



City of Richmond

Report to Committee




To: Community Safety Committee **Date:** August 25, 2023
From: Jim Wishlove **File:** 09-5140-01/2023-Vol
 Fire Chief 01
Re: Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – June and July 2023

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – June and July 2023”, dated August 25, 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

During June and July 2023, staff concluded the following initiatives:

- **Party in a Box.** A partnered project with Canadian Red Cross inclusive resilience initiative to provide funding to community groups and City partners to facilitate their own emergency preparedness information sessions. Over 132 people attended these events.
- **Ferris Elementary Public Education Project.** Staff, in collaboration with City's Public Arts team, Ferris Elementary School and local/regional artists partnered to deliver a creative approach to of emergency management education in schools. For more detail: <https://ferrisresilience.ca/>

In addition to the initiatives above, staff also participated, responded and/or managed many activities throughout the City including:

- In June, 2023, there were two persons displaced during a fire incident who were provided with Emergency Social Support.
- In July 2023, there were five persons displaced during a fire incident who were provided with Emergency Social Support.
- Vancouver Aircraft Fuel Facility Corporation (VAFFC) with Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) and Corporate Communications conducted a full scale emergency spill exercise, located at the Jet fuel tank farm hosted by the VAFFC. The RCMP, Public Works, and BC Emergency Health Services were also involved in the planning leading up to this exercise.
- Vancouver International Airport Tailspin Exercise: Staff participated in an airline crash tabletop exercise hosted by the airport. The multi stakeholder event ensured effective responses and reinforced close operational ties between the City and Vancouver International Airport.

- Approximately 80,000 people attended the annual Steveston Salmon Festival on Saturday, July 1. Staff supported the event by contributing to the development, oversight and execution of the event safety and security plan, supplying radio communications platforms, and coordinating emergency service support to the public in the combined City and RCMP command centre.

Public Outreach & Education

In June 2023, staff facilitated outreach events to provide educational opportunities to the community, including fire hall/vehicle tours for Lord Byng Elementary, Mitchell Elementary, Offer Bahn and Errington Elementary. Staff also participated in large community events for the Thompson Community Picnic, the Baptist Church Block Party, and the Burkeville Daze.

Staff also led RFR participation for the City's Doors Open event held at Brighthouse Fire Hall No. 1. This successful event attracted over 3,500 residents/attendees. Interactive displays and activities included an education booth, Turn-Out gear dress-up and photo station, fire truck displays, auto extrication demonstrations, water target games, emergency preparedness resources, a preparedness kit display, various giveaways, and a chance to win a free emergency kit upon successfully signing up with Richmond BC Alert. This event was also attended by partner agencies such as the ICBC Road Safety Unit and the YVR Fire Department.

In July 2023, staff facilitated outreach events and provided educational opportunities to the community including fire hall/vehicle tours for the Richmond Pentecostal Church Community Safety. Staff also participated in many large community events for the Salmon Festival, Thompson Community Picnic, Kidworld and St. Albans and Robinson area Block Watch community event.

Internal Staff Training

In June and July 2023, staff delivered in-house fire training, educational activities and programs including:

- Live Fire training and Fire Prevention Office training/development for 43 Officers for the current acting officer program cohort.
- Recruit firefighters final 12 month examinations/probation completion
- Train-the-trainers Course (Small Engines)
- Ground ladder testing
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter Professional evaluations,
- Chainsaw training and safety protocols

Emergency Response

In June 2023, there were 1,080 reported incidents of all types, representing an overall increase of 5 per cent in incidents from June 2022 to June 2023 (Table 1).

Table 1: Total Incidents - June 2023					
	Incident Totals June (2023)	Incident Totals June (2022)	Number Change from June 2022 to 2023	Percentage Change from June 2022 to 2023	5 Year Average for June
Alarm Active - No Fire	173	163	+10	+6	144
Explosion	0	0	0	0	0
Fire	65	45	+20	+44	50
Hazardous Materials	12	7	+5	+71	9
Medical	566	556	+10	+2	383
Motor Vehicle Incident	86	93	-7	-8	78
Public Hazard	8	9	-1	-11	10
Public Service	86	92	-6	-7	79
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	80	59	+21	+36	62
Specialized Transport	4	2	+2	+100	2
Technical Rescue	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,080	1,026	+54	5	817

In July 2023, there were 1,066 reported incidents of all types, representing an overall increase of 5 per cent in incidents from July 2022 to July 2023 (Table 1).

Table 2: Total Incidents - July 2023					
	Incident Totals July (2023)	Incident Totals July (2022)	Number Change from July 2022 to 2023	Percentage Change from July 2022 to 2023	5 Year Average for July
Alarm Active - No Fire	173	181	-8	-4	146
Explosion	0	1	-1	-100	0
Fire	87	52	+35	+67	63
Hazardous Materials	3	5	-2	-40	6
Medical	522	512	+10	+2	366
Motor Vehicle Incident	98	76	+22	+29	75
Public Hazard	9	12	-3	-25	13
Public Service	93	109	-16	-15	92
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	77	63	+14	+22	65
Specialized Transport	3	0	+3	+300	2
Technical Rescue	1	0	+1	+100	0
Total	1,066	1,011	+55	+5	828

The average time on scene in June 2023 for emergency response crews was 31 minutes, compared to 35 minutes in 2022.

The average time on scene in July 2023 for emergency response crews was 36 minutes, compared to 33 minutes in 2022.

In June 2023, there were 65 fire incidents reported to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 44 per cent increase from June 2022. The average number of fires reported each June over the last five years is 50.

In July 2023, there were 87 fire incidents reported to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 67 per cent increase from July 2022. The average number of fires reported each July over the last five years is 63.

