

# Van Anda Fire & Rescue Report for 2024

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING April 26, 2025

### 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

Fire Chief: Mark Robert  
Deputy Chief: Paul Nilsen  
Fire Fighters: Andrew Turner  
Dominic Galon  
George Franklin  
Jacob Doyle  
Joe Winnig  
Kevin Schwenk  
Marianne Segers  
Matthew Nordli  
Ravyn Godwin  
Zachary Goldman



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

### Training

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.

Training so far in 2025 includes Vehicle Extrication; planned is Jaws of Life training – one day will be with GBFD and another day with Lafarge Mine Rescue.

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

In 2024, we purchased a fire suppression 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, ladder, toolbox, tools and supplies for fire and rescue vehicles, and forest firefighting equipment. Electrical work was completed at the Firehall to repair heaters and wiring.

For 2025, purchases include 6 SCBA tanks, 8 new hoses for the firetrucks, first aid kit, gate for below Legion (replacing blocks in road so emergency access is possible), 602 brake repairs, hats and toques for members, and 3 sets of turn out gear. VAFD shared the repair cost with GB for the air compressor located in Gillies Bay Firehall. Ordered and expected soon are hydrant de-chlorination diffuser (removes chlorine from water during flushing) and 2 climbing harnesses for rescue.

### New Rescue Truck

In March 2025, we purchased a 2011 Dodge Ram 2500 from Qualicum Beach Fire Department. This vehicle is in excellent condition and has been well maintained. Being a crew cab, there is room for more responders. Medical calls outside the ID boundaries are responded to in the Rescue vehicle. The old truck seats only 2 responders; on some calls we had 3 members driving their personal vehicles to calls. Without lights and sirens, they do not have right-of-way to these calls. The old rescue truck will be used along with the new one for medical calls and wildfire response.

### 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.

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

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### 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, was donating a number of these units across Western Canada, and we were lucky enough to get one.

### 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 Texada's Fire Fighters Association.

### Texada Island Volunteer Firefighters Association

Both department's members now belong to an Island wide group, Texada Volunteer Firefighters Association. Any activities undertaken for the Fire Department by Volunteer Firefighters Associations will now be with the Texada group.

### Increased Fire Protection Area

20 property owners outside the Van Anda Improvement District (ID) applied to become part of the ID. Of these, 6 now have agreements for Temporary Fire Protection until the District Boundary change is complete. Both Texada's Fire Departments (FDs) will respond to a fire on these properties. 6 other owners decided not to proceed after being informed of the estimated increase to their Rural Property Tax for funding the FD. There was no response 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. The new bylaw can be found on our website [vananda-id.ca/fire-restrictions/](http://vananda-id.ca/fire-restrictions/) along with BC Wildfire Service Fire Danger Rating and Coastal Fire Bans.

### General Information

Mark Robert accepted the position of Fire Chief. Mark was Acting Fire Chief since Mike Craggs left.

Firefighters have insurance coverage in case of accident. This was previously limited to Fire Department activities only. In 2024, we extended the coverage to 24/7.

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

### ***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.
- ✓ Having more firefighters helps 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.

**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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