



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Community Safety Committee

**Date:** September 13, 2021

**From:** Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief

**File:** 99-Fire Rescue/2021-  
Vol 01

**Re:** Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2021

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – August 2021”, dated September 13, 2021, from the Fire Chief, be received for information.

Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief  
(604-303-2701)

Att. 1

<b>REPORT CONCURRENCE</b>	
<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>
<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>	

## 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 Programs

Notable items from Emergency Programs (EP) for August 2021 are as follows:

- EP staff led a collaborative team, consisting of Corporate Communications & Marketing, Community Services, Public Works, Richmond Public Library, and Community Social Development, to create and action the Hot Weather/Poor Air Quality Centre Operational Guide and manage Emergency Cooling Centres for the community.
- City facilities were activated as Emergency Cooling Centres during the summer heat wave events including: Cambie Community Centre, South Arm Community Centre, all four Richmond Public Libraries, Richmond Brighthouse Cultural Centre and the Minoru Centre for Active Living. Staff continue to work with the Province on reimbursement for the supplementary time and resources operating the Emergency Cooling Centres.
- EP staff continue to provide Emergency Support Services to the Emergency Support Services Regional Wildfire Operations & Emergency Management B.C. (EMBC) – Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre (PREOC) one day every week. Staff supported evacuee management from several wildfire events in the interior of the Province during the deployments at the PREOC.
- EP staff drafted a support plan for the Mass Care and Evacuee Support in the event more evacuees were displaced into the lower mainland as a result of ongoing wildfire events. Staff collaborated with City Community Services, School District 38 and B.C. Housing to create a temporary lodging plan in the event evacuees needed lodging within the City.

#### Vaccinations

During August, staff continue to attend appointments for their immunizations.

#### Training and Public Education

Fire Training staff facilitated multiple training activities during August 2021 including: Technical High-rise and Rope Rescue, Confined Space, Technical Water Rescue and Defensive Driver Training.

During August 2021, public education events remained on hold. Fire staff continued to create and post educational videos on the RFR Facebook and website pages.

### Recruitment

During August 2021, interviews were ongoing for a number of important positions within Fire-Rescue and Emergency Programs. Fire Training staff prepared for the arrival of the next round of probationary recruits.

### Emergency Response

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

Richmond Fire-Rescue's goal is to respond to incidents in a manner where loss of life, reduction of property damage and protection of the environment is mitigated. In August 2021, there were a total of 898 incidents, representing a 108 per cent increase in incidences from August 2020 (Attachment 1).

Richmond Fire-Rescue is experiencing increases in medical responses due to the changes of the Provincial Health Orders and Medical Health Officer's direction. The increase in August 2021 is a result of the gradual return to normal levels of service of medical event types and responses to medical calls for hot weather responses. RFR continues to monitor all activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

The average time on scene for RFR crews was 44 minutes, which was higher than the 36 minutes recorded in 2020. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

	<b>Totals (2021)</b>	<b>Percentage Change from August 2020</b>	<b>Number Change from August 2020</b>	<b>5 Year Average for August</b>
Alarm Active No Fire	122	-13	-19	133
Explosion	0	0	0	0
Fire	45	-6	-3	59
Haz-Mat	9	+80	+4	11
Medical	461	+549	+390	326
MVI	83	+66	+33	80
Public Hazard	9	+50	+3	12
Public Service	114	+56	+41	76
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	50	+43	+15	72
Specialized Transport	5	+67	+2	5
Tech Rescue	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>+108</b>	<b>+466</b>	<b>773</b>

In August 2021, there were 45 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a six per cent decrease from August 2020. The average figure for fires reported in August over the last five years is 59.

Richmond Fire-Rescue'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 August 2021 are estimated at \$369,700. This total includes \$233,500 for building/asset loss and \$136,200 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$3,671,200 and the total value preserved from damage was \$3,301,500. These numbers translate to 90 per cent of value protected (Table 2); this is lower than the value observed in 2020.

