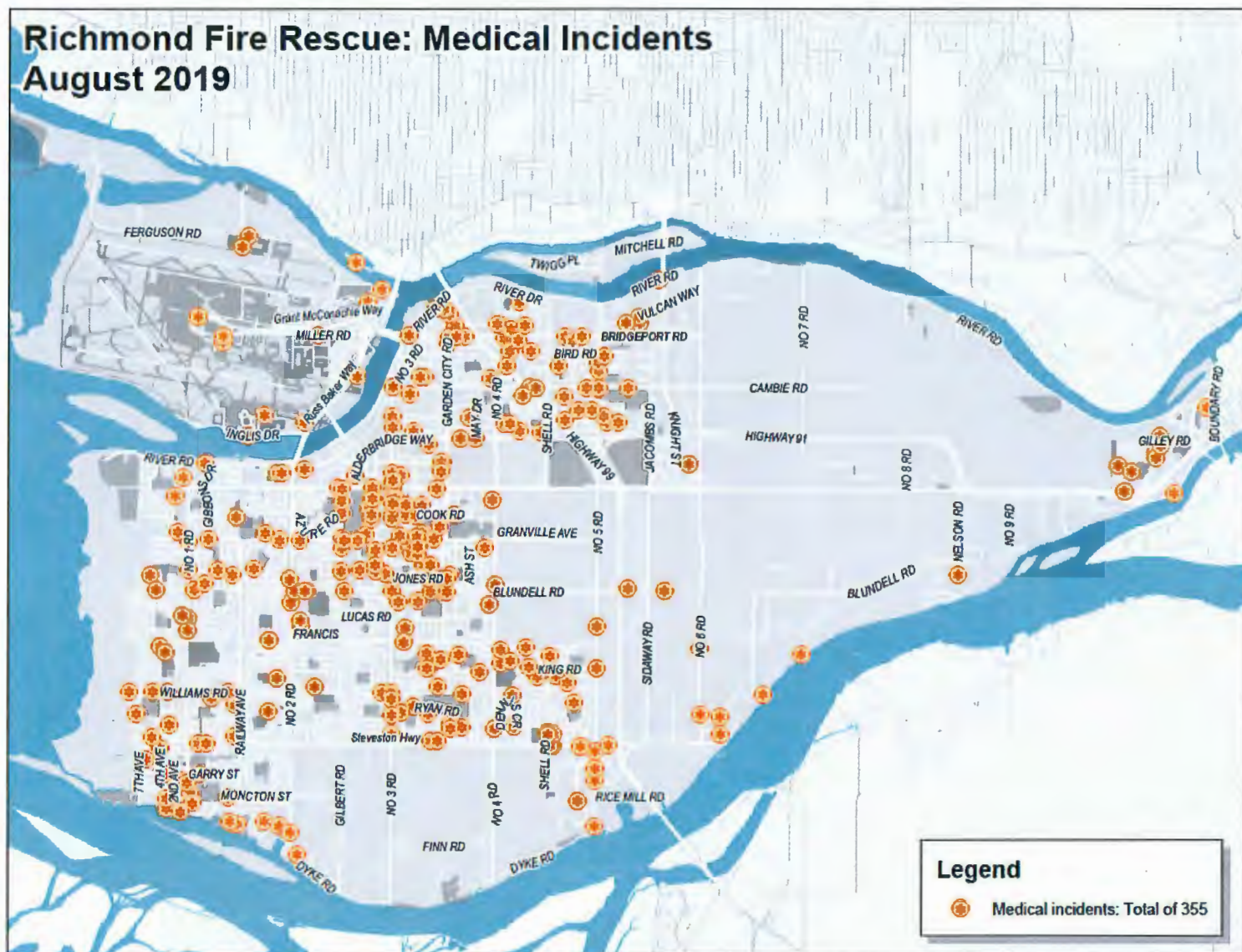


Figure 3: Location of MVI calls in August 2019 (total 75)

