



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Excellence • Perseverance • Compassion • Protection



# Markham Fire & Emergency Services

## Senior Officers



Deputy Fire Chief  
Adam Grant



Fire Chief  
Dave Decker



Deputy Fire Chief  
Chris Nearing



Platoon Chief  
Mike Thomson



Platoon Chief  
Kent Mortonson



Platoon Chief  
Frank Naccarato



Platoon Chief  
Jeff LeFaive



District Chief  
Jeremy Acton



District Chief  
Mike Hallyburton



District Chief  
Dave Creighton



District Chief  
Colin Quinn



Chief Training Officer  
Matt Keay



Chief Fire Prevention Officer  
George Macris



Dispatch Supervisor  
Janet Clarry

# Markham Council



Back Row L to R: Ward 7 Councillor Khalid Usman, Ward 3 Councillor Reid McAlpine,  
Ward 5 Councillor Andrew Keyes, Ward 2 Councillor Alan Ho

Middle Row L to R: Regional Councillor Jim Jones, Deputy Mayor/Regional Councillor Don Hamilton,  
Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Regional Councillor Jack Heath, Regional Councillor Joe Li

Front Row L to R: Councillor Karen Rea, Ward 6 Councillor Amanda Collucci,  
Ward 1 Councillor Keith Irish, Ward 8 Councillor Isa Lee



# Message from the Commissioner



Brenda Librecz,  
Commissioner,  
Community and  
Fire Service

**T**hanks to our Fire & Emergency Services Department for their outstanding public service in protecting our residents and businesses.

As Canada's most diverse and fast growing community, our Fire & Emergency Services staff undertook numerous innovative outreach and partnership programs in 2019. Over 200 outreach activities were initiated to all of our neighbourhoods and cultural groups to advance fire safety, prevention and education. The engagement of children through the very successful school program, camps and junior firefighter programs are critical to advancing safety within our City. Children are proven great teachers of fire safety within their homes with parents and grandparents.

Our Fire and Emergency Services team of women and men in all divisions – suppression/emergency response, prevention, public education, communications and training - all represent the value of our Excellence Markham Program and contribute to our overall success as an organization. Within the Community & Fire Service Commission we share the values of a strong commitment to public service through community engagement and open and transparent service delivery that exceeds the expectations of our residents.

Our fire dispatch team and firefighters are there when we most need them – answering over 60,000 calls for assistance and responding to over 7,400 incidents in 2019. We are fortunate to have very talented and skilled team of staff that are committed to continuous improvement through regular and specialized training throughout the year. Our prevention team proactively works to keep our businesses and residents safe through approximately 4,500 inspections this year and through working with development and building community on fostering new opportunities for new construction.

We also advanced a partnership with our colleagues in Richmond Hill and Vaughan to explore and foster shared services among our Fire & Emergency Services teams to create mutually beneficial outcomes for our communities in the areas of training, shared communications centres and automatic aid.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the staff who recently retired for their passion and commitment to public service – you have all made a difference to the City of Markham.

I look forward to many opportunities in 2020 to work with our Fire & Emergency Services Department to continue to foster Exceptional Services by Exceptional People. I would like to express an extra special thanks to Fire Chief Dave Decker for his many contributions to the City of Markham. Thanks as well to Deputy Chief Grant, and Deputy Chief Nearing and all the women and men of the Markham Fire and Emergency Services for their ongoing commitment to exceptional public service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Librecz".



Children's Fest at Aaniin



# Message from the Fire Chief



Dave Decker  
Fire Chief

On behalf of the 280 members of the Markham Fire and Emergency Services (MFES) I am pleased to present the 2019 annual report to Council and the Residents of the City of Markham.

The City of Markham Fire and Emergency Services provides fire services in accordance with the Fire Protection and Prevention Act. Services pro-

vided are guided by the Establishing and Regulating Bylaw which includes the management and delivery of fire and emergency services based on three lines of defense which form the framework for the protection of the public.

Public Education and Prevention  
Fire Safety Standards and Enforcement; and  
Emergency Response

Every member of MFES is responsible for public fire education and prevention. Maintaining core programs to deliver fire and safety messages and training to the public remain as key elements in the on-going effort to reduce of fire deaths, injury and damage. We focus on the first line of defense, prevention of fire and emergencies.

