

Township of
Langley



Est. 1873

NEWS RELEASE

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COMMUNICATIONS AND SAFETY ENHANCED AS TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT JOINS E-COMM WIDE-AREA RADIO NETWORK

Loud, clear, connected, and better equipped to keep themselves and the public safe.

That's how Langley Township firefighters will be working, now that they have joined the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio Network.

On May 23, the Township of Langley Fire Department became a member of the Network, which provides top-of-the-line equipment to first responders and allows firefighters, police officers, and paramedics to all communicate on the same channels.

"We have been looking forward to this for a long time," said Township Fire Chief Stephen Gamble, adding that the improvement to the clarity of calls coming in was immediately noticeable as soon as the system was implemented. "Being a part of the Network will have an enormous impact on how firefighters do their jobs and their ability to help keep our residents safe."

E-Comm's Wide-Area Radio Network is the largest multi-jurisdictional, tri-service emergency radio system in British Columbia. First implemented in 1999, E-Comm recently completed a replacement of the regional network based on new digital radio technology. Now, more than 30 agencies - including BC Emergency Health Services within Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford, all police agencies in Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford, and 15 fire departments in Metro Vancouver - communicate on the Network.

The Township of Langley is pleased to be among them.

"Our firefighters work in all kinds of extreme conditions as they protect people, property, and the environment, and the radio is literally a lifeline," said Township of Langley Mayor and E-Comm Director Jack Froese. "Ensuring the wellbeing of first responders and the public is a top priority and the new Wide-Area Radio Network system and equipment will enhance both operations and safety, especially in mutual aid situations."

The Township of Langley has seven fire halls supported by 87 Career Suppression Firefighters and 105 Paid-Call Firefighters, who serve a population of 121,000.

In past years, Township fire crews had been working with a radio system and equipment, including portable radios and mobile truck radios, that were ageing and needed to be upgraded – a costly and complicated project, according to Township of Langley Assistant Fire Chief Monty Armstrong.

Instead, as part of the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio Network, they have been replaced with the latest technology and equipment specifically designed for the firefighters' environment.

"The radios are 'ruggedized' for durability and have extra-large controls to use when firefighters are using their gloves," Armstrong said. "The microphones are rated for use inside fire buildings and have noise cancellation – this ensures the firefighter's audio is clear. This adds to firefighter safety, and quick efficient actions being taken due to the clear communication."

"Firefighters face dangerous conditions and we know it's hard to hear when they're inside burning buildings or when they're spraying water while beams crash," said Oliver Grüter-Andrew, E-Comm President and CEO. "That's why we are committed to providing firefighters in the Township of Langley with broad radio coverage and the latest equipment. It's all about enhancing safety for firefighters and the citizens they serve in their communities."

For more information, contact Township of Langley Assistant Fire Chief Monty Armstrong at marmstrong@tol.ca or 604.532.7515.