



Central Coast
REGIONAL DISTRICT
That we may be good people together

The Future of Fire Services in the Bella Coola Valley



Help Name Our Fire Service!

We're renaming our local fire service, and we want the community to decide.

Cast your vote & help shape the future!

Five name options to choose from:

- 1 Bella Coola Valley VFD**
- 2 Bella Coola/Hagensborg VFD**
- 3 Hagensborg/Bella Coola VFD**
- 4 Central Coast VFD**
- 5 Bella Coola Valley Fire & Rescue Services**

The community's voice matters — and we need **you** to decide!

Scan the QR Code or go to this link to vote:
form.jotform.com/251394884580064

**CHOOSE THE NAME TO
SERVE THE VALLEY!
VOTE NOW**



Local Fire Service Area

Not all properties in the valley are protected against fire. Find out today if you're part of the fire service response area. If not, contact us today if you'd like fire protection.

Fire protection areas must align with fire response areas to avoid unfair cost distribution.

Scan this QR code or go to the link below to view the service overview map and the recent **Report to the Board of Directors** concerning joining the fire service can be found.

www.ccrd.ca/node/4476



Become a Firefighter!

Interested in keeping your community safe?

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



- ▶ No previous experience necessary and volunteers receive an honourarium for training and attending calls
- ▶ All required personal protective equipment (PPE) and training are provided at no cost
- ▶ On duty insurance coverage
- ▶ Practice once a week for two hours
- ▶ Tax credits of \$6,000 provided to volunteer firefighters from the federal government who serve at least 200 hours per year.
- ▶ To start – fill out an application form, scan the QR code below or go to this link: form.jotform.com/251427648957067

Providing adequate training and resources is crucial for the effectiveness and safety of firefighters. The CCRD Fire Services Assessment recommends increasing the training budget to ensure compliance with updated training standards.

**HELP US HELP
OUR COMMUNITIES!
APPLY HERE**



History

Founded in 1944, the Bella Coola Fire Department was converted into a service of the CCRD in 1992. The Hagensborg Fire Department, founded in 1964, was converted into a CCRD service in 2021 following the decision to dissolve the Improvement District.

Over the years, both departments have relied on dedicated volunteer firefighters to provide fire protection to both Bella Coola and Hagensborg. **Both departments have long histories of helping community residents when they need it most.**

Present Day

In late 2024, a detailed report outlining options and recommendations for fire service delivery in the Bella Coola Valley was presented to the CCRD Board.

In February, residents heard from the CCRD about the possibility of combining the Bella Coola and Hagensborg fire protection services. Following public engagement and debate, the Board of Directors has decided to proceed with formally merging the two services into a unified fire service with two fire halls. This decision aims to improve department coordination, keep overall service costs low and meet new regulatory and operational standards.

Fire services face substantial adjustments due to new regulations under the Fire Safety Act, the replacement of aging apparatus, increased training standards, and financial considerations that will have an impact on our community.

The new service will operate two fire halls but be managed as one service. This change follows months of discussion and recent public engagement on the topic. Bylaw updates are now underway to support the merger. Part of this process includes choosing a new name for the service. **Make your vote count on choosing a new name!**

The CCRD is working towards maintaining Professional Standards for all our firefighters, including:

- ▶ Training, equipment and staffing required to meet all Minimum Standards and to safely perform duties.
- ▶ Inspection and Maintenance are to Worksafe BC OHS Regulation Part 31: Firefighting standards.

The report includes more information on the following topics:

Hagensborg Fire Department Status

The Hagensborg Fire Department requires additional volunteers and updated apparatus to meet Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) standards.

- ▶ Hagensborg has two trucks and only one has 5 years left of usable service time.
- ▶ The department needs five additional members to meet minimum requirements.

Bella Coola Fire Department Status

The Bella Coola Fire Department faces similar challenges with outdated apparatus and not enough volunteers.

- ▶ Both fire trucks are at service time limits of 30 years old.
- ▶ The department currently has a Fire Chief and five members, requiring five more members to meet minimum requirements.

Impact of Fire Protection on Insurance Rates

The Fire Services Assessment highlights the benefits of maintaining good Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC) and Dwelling Protection Grades (DPG). Improving fire protection classifications can lead to reduced insurance rates for residents and businesses.





- ▶ Improved PFPC and DPG may lower residential property insurance rates.
- ▶ A good PFPC can improve availability and pricing for commercial insurance coverages.
- ▶ Insurance companies use PFPC and DPG to assess insurable risk in communities.

Fire Service Merger Update

Merging Hagensborg and Bella Coola Fire Departments into one service with two fire halls aims to improve efficiency and meet legislative requirements. This merger will allow for better resource allocation.

- ▶ The combined service would consist of two fire halls and a total of 15 members, meeting FUS requirements (but more are always welcome!).
- ▶ The Board started the merger of the fire services in April.
- ▶ Outreach to service participants and firefighters is still underway.
- ▶ Staff and fire personnel are working on service integration.

Bella Coola Valley Regional Fire Service Area

-  Nuxalk Reserve Lands
-  Regional Fire Service Area
-  Noosatsum Fire Service Area
-  Parcels Not Covered by a Fire Service

