

Van Anda Improvement District – Jan 2025 Newsletter



Location: 2036 Marble Bay Road (Firehall)

Mail: Box 115 Van Anda BC V0N 3K0

Phone: 604-486-7035

Email: contact@vananda-id.ca

Website: vananda-id.ca

Ratepayers should phone the Water Operators directly if they experience issues such as no water, low water pressure, or leaks.

Marianne Segers: 1-604-315-1363

Office phone messages and email are checked daily; urgent items will be responded to immediately, otherwise during office hours.

VAID Trustees and employees continue to work hard on your behalf to supply clean, safe potable water for home consumption and fire protection. Any ratepayers who have concerns or suggestions, please let us know.

We want to hear from you!

The 2025 Annual General Meeting will be Saturday April 19 at the Legion. Consider volunteering for your community as a Trustee; we will be voting for one Trustee position. Make a difference in your neighbourhood!

Thanks to those who have made donations. For others, keep in mind that as a registered municipal public body, we are qualified to receive gifts of money, supplies, or work-in-kind, and issue Official Donation Receipts for credits in your tax return.

Water Treatment

Our water treatment plant filters, removes sediments and organics, and disinfects our water using both ultraviolet light and chlorine.

Water Quality

A Water Quality Advisory was in effect for most of the year and there were several short-term Boil Water Notices. 2024 brought many challenges with our 5-year-old water treatment plant, most of which have been resolved, and plans are in place for the rest.

The Water Quality Advisory is due to temporary Ultraviolet Treatment (UVT) insufficiency. UVT is the final step in water treatment before chlorination. The UVT system is not adequate at present due to the dissolved solids not being removed by the Ion Exchangers (Ionex), as designed. Replacement of the Ionex media will solve this issue however it is a complicated and expensive process. This job has been contracted to Aaron Service & Supply and is scheduled for late December 2024. Timing depends on if the Ionex maximum flow rate is enough to keep up with the leaks.

Replacement of the chlorine analyser is also scheduled to be completed soon. This will solve the issue that caused the most recent Boil Water Notice.

The addition of a sand filtration unit between the self-cleaning filters and the cartridge filters is expected to be completed summer 2025. This sand filter was donated to VAID from a Vancouver Island location that has since connected to a larger water supply system. It will save us money on treatment consumables such as cartridges, chlorine, salt, and electricity, and extend the life of the new ionex media.

Tolls & Taxes

We have kept this year's increase of Water Tolls and Parcel Taxes for most properties to 6%, which is the minimum required, especially given the inflationary pressures that continued this year.

If you believe an error may have been made in your billing, contact the office as soon as possible. You can also register for the 2025 Court of Revision to speak to Trustees about your invoice on Saturday February 8th at the Van Anda Firehall.

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Leaks Status

Leaks have continued to increase even after the many repairs during the year. We estimate the volume of water treated for 2024 will be about 20% more than 2023. If this continues, the water treatment plant will not be able to keep up. Finding these leaks is our major priority.

Due to the severity of this situation, a leak detection specialist has been contracted - Velocity Water Services will be here in January using their industry-leading technologies in acoustic leak detection to locate water leaks. Preliminary surveys are completed using listening devices called loggers that are strategically placed throughout the water distribution system. These loggers activate overnight and log potential leak locations. Once leak locations have been identified, their technicians use a correlating device to better pinpoint a leak location. This is then followed up using a ground microphone that can listen at any specific location.

Many thanks to those who have helped identify and repair the leaks.

Climate Change & Water Restrictions

Recent summers brought extended dry periods, with lower lake levels. The intake pump is now on a float to ensure that low water levels at the intake well do not impact pump operation.

Our water supply, Priest Lake, has plenty of water. Seasonal water restrictions are put in place to manage the volume of water that is treated, as high usage can max out the plant capacity and water supply for fire protection. We heard your comments and suggestions, and the Water Conservation Bylaw was changed this year to be clearer about Restrictions.

Please ensure your hoses have attachments to restrict full flow and let us know of concerns about excessive water use. Insulate pipes to avoid freezing.

CALL FOR CONTRACTORS

Contact the office if you have the necessary equipment and would like to be considered for contract work for Van Anda's water system.

Email contact@vananda-id.ca or phone 604-486-7035

Encouraging Water Conservation

VAID continues with our program to ease up the summer load on the Water Treatment Plant by offering a discount for drip irrigation parts.

This is a method of plant watering that uses much less water than traditional methods. VAID will help you reduce the costs of purchasing a drip irrigation system – please contact us for details.

Employee Changes

We have 1 new employee who started working for VAID in 2025 after Austin Rycroft resigned. Trevor Morrison (Water Operator in training) started in April. Marianne Segers continues as Water Operator and Sandra Haszard as Administrator. Joseph Scott's position has changed to Operations Coordinator.