Fire damage and property losses during June 2023 are estimated at \$1,026,930. This total includes \$587,060 for building/asset loss and \$439,870 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk is estimated to be \$231,711,700 and the total value preserved from damage was \$230,684,770. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 3), which is the same value observed in 2022: 99 per cent.

Table 3: Fire Incidents By Type and Loss Estimates - June 2023	
Incident Type Breakdown	Incident Volume
Residential: Single family	4
Residential: Multi family	10
Commercial/Industrial	2
Outdoor	47
Vehicle/Vessel	2
Totals*	65

Fire damage and property losses during July 2023 are estimated at \$615,060. This total includes \$613,860 for building/asset loss and \$1,200 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk is estimated to be \$332,075,235 and the total value preserved from damage was \$331,460,175. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 4), which is the same value observed in 2022: 99 per cent.

Table 4: Fire Incidents By Type and Loss Estimates - July 2023	
Incident Type Breakdown	Incident Volume
Residential: Single family	4
Residential: Multi family	1
Commercial/Industrial	5
Outdoor	68
Vehicle/Vessel	9
Totals*	87

* The dollar losses 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 minimize harm, limit damage and stop fire spread from the place of origin by performing life-saving interventions as demonstrated by these notable June & July 2023 incidents:

- **June 7, 2023 – Electric Vehicle Battery removal/relocation.** RFR crews completed the removal of an electric vehicle battery from Garden City Road in a coordinated operation involving Transport Canada, Volkswagen Canada, and the City of Richmond. The battery was declared de-energized and safe for transport by experts from Volkswagen Canada and City electrician staff. The battery has been relocated to a holding facility.
- **June 8, 2023 – Residential Fire on No. 3 Road.** Emergency crews responded to a reported apartment bedroom. Upon arrival, crews entered the unit to find a sprinkler had been activated for an electrical fire under a bed. After a thorough overhaul of the room, they found the fire to be fully extinguished from the sprinklers. No injuries to the occupants were reported at the time and Emergency Support Services (ESS) were called to provide support to the displaced occupants. A Fire Investigator attended. No other injuries were reported to the public or RFR personnel.
- **June 10, 2023 – Drowning in Steveston Harbour Marina.** Emergency crews responded to a report of a person floating in the water at the Steveston Harbour Marina. First on scene crews, reported a body floating beside the east end of a dock. On scene BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) staff confirmed the person to be deceased. After arrival of RCMP, RFR personnel lifted the body from the water to the dock and covered with a blanket. Care of the scene was left with RCMP, BCEHS and the coroner. No other injuries were reported to the public or RFR personnel.
- **June 11, 2023 – Residential Fire on Garratt Drive.** Emergency crews responded to a fire in a single family home. The fire had extended into the attic space but was contained. Crews extinguished the fire and checked for hot spots in the attic area. The fire extension had burned through the roof structure causing damage to the home necessitating all of the occupants to be displaced. ESS were called to assist the occupants. Crews remained to ensure the scene was secured before leaving. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.
- **June 15, 2023 – Residential Fire on King Road.** Emergency crews responded to a house fire. First in apparatus observed smoke coming from the residence. After further investigation crews were able to determine that the fire was in the basement suite of the duplex. The tenant had extinguished the fire with a garden hose prior to their arrival. Fire crews, checked for extension and found no further fire extension. Fire crews, then ventilated the residence. One tenant was displaced temporarily and ESS were notified. A Fire Investigator attended. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.

- **June 17, 2023 – Commercial Property Fire on No. 5 Road.** Emergency crews responded to a fire on No. 5 Road. Upon arrival, crews discovered a large plume of smoke and upgraded the incident to a working fire. A large pile of recycled material was on fire at the rear of the property. Multiple crews attended the scene and additional assistance was received with an excavator operated by a property representative. The fire was extinguished and RFR crews demobilized the scene. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **June 20, 2023 - Gas Leak on Lackner Crescent.** RFR crews responded to a gas leak at a townhouse complex. Upon arrival, flames were observed coming from the gas line, a couple of feet from a garage. Fire crews isolated the gas line and protected exposures with hose lines. Crews also found fuel had collected in the attic space of the garages. The gas combusted rapidly, causing a small explosion and damage to the interior of the garages. Fortis Gas arrived on scene and shut off the gas to the complex. RFR crews ventilated the town homes to remove any remaining gas exposure and risk. Fire Prevention and Richmond City engineers attended for further investigation and to ensure the homes were structurally sound. Fortis Gas crews repaired the damaged line. There were no reported injuries to the public, residents, RFR personnel or onsite workers.
- **June 30, 2023 – Structure Fire on Granville Avenue.** Emergency Crews responded to a report of a structure fire. Upon arrival, crews found a vacant house completely involved in fire. Crews performed a rapid defensive attack with multiple hose lines on all sides of the house. The fire was quickly extinguished. Multiple crews remained on scene to perform salvage, remove boards from windows and check rooms on all levels to confirm extinguishment. RCMP attended the scene to facilitate traffic and pedestrian control. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A security firm was contacted to maintain the scene overnight. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **July 2, 2023 - Wildland Fire on Blundell Road.** Emergency crews responded to a wildland fire on Blundell Road. The fire was located approximately 600 feet south of Blundell Road in a blueberry field. Additional apparatus was requested by the first-in officer, including the RFR Wildland Utility vehicle. RFR crews extinguished the fire and began to examine the area and extinguish any further spot fires. Crews established sprinkler operations to wet the area overnight to ensure there was no subterranean fire extension. The area was re-inspected the following day to ensure full ground saturation before demobilization. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **July 5, 2023 - Hazardous Materials Leak on Viking Way.** Emergency crews responded to a report of an ammonia leak on Viking Way. Initial command reported full evacuation with alarm activation. RFR crews entered the building with the on-site technician in full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to isolate the leak. The ammonia leak was mitigated and crews cleared the site. The onsite technician reported when the lines were emptied of ammonia and the system was no longer a hazard. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel.