During 2019 MFES was provided with several grants and donations all with a focus on fire prevention/education including the donation of 300 carbon monoxide alarms; set of kitchen fire props, children's red fire helmets and fire prevention messaging installed on the side of all fire trucks.

Maintaining fire safety provisions as required in accordance with legislation, bylaws, codes and standards ensure that every effort is provided for public safety. The work to provide fire safety features within buildings and for other processes are well planned in advance of construction and put into place begin before a structure is cleared for occupancy. MFES monitors and inspects fire safety systems and processes throughout the life of the building.

MFES strives to provide equal service level delivery to everyone that lives, works and plays within our City. MFES continually reviews actual experiences and balances relative risks to determine service level needs to meet objectives all with the goal to provide safe occupancy within buildings but also be prepared to respond to provide an effective emergency response.

Daily MFES firefighters are faced with many challenges and they continue to commit to place their health and safety at risk for the protection of the public. Risk reduction in an inherently dangerous profession requires on-going commitment to basic health and safety principles resulting in new training, equipment policies and procedures.

The City continues to expand in population and buildings, both are drivers to provide additional resources to maintain equitable service levels as well as ensure public and firefighter safety. Maintaining an effective and readily available response to emergencies requires firefighters to constantly be engaged in training and fire pre-planning to be better prepared.

2019 highlights include:

- 16 Promotions
- 12 Firefighters hired to offset the cost of overtime and training,
- Annual Pump Testing initiated,
- Addition of two new positions: Fire Prevention Officer and Training Officer,
- Shared Services Committee Consultant to provide a Radio Communications Study,
- 2 Replacement Engines ordered and under construction,
- Return of the 1932 Rugby following restoration.

MFES will continue to focus on three lines of defense; fire safety, code enforcement and provide emergency response services. At the time of writing this report MFES is engaged in its biggest challenge with the onset of the Pandemic in early 2020. Management will continue to deal with the day to day business and on-going challenges associated with the pandemic and a modern and growing fire service.

On behalf of the management team I thank the women and men of the Markham Fire Service for their continuous commitment and professional service. I would also thank the Mayor, members of Council, the CAO, Commissioners, directors and all City staff for their on-going support of the Markham Fire and Emergency Services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Dave Decker, the Fire Chief.

# EXCELLENCE

Our journey to excellence is an ongoing process that we evaluate on a daily basis. First and foremost, we strive to deliver excellent customer service to every Markham resident. At the same time, we endeavour to provide a challenging and fulfilling work environment for our team members. This includes encouraging them to provide input on daily activities, which allows us to continue to enhance our services to those who live, work and play in our community. We are always looking at expanding our services in the most cost-effective and beneficial way as Markham continues to grow. We are constantly training our staff to the highest standards to ensure we can respond to the demands of our community efficiently and effectively.

## Mechanical

In 2019 the Mechanical Division processed over 490 work orders and performed scheduled annual certifications on all front run apparatus. Annual vehicle, ladder and fire pump certification is coordinated and supported by the mechanics for all apparatus. MFES mechanics also participated in the Ontario Fire College Mechanical Officer Program. Annually fire mechanics travel to Lansing Michigan to participate in courses hosted by Smeal-Spartan to stay current on the evolving care and maintenance of our entire fleet.

Our mechanics are also intricately involved in apparatus specification review and take an active role in pre-construction consultations and final inspection of all apparatus. The servicing of our day staff vehicles to ensure they remain on the road and operate safely is also a responsibility of our fire mechanics.

## Training

The Training Division offers a high level of specialized training, supplemented by certified on-shift Instructors, educational institutions and in-house fire service staff.

Together, our goal is to enhance the knowledge, skills and professionalism of our staff.