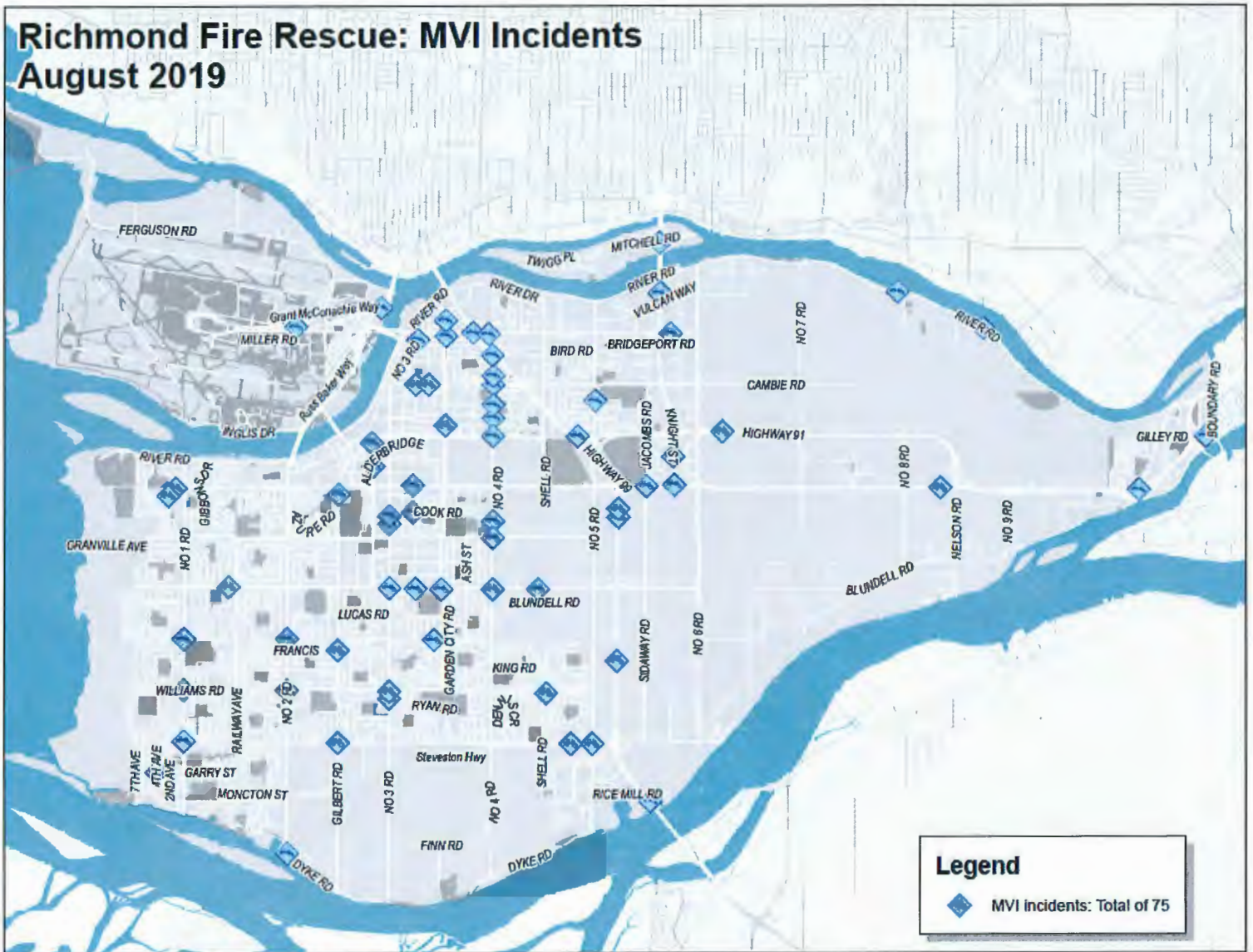


Figure 4: Cigarette Fire Statistics – August 2019

Fire Attributed to Discarded Cigarettes