- **July 5, 2023 - Residential Fire on River Road.** Emergency crews responded to a report of smoke and fire from a residential house on River Road. Upon arrival, crews reported large volumes of smoke and fire and a working fire was declared. Initial teams performed a quick, high-volume attack and knocked down the majority of the visible flames. Crews doused any hot spots and began an overhaul of the premises. RCMP were on scene to interview the occupants and a security guard was called to preserve the scene. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **July 9, 2023 - Wildland Fire on Westminster Highway.** Emergency crews responded to a wildland fire approximately 300 feet East of Shell Road trail and approximately halfway between Westminster Highway and Granville Avenue. Both wildland utility vehicles were dispatched to the scene. The fire was contained and crews continued to extinguish hot spots. The railway line was temporarily shut down to allow better access for crews, and to ensure a safe working environment. Once extinguished, large-volume sprinklers were placed to fully saturate the ground. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **July 14, 2023 - Wildland Fire on Westminster Highway.** Emergency crews responded to Westminster Highway for reports of smoke in the area. First arriving crews located a fire on the east side of Highway 99 in the treed area. Once crews were able to access the site, they located the fire and began extinguishment. The fire was quickly contained. RCMP attended the scene to assist with staff protection and safety. RCMP also provided traffic management on No. 5 Road. RFR maintained apparatus and resources on scene until there were no remaining fires in the area. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.
- **July 19, 2023 - Technical Rescue on Sidaway Road.** Emergency crews responded to a report of a golf cart that had flipped over with the operator trapped under the cart in a pond at this location. Crews arrived and made contact with the patient, who was partially submerged in water under the golf cart and unable to complete to a self rescue. Crews entered the water in water-rescue gear and assisted the extraction of the patient and transferred care to an awaiting BC Emergency Health Services crew. Crews returned to quarters and decontaminated their tools and equipment. There no other reported injuries reported to the public or RFR personnel.
- **July 23, 2023 - Vehicle Fire on Beckwith Road.** Emergency crews responded to a structure fire in a one story commercial building. First-in crews reported the fire appeared to be coming from a motor home in the rear of the property and may have extended to the rear of the building. The building included a number of vehicle repair operations and combustible products. Crews deemed the building unsafe to enter. A defensive fire attack was initiated and the fire was extinguished, during which the building's roof collapsed. One civilian was transported to hospital with burns to their arms and one firefighter suffered a possible shoulder dislocation while attempting to pull off metal clad siding. The firefighter was also transported to hospital. Due to the nature of the scene a fire watch was initiated due to stubborn smoldering hot spots. There were no other reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.

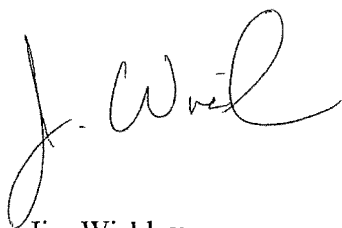
- **July 27, 2023 - Residential Fire on Cambie Road.** Emergency crews responded to a house fire on Cambie Road. Upon arrival, crews noticed heavy smoke coming from the structure. The fire was declared a working fire and it was determined that a defensive attack was appropriate for the unoccupied house. Crews initiated ladder protocols as the fire had broken through the roof. Once extinguished, crews checked for hot spots inside the structure. RCMP were on scene to assist with traffic and transit operations. There were no reported injuries to the public or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

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



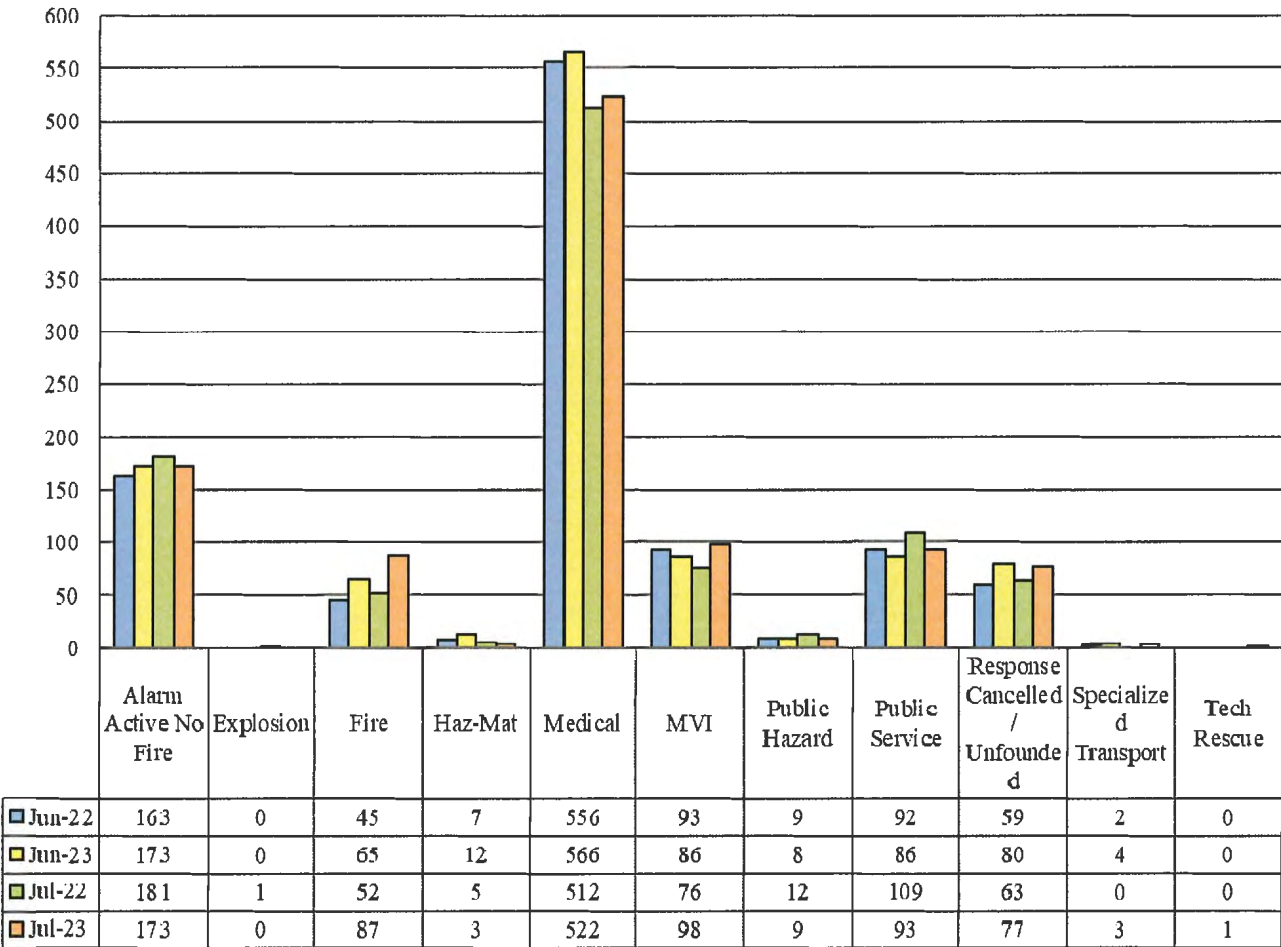
Jim Wishlove
Fire Chief
(604-303-2715)

