



Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue hits a Historical Milestone

After years of discussions, vision and numerous months of training the Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue (SSIFR) have achieved a true milestone, by successfully completing the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) Superior Tanker Shuttle Service Accreditation Testing requirements on April 9th 2011. Over 30 SSIFR members and support personnel gathered at 7am on Saturday April 9th at the Ganges Fire Hall to hear final directions and instructions from the SSIFR leadership, and FUS Surveyor Rob McGuinness who arrived from Vancouver to authenticate the testing process. Due to the geographical layout and distance of the Island for which the SSIFR covers, there were three individual tests required to be conducted. One in the South end, one in the Central area and one in the North end. In each test location the SSIFR accomplished the task requirements, and in fact exceeded the requirements in all.

The Surveyor was very supportive in noting that the SSIFR had done its homework in preparation for the testing requirements. His quote was, "This was the best organized and structured testing process I have experienced". SSIFR members and support personnel can walk tall and proud, due to commitment and hard work which they earned by conducting such a "Historical event" with 100% success.

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue will be accredited unconditionally within the specified Superior Tanker Shuttle Service accredited areas. The final calculation of the grade update and publication of results will take 1-2 weeks, after which, properties that are affected (those without hydrant protection, but within accredited service areas), can discuss possible improvements with their insurance brokers.

FUS will forward Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue an accreditation letter and certificate as well as publish the results in the fire insurance grading index. The insurers in BC are as yet somewhat unfamiliar with this accreditation; however Fire Underwriters Survey will work to educate the insurers in BC to facilitate their recognition of this significant improvement in the level of fire protection service that is being provided.

Engineer Dave Shillabeer, of Koers & Associates Engineering LTD, summed it up this way, "This is a remarkable achievement, and shows your terrific planning, preparedness, and training programs. The Fire Underwriter's Survey (FUS) standards and requirements are extremely thorough, so to complete all the tests on the first attempt and achieve such a great comment from the evaluator is indeed an accreditation for the SSIFR to be really proud of. Well done! The improved fire insurance rates will provide a long-term benefit to all."

Improved fire insurance rates will likely be available after the publication of results, are finalized in the Fire insurance grading index.