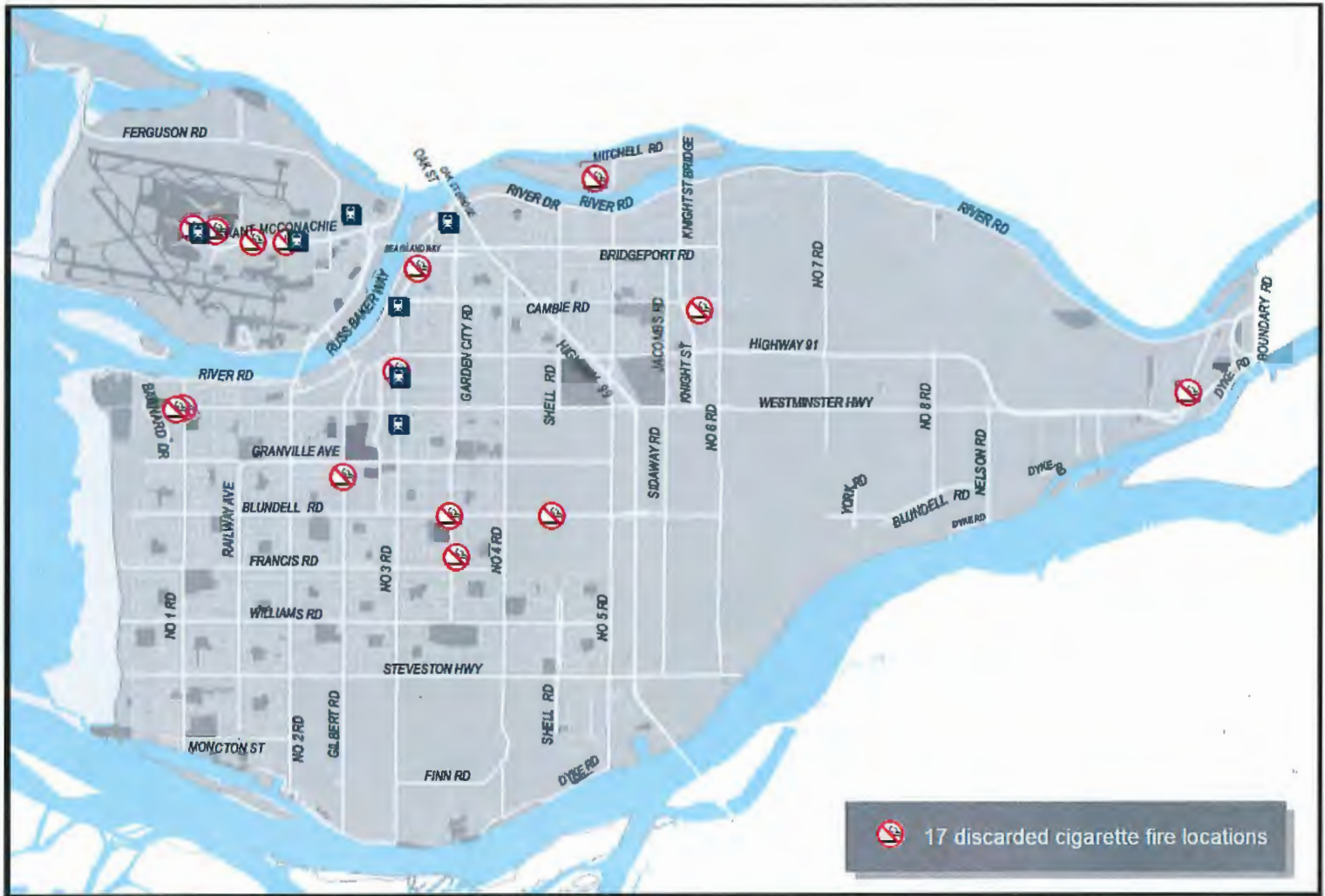


Figure 5: Cigarette Fire Statistics – August 2019

Location Density Heat Map Surface for cigarette fires