In 2019, ice water rescue, hazardous material response, first Specialty Rescue Training saw an improvement in level of training as we sent our Water Rescue On-Shift Instructors to NFPA 1006 training who have shared their knowledge with the suppression staff. We put new equipment in



Chassis inspection of our new pumper vehicle

service for the Technical Rope Rescue Program and ran new annual scenarios for Hazardous Materials training. For Elevator Rescue, we trained over 80 staff to a newly developed program as elevator calls increase across the city. The Medical program saw an expansion of Tourniquet training and Mass Casualty training with York EMS and York Police. Markham Fire required a new Driver Program. To help create this program, the City sent two Training Officers to be certified Signing Authority members from the Ministry of Transportation. And finally, the summer allowed for our newest Training Officer to get an understanding of skill level of all staff for Auto Extrication and Vehicle Rescue. This experience will aid in the creation of a new program for 2020 which will follow the latest NFPA standard.



Auto Extrication Training





2019 Firefighter Recruit Graduation

## Firefighter Recruit Training

We were pleased to welcome 12 new suppression recruits to Markham. The Training team began an 10-week program with these new recruits in April 2019. This training program is a combination of lecture and practical delivery, covering a number of areas including clothing, flashover training, search and rescue, ventilation, hose evolutions and self-contained breathing apparatus training.

During 2019 the Training Division also delivered content to 2 Captain's Schools which will aid in Captains.



2019 Captain's School participants

## Promotions

Tim Johnson was the successful Training Officer candidate and was welcomed into the Division in July of 2019.

## Looking Ahead

2019 brought a year of some new training opportunities and we look forward to taking these changes into 2020. Our goal is to continue to make the Markham Fire and Emergency Services Suppression staff a highly trained entity to provide the best customer service to our community.



Water Rescue Training



# PERSEVERANCE

Every year our staff respond to emergency situations and fight fires throughout Markham. We take special precautions to limit the amount of damage suffered to any structure within Markham. We also take the steps necessary to preserve as many belongings as we possibly can without compromising the speed with which we extinguish a fire. Although there are many dangers associated with firefighting, we take great pride in providing this vital service to our residents in the most professional manner possible.