Text Notification System

We are setting a system for notification by text. If you know of anyone who would like to be texted when there are water issues, please let us know. In the meantime, be notified immediately by email for outages, monthly newsletter, and other events at vananda-id.ca/subscribe/

Members of the public are invited to join us at our regular monthly board meetings. 2025 dates:

Jan 15, Feb 12, Mar 12, Apr 16, May 14, June 11,
July 16, Aug 13, Sept 17, Oct 15, Nov 12, Dec 17

Court of Revision: Feb 8
Annual General Meeting: Apr 19

Van Anda Fire & Rescue – January 2025 Newsletter

2024 CALL OUTS

- 0 structure fire
- 2 small fires put out easily
- 4 wildfires
- 3 burning complaints
- 29 medical calls
- 2 minor motor vehicle incidents
- 7 Duty Officer calls
- 4 Fire Chief calls
- Total of 51 calls

3 new members joined the department in 2024.
Welcome to the team!

Fire Chief: Mark Robert
Deputy Chief: Paul Nilsen

Fire Fighters: Andrew Turner
Colin Duffy
Dominic Galon
Jacob Doyle
Joe Winnig
Kevin Schwenk
Marianne Segers
Matthew Nordli
Ravyn Godwin
Sylvia Praught
Zachary Goldman

Training Completed in 2024

Members completed training for Emergency Medical Responder First Aid, S-100 Wildfire (BC Wildfire Service recognized Basic Fire Suppression and Safety), Live Fire exterior and interior firefighting at the facility in Lund, and a chain saw operator's course.

VAFD and Gillies Bay Fire Department train together often and work well together at incidents. Training with GBFD this year included live fire training on Texada – 2 boats and 2 structures.



Equipment Upgrades

We purchased a fire blanket for vehicle fires. Some electric vehicles may take up to four hours to put out with just water. With the blanket and water, it can be put out much faster by cutting oxygen out of the fire triangle.

Other upgrades include a new first aid kit, a new O2 tank, SCBA facemasks, tools and supplies for the fire and rescue vehicles, and forest fire fighting equipment.

Community Emergency Preparedness Grant

The 2023 grant funds were received in 2024 (\$24,644). These were used for S-100 forest fire fighting training, turnout gear, a 1200 USG portable water tank with carry case and ground tarp, Mark-3 pump package (including suction hose, foot valve, fuel line, and fuel can), protective jackets and vests, forestry shovels and axes, and other forestry gear.

Wildfire Skid Donation

The Texada Fire Fighters Association received a donation of a wildfire skid. This is a self-contained 1200L tank, a wildfire pump, and a section of hose on a skid that fits in the back of a pickup or on a trailer. The donor, GlobalMedic, were donating a number of these units across Western Canada, and we were lucky enough to get one.

Contact info: Fire Chief Mark Robert phone or text 604-414-9662 or email firechief@vananda.ca

Van Anda Fire & Rescue – January 2025 Newsletter

Merging Fire Departments

Van Anda and Gillies Bay Fire Departments looked more at merging, but it seems there is no way to do this while keeping full control of the FDs on Texada. Along with training together, both are now part of the Texada Fire Fighters Association.

Increased Fire Protection Area

20 property owners outside the Van Anda Improvement District (ID) applied to become part of the ID. 6 now have Fire Protection in place. Both Texada's Fire Departments (FDs) will respond to a fire on their properties. 6 other owners decided not to proceed after being informed of the estimated increase to their Rural Property Tax for funding the FD. We are waiting for confirmation from the remaining owners to continue with their applications.

The FDs of Van Anda and Gillies Bay have an agreement in place for immediate response to fires in both IDs. Fires within the boundaries of either ID are attended to by both FDs without delay. Our FDs cannot attend fires outside the IDs, unless called in by Forestry. Forestry will not act on structure fires or request FD assistance until the fire has spread to the forest. This means valuable time is wasted, which could lead to a disastrous situation.

Annual Burn Ban

We heard your comments and suggestions, and the Fire Regulation Bylaw was changed this year to be clearer about burning restrictions and match up with those in Gillies Bay.

General Information

The Fire Department and Firefighters continue to assist BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) with patient movements and transport.

Mark Robert accepted the position of Fire Chief. Mark was Acting Fire Chief since Mike Craggs left. Phone or text Mark at 604-414-9662 or email firechief@vananda.ca

Please think about becoming a volunteer member and helping your community!

A couple of hours a week are all you need to become a volunteer firefighter:

- ✓ No previous experience necessary.
- ✓ All gear and training provided at no cost.
- ✓ Accident insurance coverage (new – 24/7 coverage, not just while performing fire fighter duties).
- ✓ Practice once a week for two hours with occasional weekend training.
- ✓ CRA tax benefit.
- ✓ More firefighters means lower home insurance costs for everyone in Van Anda.

Anyone interested in joining is welcome to attend a practice. These are held on Monday nights beginning at 6:30 pm. (This may be changed to weekends to accommodate shift workers.) You don't have to live in Van Anda to join.

Phone or text Fire Chief Mark Roberts for more information at 604-414-9662 or email firechief@vananda.ca

Training

Hall training focuses on practical skills, hazard awareness, SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus), ropes and pulleys, pumper skills, hydrant hookup with truck pressurization, traffic control, and radio use. First Responder medical scenario training is ongoing, as is forest fire fighting training.

Training away such as Live-Fire, EMA accreditation, Critical Incident Stress Management, Air Brakes endorsement, and Class 4 endorsement on Driver's License is paid for by the Fire Department and costs such as travel, food, and hotel are also covered.

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