

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES...

- ✓ **Saves Lives**
- ✓ **Saves Jobs**
- ✓ **Saves Money**



What you don't know about fire in Vancouver

- Vancouver Fire responded to **276 structure fires** in 2009 with a total **fire loss of \$11.2 million.**
- Of those, 223, or **80%, occurred in homes** and cost residents **\$8.8 million.**
- Vancouver Fire responds to **three home fires every five days.**
- The U.S. has a fire death rate more than twice that of European nations.
- Of the 25 top industrial nations, the U.S. has the **5th highest fire death rate.**



PREVENTION SAVES MONEY:

The total cost of fire to society is staggering—over \$182 billion per year, on the order of 1 to 2 percent of the gross domestic product, which was \$13.8 trillion in 2007. The U.S. has among the worst fire rates of industrialized nations.

PREVENTION SAVES JOBS:

For some businesses, fire causes a disruption that can never be overcome. In addition to lost jobs, a shuttered business contributes to neighborhood decline and lost tax revenue that communities count on to pay for public services and amenities.

PREVENTION SAVES LIVES:

Vancouver suffered five civilian fire-related deaths in the past decade. In the same time period, there were 134 fire related injuries. More property loss occurs every year due to fire than all other natural disasters combined.



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Vancouver residents live, work and play in a safe community because of targeted education programs and vigorous fire investigation.

EDUCATION

Most fires occur where least expected – in people’s homes. Public education solves problems before they become dangerous and costly! The Vancouver Fire Department delivers tailored public education that saves lives, saves money and saves jobs by...

- Targeting high-risk groups (children, elders, lower income, apartment occupants, non-English speaking residents)
- Educating over 3,000 eager first graders every year, teaching them the basics of fire safety as part of a “lifelong learning” approach to fire and life safety.
- Helping families struggling with juvenile fire setters. Using our teaching resources, we help families avoid tragedy through intervention and education.



INVESTIGATION

Washington state law requires cities to investigate the origin and cause of all fires. In the past three years Vancouver’s Fire-Arson team investigated 639 fires, 217 of which were incendiary (arson) fires. Vancouver Police made 67 arson arrests.



Fire investigation services and information are needed by:

- Victims of fire crimes
- Police, Prosecutors and the Courts
- Property owners
- Insurance companies
- Neighborhood residents and the community at risk

Vancouver Fire Department’s certified investigators are trained in the science of fire behavior. They are experts in related subject areas such as burn patterns, temperature determination, interpretation of thermal expansion, construction, electricity and human behavior.

We advise business owners to help prevent arson crimes using our expertise and the results of our investigations.

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Vancouver residents live, work and play in a safe community because of consistent, professional enforcement of fire and life safety codes.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Vancouver residents can confidently send their **children to school**, safely **visit stores and restaurants**, and **go to work without fear** of preventable injury and death—thanks to vigorous fire safety code enforcement. Firefighter survival is also enhanced by careful code enforcement in Vancouver.

We reach out to partner with the business community to help them prepare themselves for disaster, comply with laws, and prepare for successful safety inspections.

Identifying and analyzing fire trends and emergency call information helps the Vancouver Fire Department put effective, timely preventative measures in place.



Multi-family residences are high-risk properties that merit extra watchfulness. In the 2009 Springbrook Apartment fire, shown above, improperly discarded smoking materials in a balcony planter burned 22 apartments and left 40 people without a home. **Fire loss = \$1.17 million.**

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Your Vancouver Fire Department **saves lives, saves money** and **protects commerce** by insuring every new building and building alteration complies with the law. This protects current and future building owners, operators and occupants.

How it works in Vancouver's new buildings, apartments, factories...

- **We make sure it's built right from the ground up.** This includes insuring correct alarm and sprinkler systems, and safe exits to get people out of harm's way in a fire.
- **Safe work places support a vigorous business environment**
- Ongoing enforcement of **modern standards protects lives, property** and the **tax base.**
- Places people gather such as schools and stores are kept safe with fire alarms, sprinklers and other fixed safety



Fire marshals work hard to accomplish complex safety enforcement tasks in a customer-friendly way that respects the role of business— and the need for jobs our businesses create .

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The Vancouver Fire Department, Fire Marshal's Office, delivers effective prevention strategies that work.

LOOK AROUND VANCOUVER TO SEE FIRE SAFETY RESULTS

- Schools and businesses are kept safe with fire alarms, sprinklers and other built-in safety systems
- Unlocked and easy to find emergency exit doors
- Clean and tested commercial kitchen systems
- Working fire extinguishers in buildings
- Escape plans where people gather
- Accessible fire hydrants to help firefighters fight fires
- Well-educated youth, ready to lead fire-safe lives.

Businesses that suffer a large fire may never be able to reopen, which results in lost jobs, destroyed lives, and damaged neighborhood livability.



After the fire, the formerly bustling Kauffman Center on Vancouver's Fourth Plain Blvd. was rebuilt. However the owner has been unable to secure new tenants, leaving the building empty and neighborhood without needed jobs and retail services.

The law specifies:

- RCW 19.27.050 requires the city to enforce provisions of the International Fire Code.
- RCW 43.44.050 requires cities to investigate the origin and cause of all fires.
- The Vancouver Fire Department is legally responsible for preserving evidence for legal proceedings related to arson crimes.



*City of Vancouver Fire Department
Fire Marshal Jim Crawford*