<b>Incident Type Breakdown</b>	<b>Incident 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	5	2,216,500	180,000	563,000	131,000	2,468,500
Multi family	5	833,000	-	200	200	833,000
Commercial/Industrial	0	-	-	-	-	-
Outdoor	32	12,000	12,000	5,000	5,000	-
Vehicle/Vessel	3	41,500	41,500	-	-	-
<b>Totals*</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3,103,000</b>	<b>233,500</b>	<b>568,200</b>	<b>136,200</b>	<b>3,301,500</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

During August the Province of BC Wild Fire Service requested a fire engine with a crew to be deployed to assist with the wild firefighting efforts in the interior. The deployed crews were then assigned multiple suppression duties. No injuries were reported for any of the deployed staff.

Fire crews minimized harm and limited fires to the place of origin in these notable August 2021 incidents:

- **August 3, 2021 – Wildland fire on No. 5 Road.** Multiple crews responded to a wildland fire on No. 5 Road, which was quickly extinguished by fire crews. RFR crews carried out a search of the surrounding area to check for hotspots and to see if there were any suspicious persons around; none were found. A Fire Investigator attended the scene to collect information to assist in the cause and origin investigation. There were no injuries reported.
- **August 7, 2021 – Death on Cambie Road.** RFR crews responded to reports of a body lying in a ditch with a vehicle was found nearby. RFR crews surveyed the area and assisted the RCMP with their investigation set up. The person was confirmed as being deceased by on scene BC Emergency Health Services staff. The scene was taken over by the RCMP for further investigation.

- **August 8, 2021 – Kitchen fire on Snowdon Avenue.** RFR crews responded for a structure fire. Arriving crews made a quick attack on a kitchen fire with extension into the ceiling directly above. The fire was quickly extinguished and crews performed an overhaul to mitigate the ceiling fire extension. Ventilation was set up to reduce the smoke in the room of origin. The homeowner received burns to their forearms and BC Emergency Health Services crews provided treatment and transported them to Richmond Hospital for further care. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.
- **August 28, 2021 – Residential fire on Anahim Drive.** RFR crews responded to a two storey single-family residence. Arriving crews attacked and quickly extinguished the structure fire and then carried out overhaul and checked for extension. There were no injuries to residents or crews reported. Attempts were made to revive a family pet (cat), which was unsuccessful. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.
- **August 30, 2021 – Residential fire on Cullen Crescent.** RFR crews arrived on scene to a residential structure fire. Upon arrival crew found a vented fire on the first floor and quickly acted to extinguish it. One resident suffered smoke inhalation and was provided treatment by BC Emergency Health Services crews. Ventilation was set up on the first floor of the premises. No other injuries were reported. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.

#### **Financial Impact**

None.

#### **Conclusion**

During August 2021, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews continued to experience increases to incident volumes that are a return to volumes experienced in years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. RFR staff remain ready to react and adapt to the ever changing pandemic situation.



Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief  
(604-303-2701)

