

April 15, 2018

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### **Fire Department celebrates National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week**

The City of Campbell River is celebrating April 14 to 20 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week – to honour the men and women who respond to emergency calls and dispatch life-saving assistance.

*“Dispatchers play a vital role in public safety, serving as the “first” first responders, and an indispensable part of our emergency services team,”* says manager of fire administration Stephanie Bremer. *“City of Campbell River Fire Department dispatchers are recognized for their expertise and professionalism, demonstrated through the service they provide to 61 fire departments located here on the coast and in the Peace River region of the province.”*

Campbell River provides fire dispatch services under contract with the North Island 911 Corporation. The fire dispatch centre is staffed 24 hours a day with two professional public safety telecommunicators, who serve an estimated 310,000 residents living across more than 180,000 square kilometres in seven regional districts (61 fire departments) from central to northern Vancouver Island and across to Powell River as well as the Peace River Region. The fire dispatch centre is located in the No. 1 Fire Hall downtown and handled more than 24,000 incidents last year.

*“Locally, the efforts of our dispatchers are complemented by a team of responders and fire officers – both professionals and auxiliaries. Their dedication is a hallmark of our community’s commitment to safety,”* Bremer adds.

Every year, the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International sponsors National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week to honour the thousands of people who take calls and dispatch emergency professionals and equipment to people around the world.

Accidental 9-1-1 calls and non-emergency calls to 9-1-1 divert resources from real emergencies and put people’s lives at risk.

The City of Campbell River Fire Department extends a reminder about these guidelines to prevent accidental calls to 9-1-1:

- Don’t hang up when calling 9-1-1. If you called by mistake, let the operator know.
- Protect your cell phone by locking and storing it carefully.
- Don’t program 9-1-1 into any telephone.
- Never give phones to children to play with.
- 9-1-1 is for police, fire and medical emergencies only. Non-emergency calls should be directed to non-emergency phone numbers.

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