



News Release

Fire Underwriter's Survey Shows Improved Results for SCRD Fire Departments

Sechelt, BC – October 11, 2018 - On October 11, the Planning and Community Development Committee meeting received the findings of an independent Fire Underwriters Survey of the Sunshine Coast Regional District's (SCRD) fire service, showing above average results. The main intent of the survey was to rate the SCRD fire departments ability to "prevent and control major fires."

"This success story is built on a community and corporate commitment to safety," says Bill Higgs, Fire Chief Special Projects. "Over the years, substantial improvements have been made in fire prevention and public education, fire hydrant systems, firefighting apparatus and equipment, and most importantly, training for our fire fighters."

The four SCRD fire departments (Gibsons and District, Roberts Creek, Halfmoon Bay and Egmont) received above average ratings for the Public Fire Protection Classification, a substantial improvement over 1999 grades, which is the last time a survey was conducted. Its Dwelling Protection Grade remained on average the same as in 1999, and is generally considered the highest scores possible for a volunteer fire department.

"The SCRD fire departments have invested in their apparatus, equipment and firefighter training," says Rob Michael, Gibsons and District Fire Chief. "It is encouraging to see that investment translates to improved fire insurance grading for the communities."

The Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) is a national organization that provides data to municipalities and insurers and also publishes the Canadian Fire Insurance Grading Index, which insurers consult when establishing rates.

FUS Certified Fire Protection Specialists conduct field surveys of the fire risks and fire defenses maintained in built up communities (including incorporated and unincorporated communities of all types) across Canada and the results of these surveys are used to establish a Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC) for each community.

The PFPC system provides a standardized measure of the ability of the protective facilities of a community to prevent and control the major fires that may be expected to occur by evaluating in detail the adequacy, reliability, strength and efficiency of the protective facilities and comparing the level of protection against the level of fire risk in the built environment.

"Fire department members are excited to see insurance grading equal to, or greater, than other rural departments in the province," says Kal Helyar, Egmont Fire Chief. "Our automatic and mutual aid agreements have benefited the community greatly and the improved insurance grading is a shining example of that."

The FUS also uses PFPC information to develop the Dwelling Protection Grade, which is utilized by personal insurers in determining property insurance rates for detached dwellings.

"This significant improvement in the SCRD's fire service is a result of a region-wide commitment to fire protection and safety", says Pat Higgins, Roberts Creek Fire Chief. "Many staff and the public, in addition to our four fire departments, have significantly contributed to this accomplishment while further improvement will continue to be investigated."

Media contact:

Janette Loveys, Chief Administrative Officer
Sunshine Coast Regional District
Tel.: 604-885-6811
Email: janette.loveys@scrd.ca