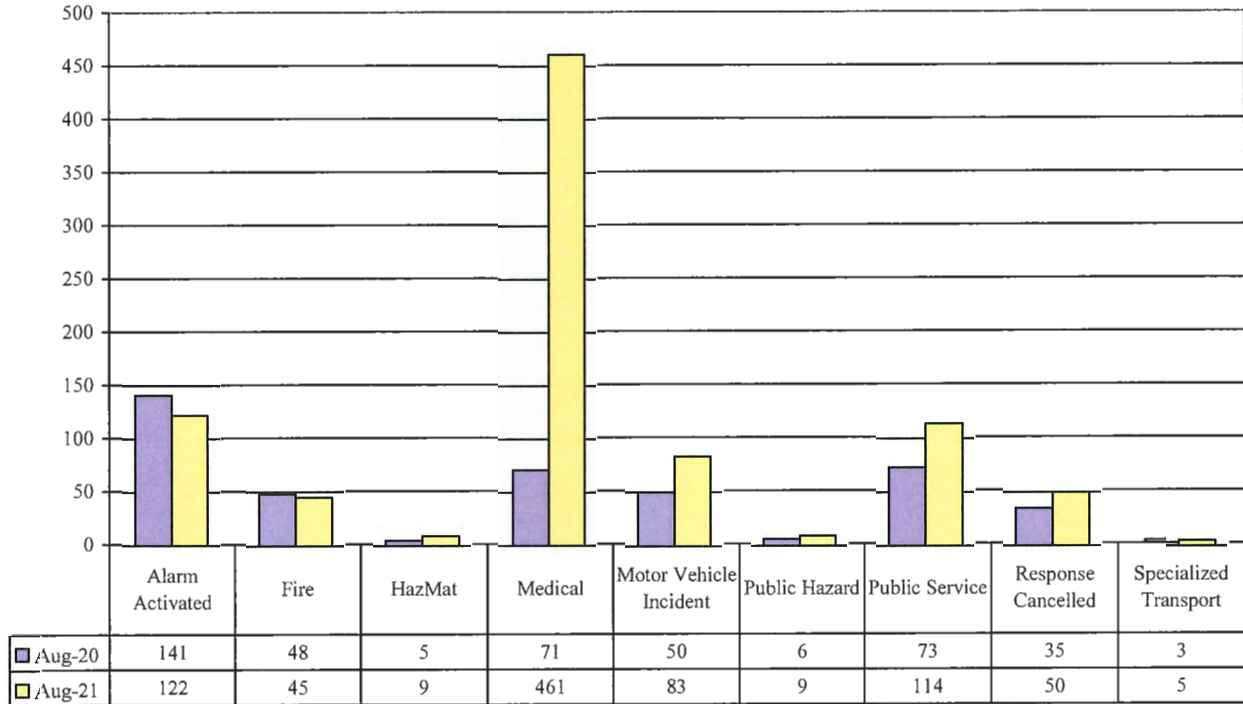
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of August's Fire, Medical and MVI's

**Incident Volumes**

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in August 2021 and 2020. In August 2021, there were a total of 898 incidents, compared to 432 in August 2020. This represents an increase of 108 per cent.

**Table 3: August 2020 & August 2021**

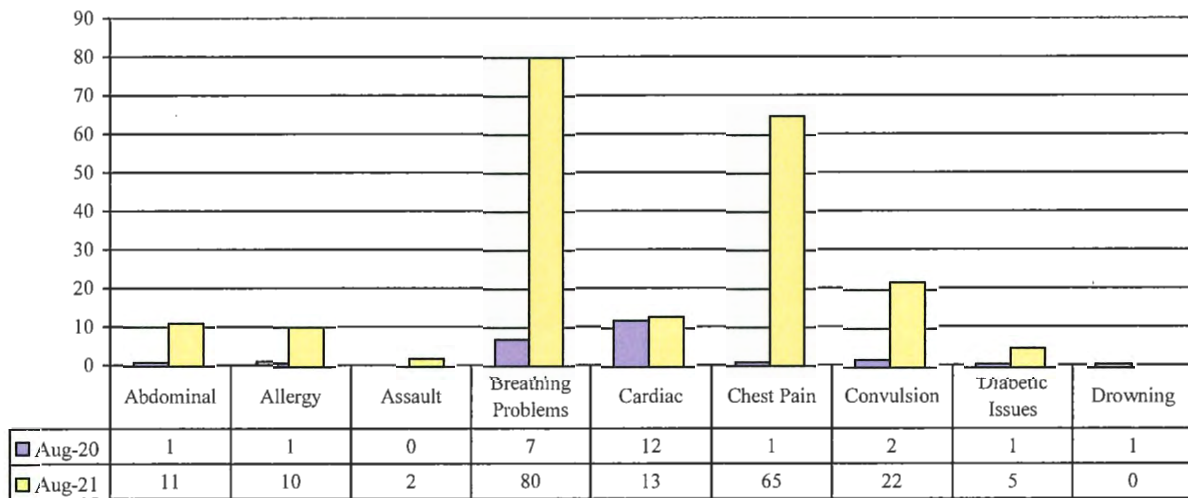


**Incident Type Legend:**  
**HazMat:** includes fuel or vapour; spills, leaks, or containment  
**Medical** includes: cardiac arrest, emergency response, home or industrial accidents  
**Public Hazard** includes: aircraft emergency, bomb removal standby, object removal, or power lines down  
**Public Service** includes: assisting public, ambulance or police, locked in/out, special events, trapped in elevator, water removal