Att. 1: June and July - Suppression Activity, including location of Fire, Medical and MVIs

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month-to-month comparison regarding incidents occurring in June 2022/2023 and July 2022/2023. In June 2023, there were 1,080 incidents, compared to 1,026 in June 2022. This represents an overall increase of 5 per cent. In July 2023, there were 1,066 incidents, compared to 1,011 in July 2022. This represents an overall increase of 5 per cent.

Table 5: June 2022/2023 and July 2022/2023 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

In June 2023 Medical first responder incidents comprised 52 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of June 2023. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for June 2022 and 2023 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were 566 medical incidents in June 2023 compared to 556 in June 2022, an increase of 2 per cent.

In July 2023 Medical first responder incidents comprised 49 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of July 2023. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for July 2022 and 2023 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were 522 medical incidents in July 2023 compared to 512 in July 2022, an increase of 2 per cent.

Table 6a: June 2022/2023 and July 2022/2023 Medical Calls by Type

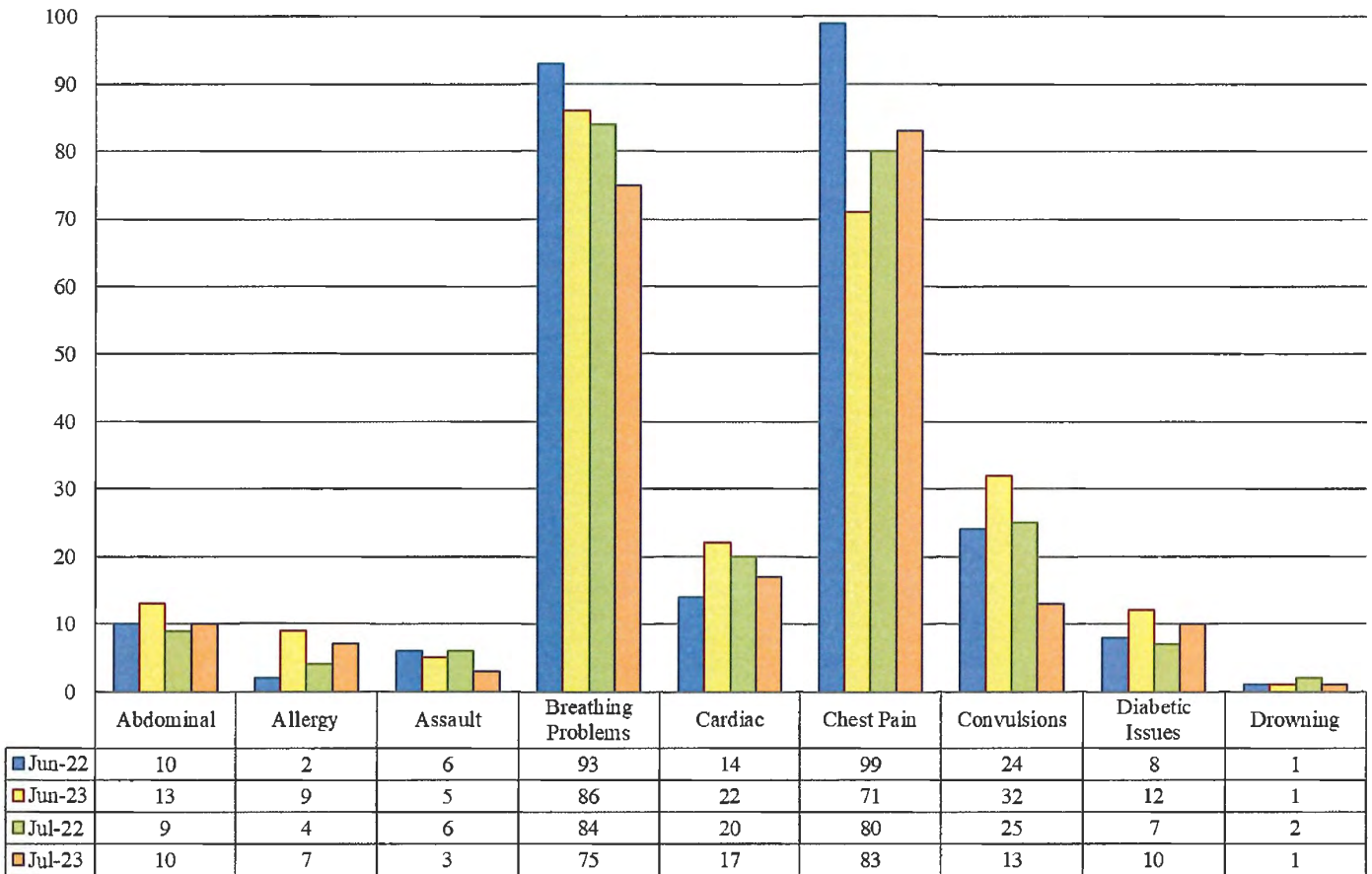
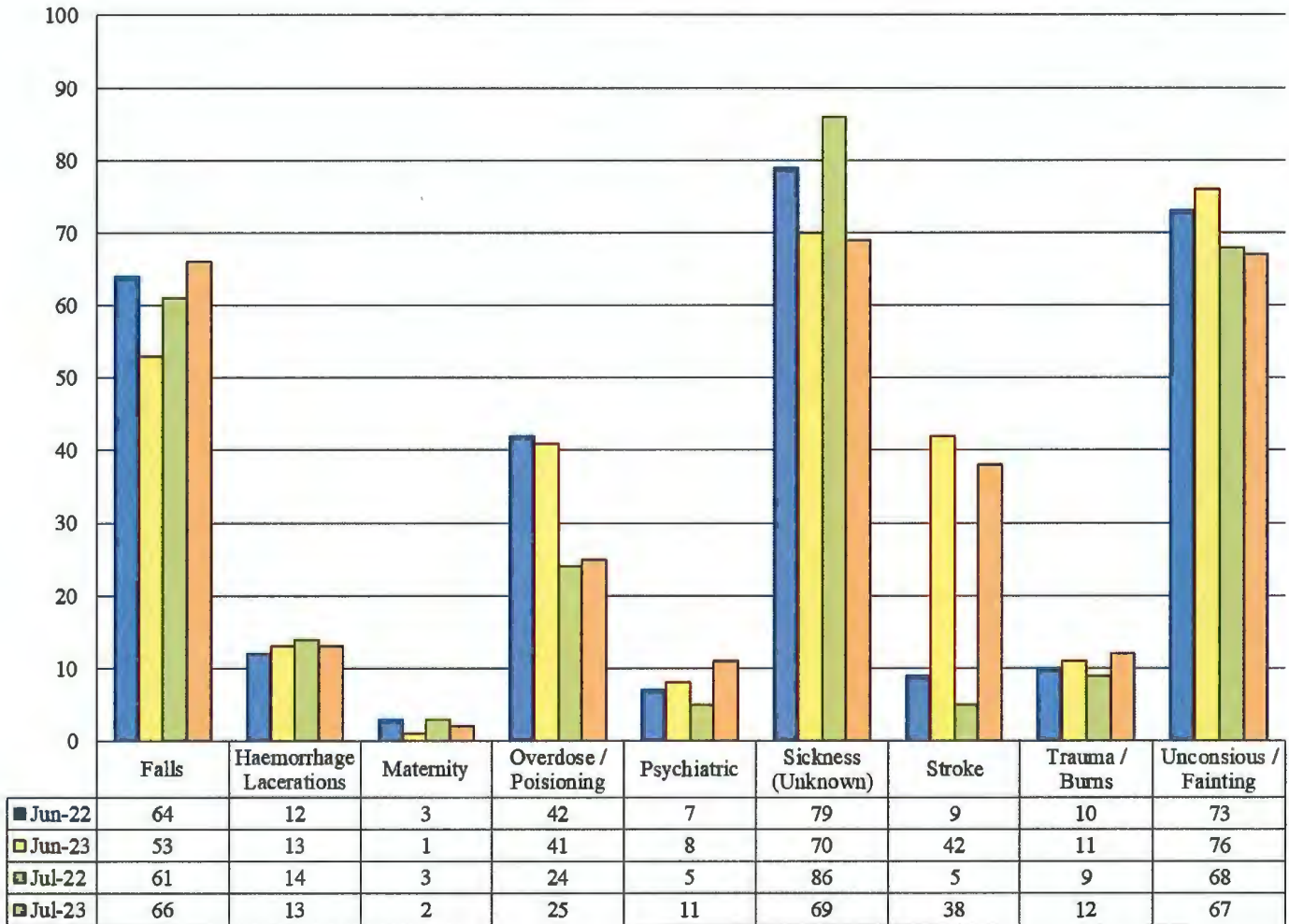


Table 6b: June 2022/2023 and July 2022/2023 Medical Calls by Type



The following chart provides the overdose / poisoning incident volume breakdown for June and July 2023.

Table 6c: Overdose / Poisoning Incidents By Type – June and July 2023	June 2023 Details	July 2023 Details
Opioids	11	7
Other Miscellaneous Drugs	9	5
Alcohol	3	2
Unknown (No patient contact / BC Emergency Health Services staff on scene)	18	11
Totals	41	25

In June, out of 41 total overdose / poisoning calls, 28 were located outdoors and 13 were located in a commercial property or residence. In July, out of 25 total overdose / poisoning calls, 17 were located outdoors and 8 were located in a commercial property or residence.

