

MOTION

CAROL DAY

Medical Response Units for Richmond Fire Department

That staff be directed to investigate purchasing Medical Response units for responding to medical calls.

Rationale: The Vancouver Fire Department deploys Medical Response units called Rescue trucks to medical calls, these units have life saving gear and this allows the heavier fire engines to remain available for fire and rescue emergencies.

The lighter trucks are much cheaper to operate and cause significantly less wear on the road network. The Rescue trucks are built on a Ford F350 4X4 chassis and include rear beds and have medical equipment.

In Richmond over 80 % of the calls to the Fire Department are for medicals calls such as falls, trouble breathing, chest pains, medical and opioid overdoses so it would enhance the department to have medical response units. The cost for these units is far less than a traditional fire truck and will result in less wear and tear on the fire trucks that cost in excess of a million dollars each.



Vancouver Fire Fighters's Post



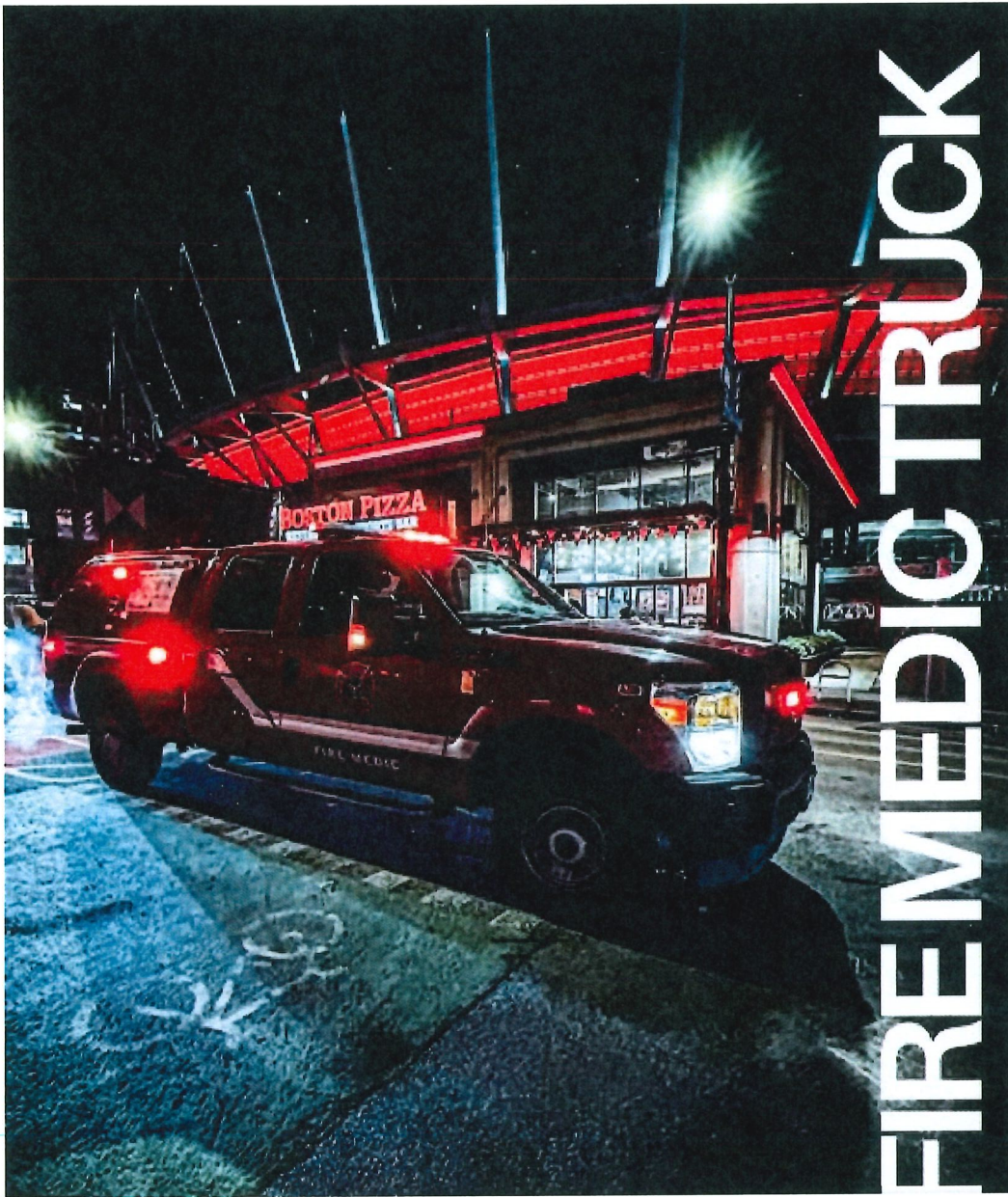
Vancouver Fire Fighters

March 13, 2024 · 🌐



🚒 What's a Rescue Truck? A crucial part of our emergency fleet, merging [#firefighting](#) & medical response. Staffed by fire fighters these trucks tackle fires by providing staffing & save lives through medical response. Despite being small they are equipped for many emergencies, but not all. Every second counts & these trucks deliver fast, effective aid.