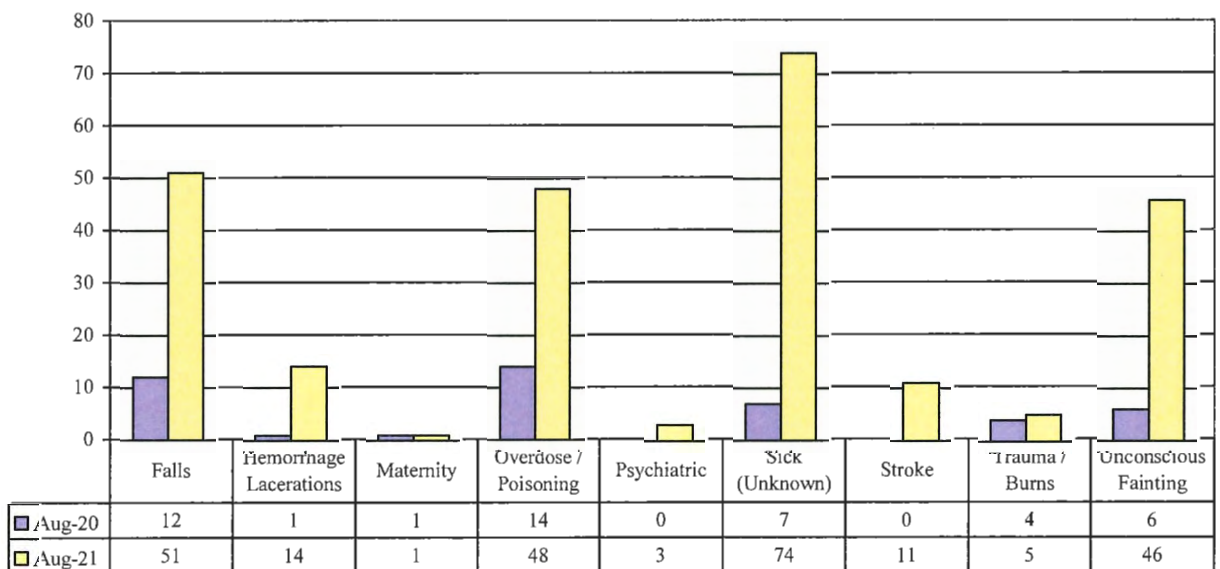
**First Responder Totals**

Medical first responder incidents comprised 51 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of August 2021. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for August 2020 and 2021 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 461 medical incidents in August 2021 compared to 71 in August 2020, an increase of 549 per cent. RFR are continuing to see incident numbers returning to normal levels due to gradual changes in the Provincial Medical Health Officer orders in response to the pandemic.

**Table 4a: August 2020 & August 2021 Medical Calls by Type**



**Table 4b: August 2020 & August 2021 Medical Calls by Type**



## Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for August 2021 are listed below:

<b>Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – August 2021</b>			
	<b>Suspicious</b>	<b>Accidental</b>	<b>Undetermined</b>
Residential - Single-family	-	3	2
Residential - Multi-family	-	5	-
Commercial/Industrial	-	-	-
Outdoor	3	26	3
Vehicle	1	2	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5</b>

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

<b>Table 6: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – August 2021</b>	
	<b>Details</b>
Flammable / Combustible Liquids	3
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	4
Standby / Support for other Agency	1
Unclassified	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>



Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in August 2021 (total 45)