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

Table 6d: Total Fire Calls Fore Service In June from 2014 to 2023

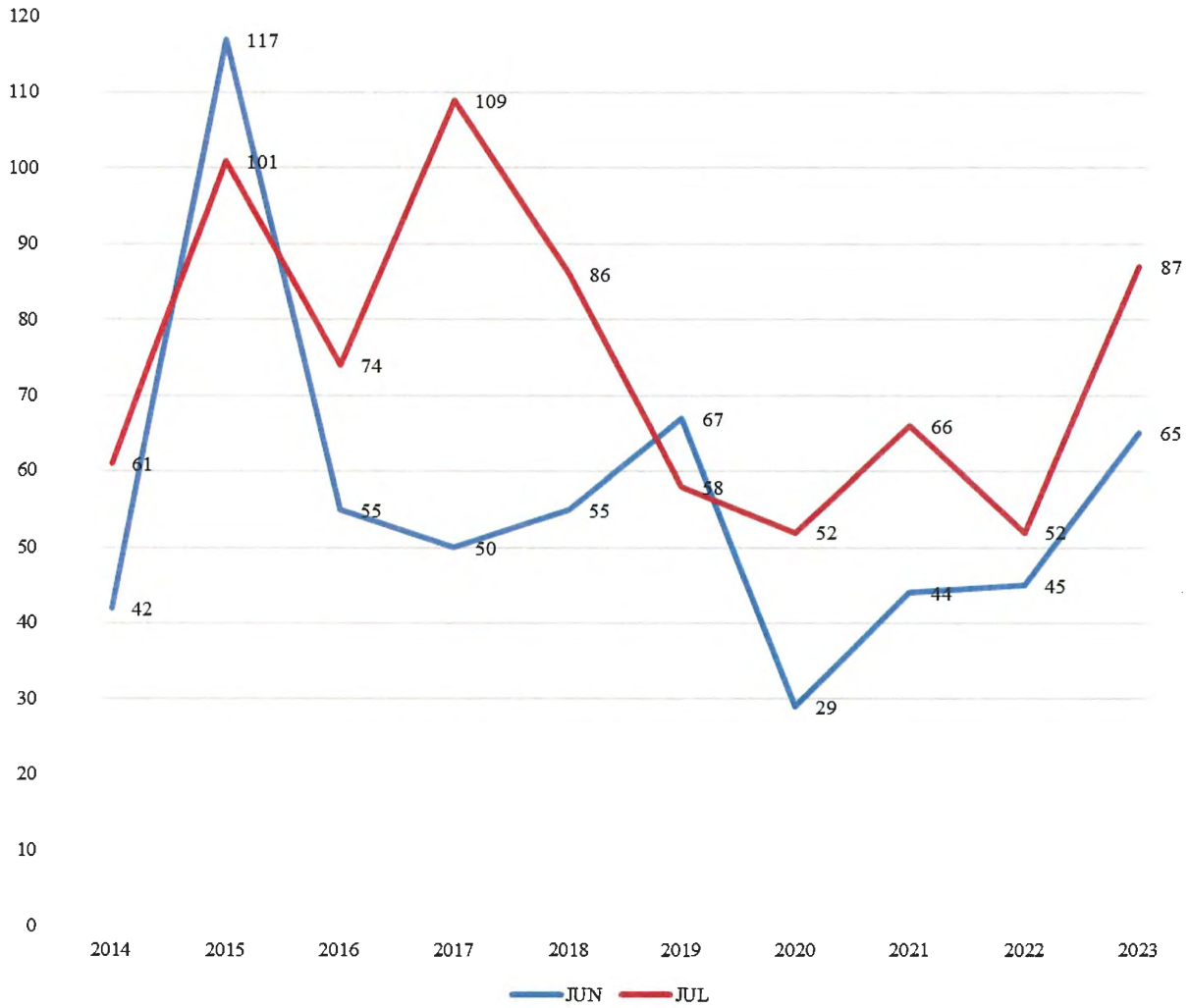
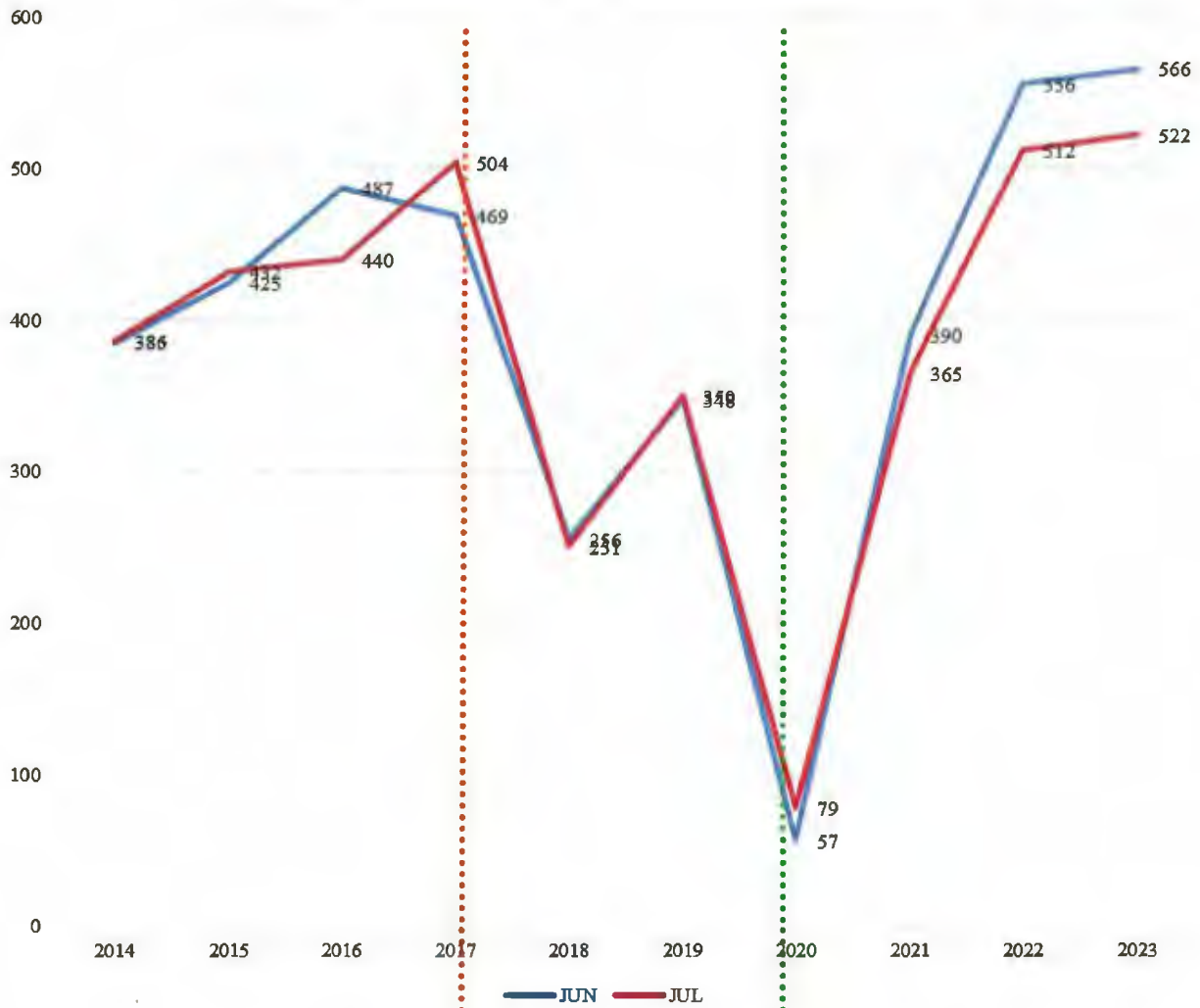