[Vancouver Fire Rescue Services](#) [BC Professional Fire Fighters](#)



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Vancouver Medical Response Units: Rescue trucks

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) utilizes smaller, quick-response vehicles—such as modified pickup trucks and SUVs—for medical calls. [1, 2, 3]

These units, known as **medical-response units** or **rescue trucks**, provide specific benefits for VFRS: [1, 2]

- **Purpose-built for medical aids:** They are equipped with vital life-saving gear but allow the heavier fire engines to remain available for fire and rescue emergencies. [1, 2]
- **Downtown Eastside Efficiency:** VFRS uses cross-staffing, meaning the crew can easily swap between a massive pumper truck and a smaller unit based on the type of dispatch. [1]
- **Reduced Wear and Tear:** Lighter units are much cheaper to operate per mile and cause significantly less wear on the road network. [1]

If you'd like to know more, I can look into:

- **Which specific fire halls** utilize these smaller medic units.
- **How VFRS operates** compared to BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS).
- The **latest fleet initiatives**, including new electric fire engines. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Let me know what you'd like to **explore next**.



8 sites

- Vancouver Fire Fighters - Facebook
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- City looks to trim fire expenses - The Columbian
Vancouver may use smaller vehicles to respond to low-priority medical calls * Instead of dispatching a three-or-four person crew i...



The Columbian

- VFD's emergency response is more responsive - The Columbian
Captain and paramedic with the Vancouver Fire Department, Bob Carroll, left, and firefighter Natalie Newgent prepare to leave Stat...



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Core Medic Truck Specifications

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) custom-builds its medical-response vehicles for rapid urban deployment. The current fleet primarily relies on modified heavy-duty pickup trucks tailored for first-responder duties: [1, 2]

- **Chassis Model:** Ford F-350 4x4 Crew Cabs and heavy-duty Ford F-550 platforms. [1, 2]
- **Powertrain:** 6.2L gas or diesel engines paired with 10-speed automatic transmissions to handle stop-and-go city traffic. [1]
- **Custom Enclosures:** The rear beds feature custom aluminum utility bodies fabricated by emergency vehicle specialists like Safetek Promedx. [1, 2]
- **Battery Management:** Equipped with smart Idle Right battery systems to power emergency lights and climate-controlled medical storage without keeping the engine constantly running. [1]

Internal Layout and Equipment

Because these trucks do not transport patients, the rear cabin space is strictly dedicated to rapid-access life support gear:

- **Medical Cabinetry:** Roll-out trays and slide-out drawers hold trauma kits, advanced airway equipment, oxygen cylinders, and automated external defibrillators (AEDs).
- **Scene Support:** Built-in compartments hold small-scale tools, flashlights, and a traffic management kit for motor vehicle accidents.
- **Crew Space:** Standard four-door crew cabs allow up to 2 to 3 firefighters to travel comfortably with their personal turn-out gear. [1, 2, 4]

Operations and Deployment Strategy

- **The "Cross-Staffing" Model:** Firefighters do not sit in these trucks all day. At high-volume stations like **Fire Hall 2** in the Downtown Eastside, a single crew is responsible for both a full-sized engine/quint and a medic truck. When a medical call comes in, they hop into the F-350; if a fire call sounds, they switch to the big rig. [1, 2]
- **First-Out Strategy:** The medic unit is automatically designated as the "first-out" vehicle for suspected medical calls, keeping the multi-million dollar pumper trucks parked and ready for structural fires. []
- **Recent Service Changes:** To protect these crews from extreme burnout at busy halls, VFRS enacted policies to stop responding to lower-priority medical calls (such as non-life-threatening "Code Orange" or "Code Red" dispatches) unless BC Ambulance paramedics are delayed by more than six minutes. [1, 2]

Are you interested in learning about the specialized training **VFRS firefighters** receive to perform advanced pre-hospital care from these trucks?