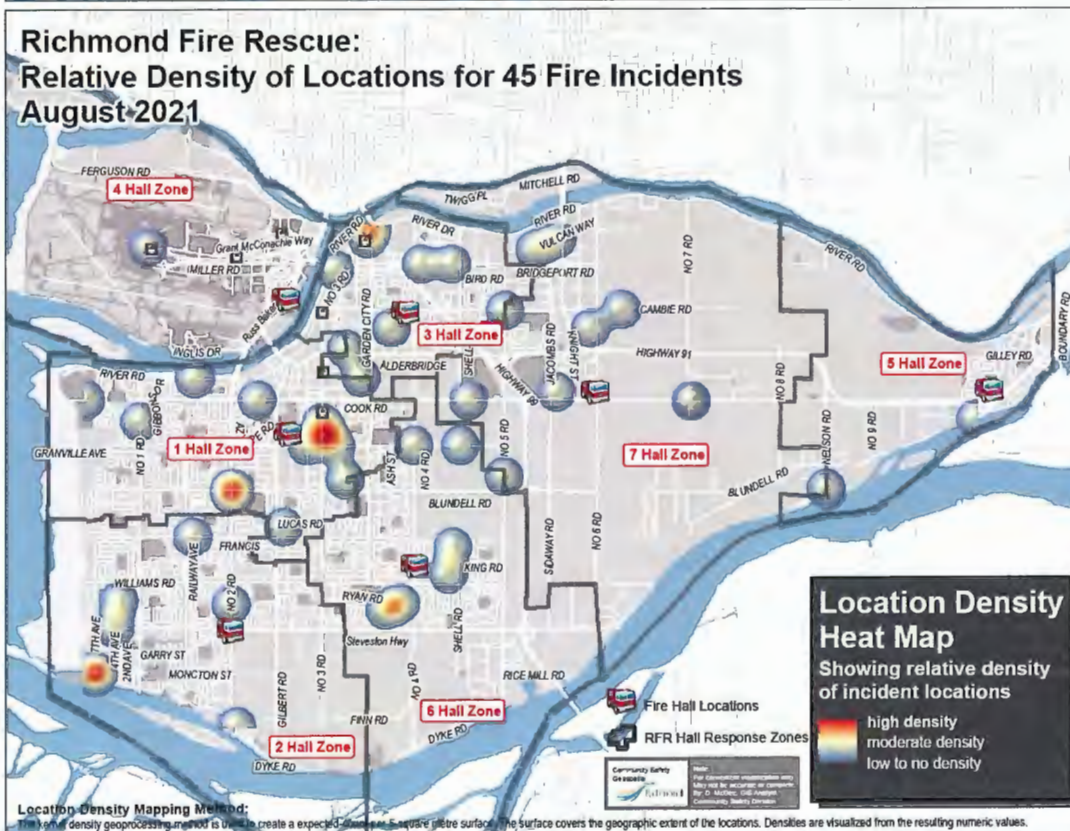
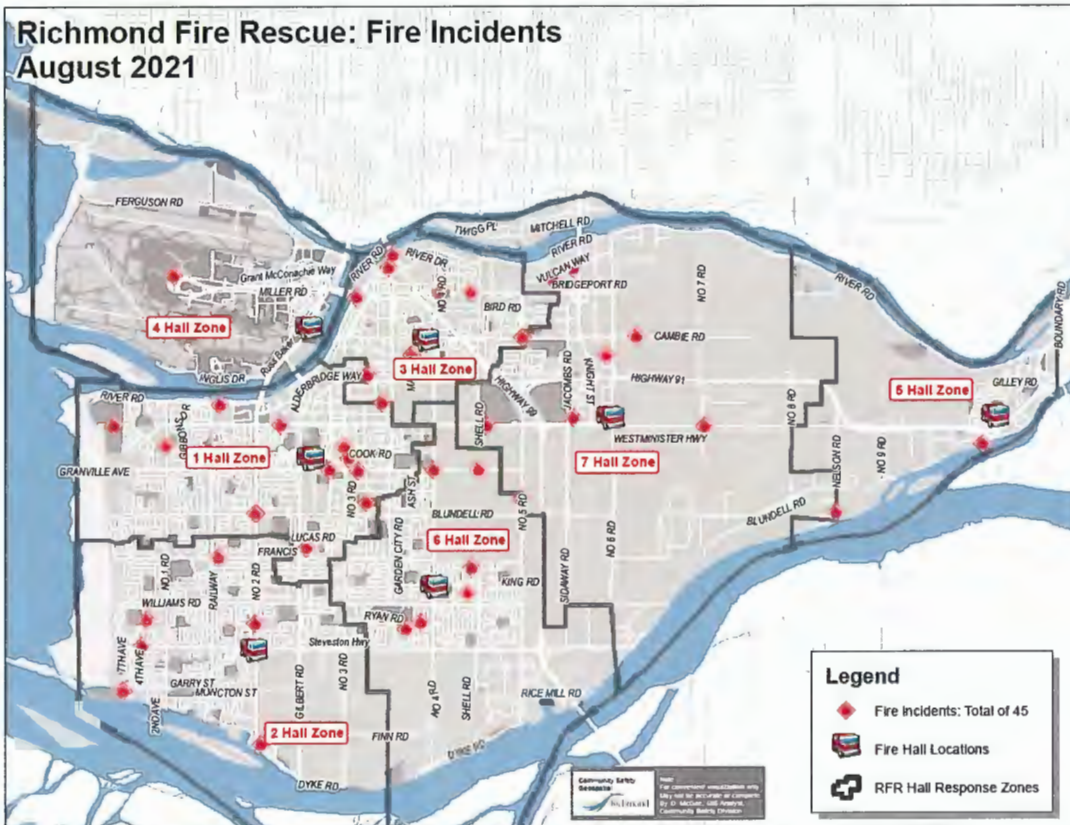
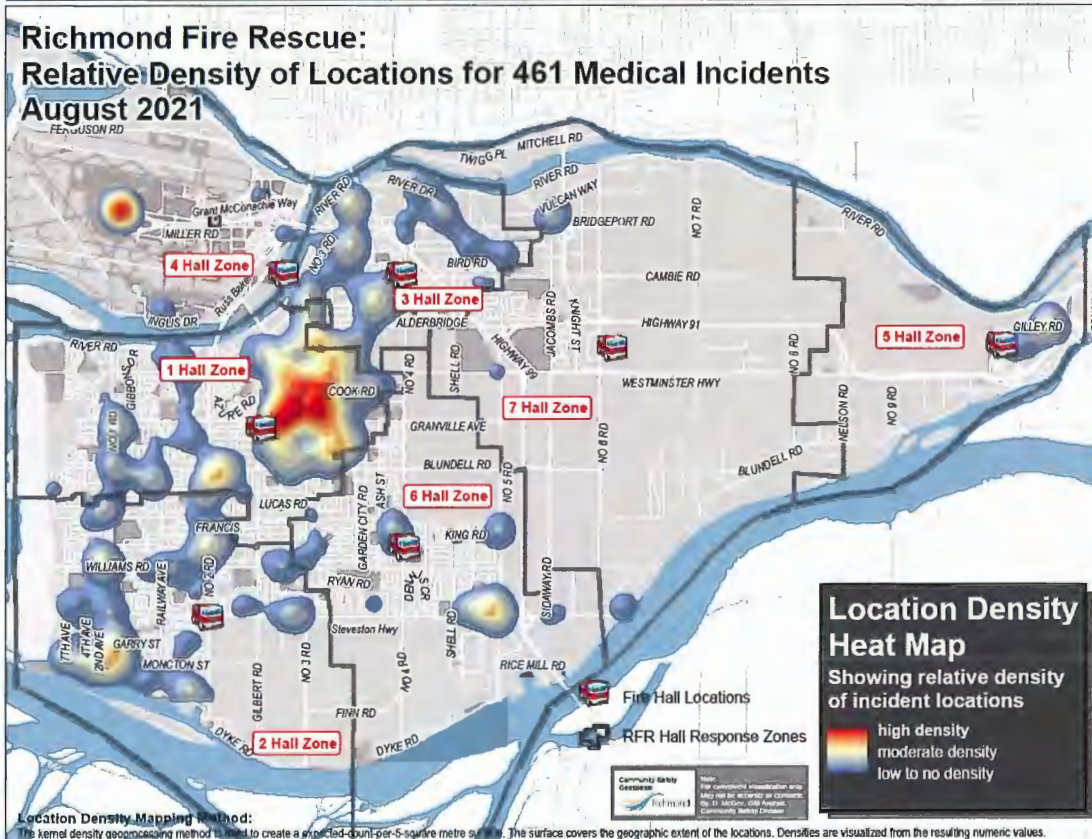
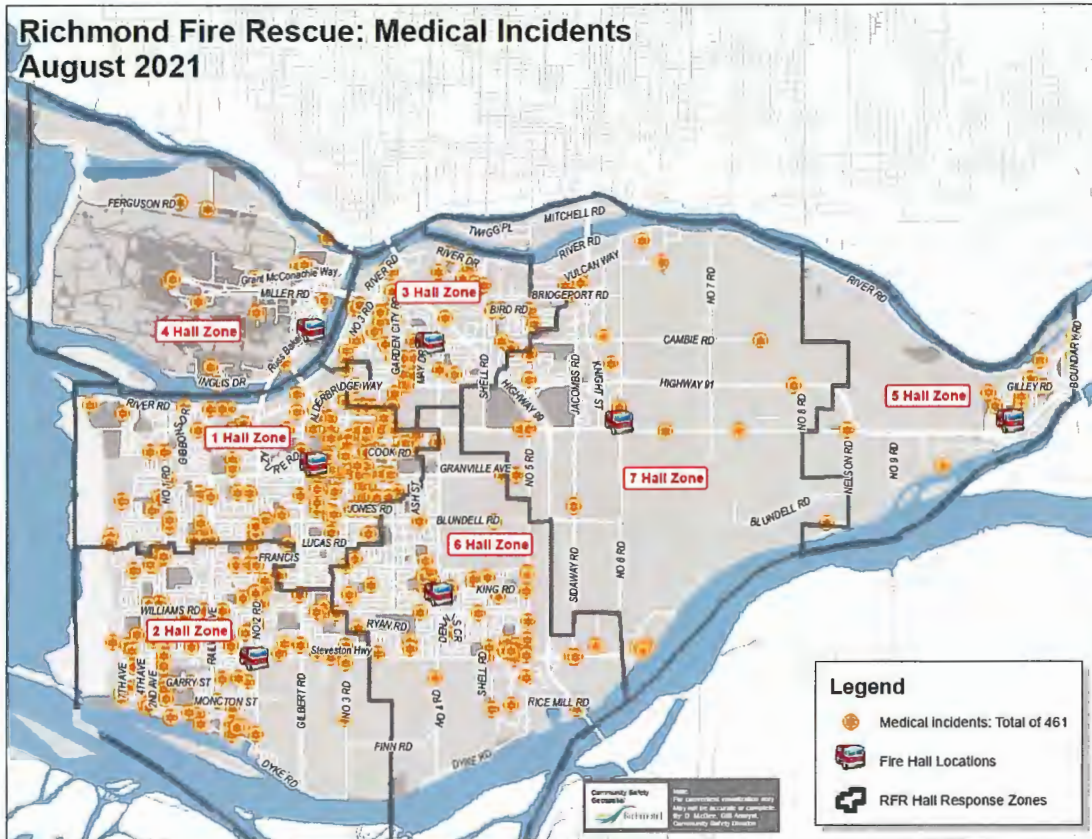


Figure 2: Location of medical incidents in August 2021 (total 461)



Location Density Mapping Method: The kernel density geospatial method is used to create a kernel density surface. The surface covers the geographic extent of the locations. Densities are visualized from the resulting numeric values.

Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in August 2021 (total 83)