Table 6e: Total Medical Calls Fore Service In June from 2014 to 2023



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

Start of pandemic

Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for June 2023 are listed below:

Table 7: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – June and July 2023						
	June 2023			July 2023		
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential:	-	2	2	1	2	1
Single-family	-	7	3	0	1	0
Multi-family						
Commercial/Industrial	1	1	-	0	3	2
Outdoor	5	37	5	15	42	11
Vehicle	-	1	1	1	6	2
Totals	6	48	11	17	54	16

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 8: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – June and July 2023		
	June 2023 Details	July 2023 Details
Flammable / Combustible Liquids	1	0
Gasses (Natural / Propane)	10	2
Unclassified	1	1
Totals	12	3

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in June 2023 and July 2023 (Combined total 152)

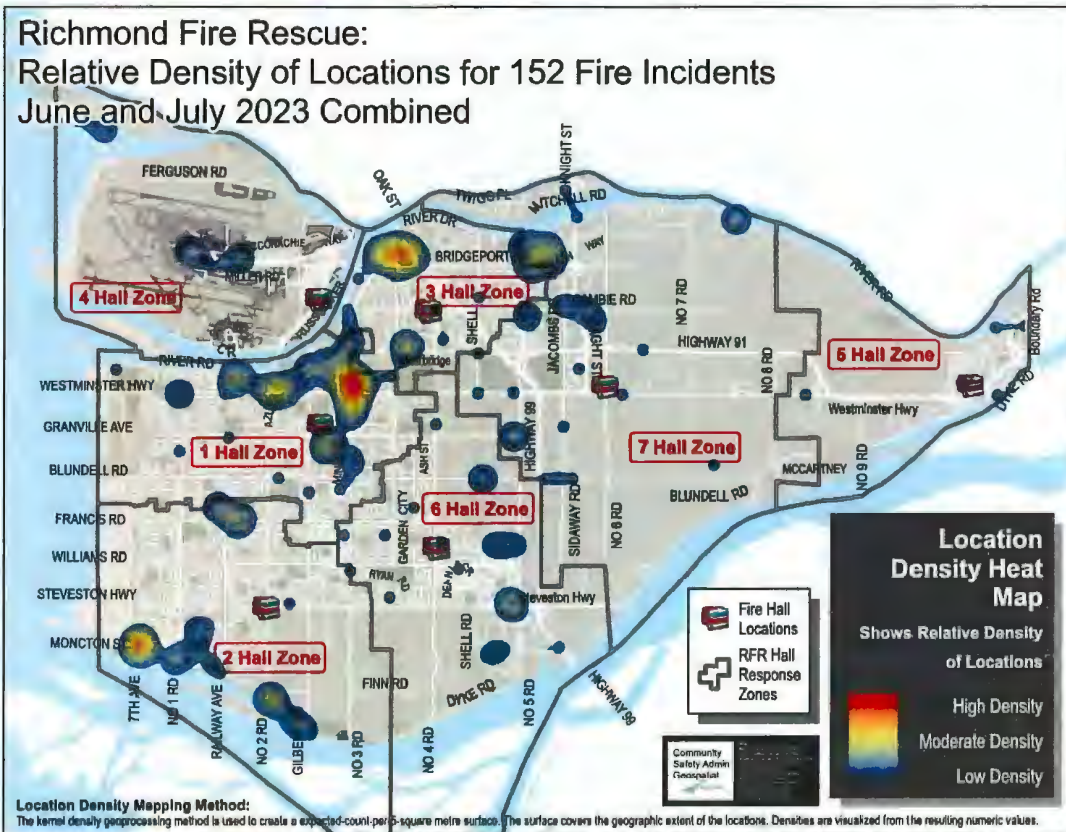
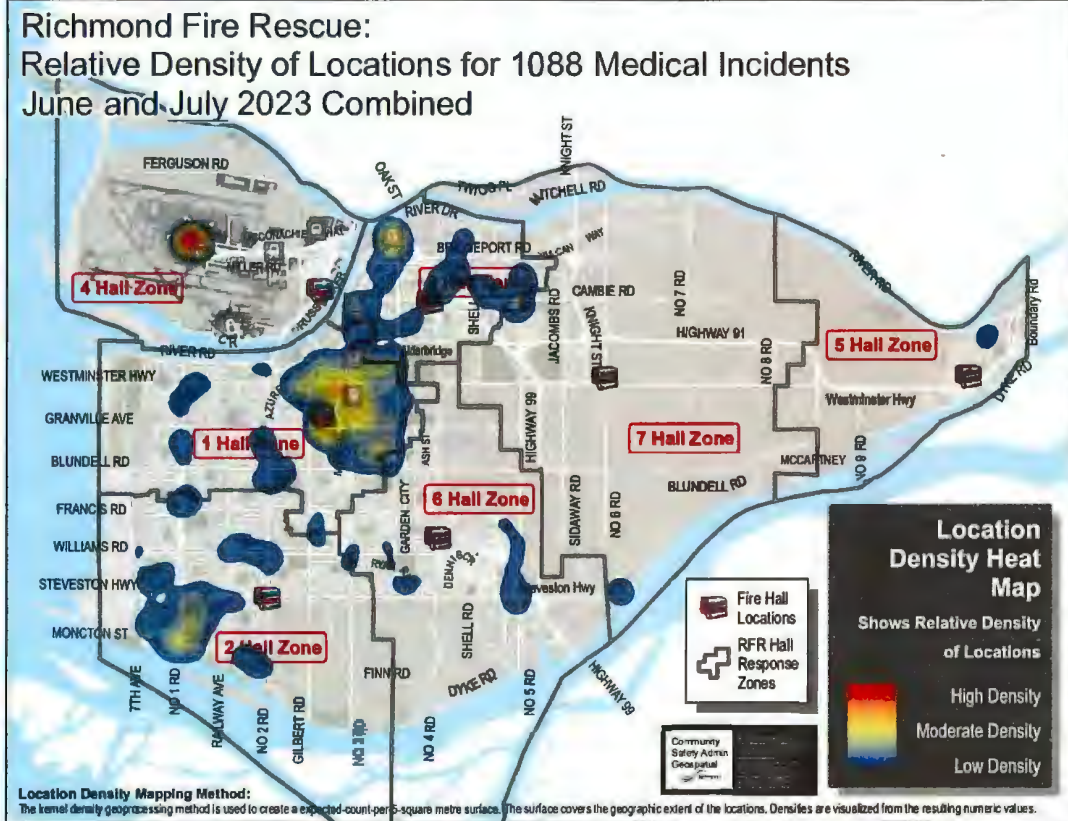
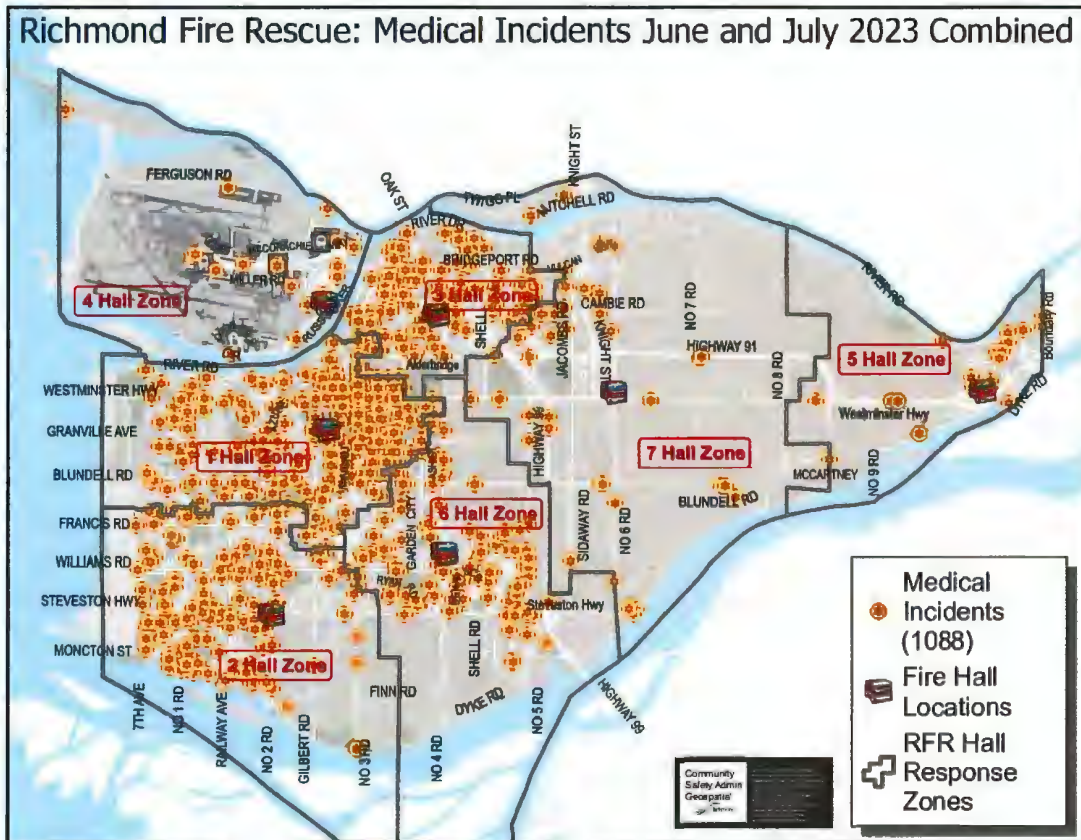


Figure 2: Location of Medical Incidents in June 2023 and July 2023 (Combined total 1,088)



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Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in June 2023 and July 2023 (Combined total 184)

