



March 14, 2025

Provincial Grant Will Fund Joint Fire Department Training Projects

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), Town of Qualicum Beach, District of Lantzville and Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department have been awarded a \$200,000 grant for two projects from the Government of British Columbia's Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF). The first project is the purchase of live fire training props for the joint training center at the Qualicum Beach firehall, used by Qualicum Beach Fire Rescue, Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department and Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department. The second project is the purchase of equipment to support a new joint training facility to be used by Nanose Volunteer Fire Department and Lantzville Fire Rescue. Coordinated and administered by the RDN on behalf of its regional partners, the grant will enable each department to enhance its training capabilities greatly and allow firefighters to meet the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards through local training opportunities.

The live fire training props for the joint training centre at the Qualicum Beach firehall will be fully funded by \$120,000 of the grant. The new props will enable a safer and controlled live-fire training experience for firefighters, currently unavailable at this joint training centre. This project also includes funding for about three firefighters from the three project partner fire departments to attend the 2025 Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit. At the summit, they will enhance their wildland firefighting skills and knowledge, which will help build regional resilience against interface wildfires.

The Nanose Volunteer Fire Department and Lantzville Fire Rescue will collaboratively develop and construct the joint training facility at the Nanose firehall. The two-story facility will have features like the Qualicum Beach firehall joint training centre, increasing regional training capacity and skill development opportunities. This project is funded with \$80,000 from the CEPF grant, \$30,000 in Growing Community Funds - \$28,500 from Electoral Area E (Nanose Bay) and \$1,500 from Electoral Area G (Englishman River, San Pareil, French Creek, Little Qualicum, Dashwood), \$30,000 from Lantzville Fire Rescue's 2025 budget and a nearly \$48,000 donation made to the Nanose Volunteer Fire Department in 2020.

For more information about the grant funding, visit ubcm.ca/cepf. For more information about fire services, visit rdn.bc.ca/fire-departments, qbfirerescue.com, lantzville.ca and dashwoodvfd.com.

Quotes

"Many communities in our province are served, at least in part, by volunteer firefighters whose vital work helps ensure peoples' safety and wellbeing," said Kelly Greene, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. "This funding through our ministry's Community Emergency Preparedness Fund will support the Regional District of Nanaimo's volunteer fire departments to better respond to fires and other emergencies and keep people in the region safe. We are committed to building stronger, more resilient communities throughout British Columbia."

"Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department is once again pleased to partner with our neighbouring departments to secure funding for the new training props. These props will enhance the already high level of training the area departments do." - Ron Schildroth, Community Fire Chief, Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department

“The training facility that will be built as a result of this joint application with Lantzville Fire Rescue will allow for further professional firefighter training that will benefit both our departments and the communities we serve.” - Leo Groenewegen, Community Fire Chief, Nanoose Bay Volunteer Fire Department

“We are very grateful to receive this grant that will be used to help train our firefighters for years to come.” - Nick Acciavatti, Fire Chief, Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department

“The live fire training props will benefit us and our regional partners by providing regular training opportunities so firefighters can respond effectively and efficiently to a fire event in the region. This collaboration indicates the ability and commitment of our local fire rescue departments to work together collectively.” - Peter Cornell, Fire Chief, Qualicum Beach Fire Rescue

“This new training facility will be a great asset to increase firefighter safety through hands-on training. We look forward to having a new training facility that we can train at with our mutual aid partners.” - Neil Rukus, Fire Chief, Lantzville Fire Rescue

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For more information, contact:

Rebecca Taylor
Communications Coordinator
Regional District of Nanaimo
250-713-2400
engagement@rdn.bc.ca

Peter Cornell, ECFO
Fire Chief
Qualicum Beach Fire Rescue
250-752-6232
Firechief@qualicumbeach.com

Nick Acciavatti
Fire Chief
Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department
250-752-5434
firechief@dashwoodvfd.com

Neil Rukus
Fire Chief
Lantzville Fire Rescue
250-390-2811
nrukus@lantzville.ca