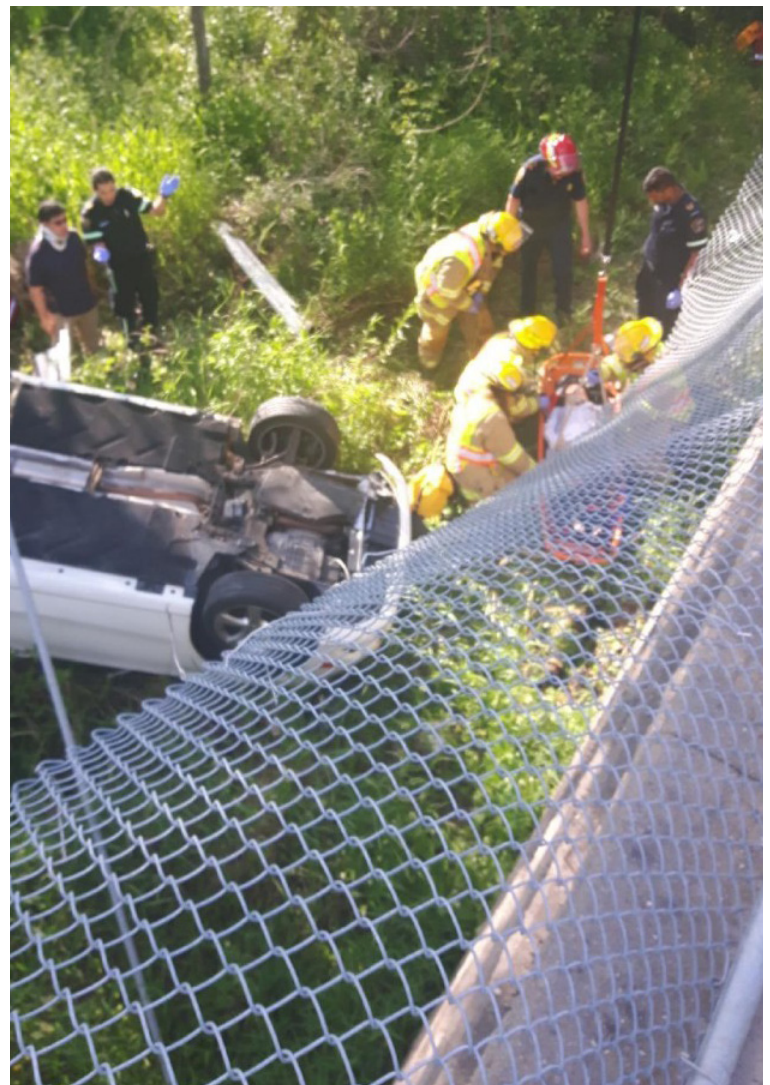
## Suppression

The 240 firefighters that comprise the Suppression Division of MFES responded to 7,372 emergency incidents in 2019. These responses resulted in a total of over 15,000 emergency vehicles being dispatched to emergencies. 11 front run apparatus operate from 9 fire stations with a compliment of 7 support vehicles, including two Command Officers. In addition to structure fires, suppression firefighters also respond to motor vehicle collisions, hazardous material incidents, technical rescue incidents of all types and calls for medical aid and assistance.

Despite the inherent risks associated with firefighting, our highly trained professional firefighters take every step reasonably necessary to protect the lives and property of our residents. In the most professional manner, we work tirelessly and with passion and determination to limit the impact of any emergency to those that live, work, play or travel through our community.

In addition to emergency response, suppression firefighters contribute to fire prevention and the public education of Markham residents. In 2019, suppression fire crews attended over 400 community events such as festivals, fairs, and community BBQs. Children and adults alike were informed on City fire apparatus and equipment, as well as the firefighter's role within the community. The fire crews also took the opportunity to address home fire safety questions that we believe had an effect on life safety and emergency preparedness.

School children in grades 1-4 in every school in Markham received visits from firefighters to enforce fire safety lessons. During the three annual visits throughout the school year, students learn about the value of a home escape plan, operating smoke detectors and many other valuable safety lessons for them and their family.



June - Technical Rope Rescue in Ward 2





## FIRE

Fire/Smoke Visible  
Remote Alarm  
Brush/Grass Fire  
Garbage Fire  
Vehicle Fire



## MEDICAL

Medical



## PUBLIC HAZARD

Police/Medical Assistance  
Hazardous Materials  
Hydro/Telephone/Mailbox  
Lock-out (House, Car, Elevator)



## RESCUE

Motor Vehicle Collision  
Aircraft Incident  
Train Incident  
Industrial Accident  
Water Rescue  
Elevator Entrapment



## NON-FIRE

Burning Complaint  
Public Assistance  
Upgraded Calls



September - Retail Warehouse Fire in Ward 2

## Promotions in 2019

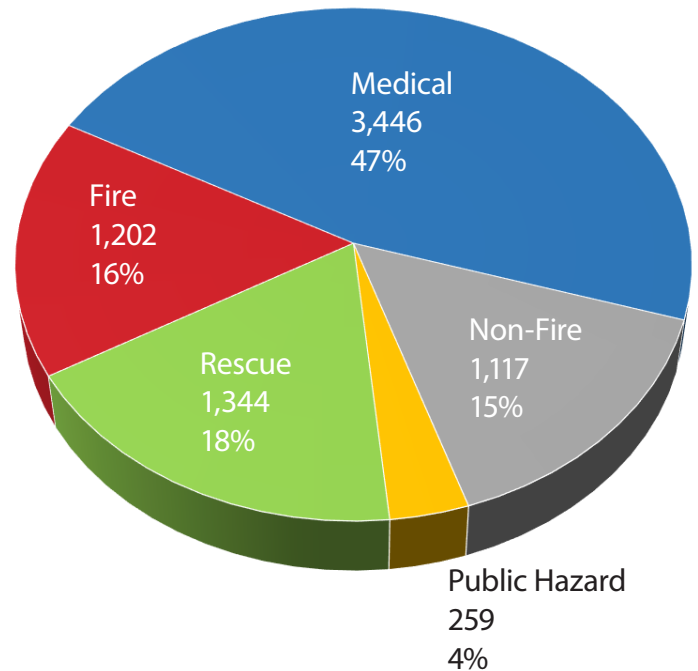
Aaron Hiley, Stuart Hart, Nick Patel, Rob Klassen, Kevin Comrie, Jerry Arkema and Brad Sterling were promoted to the rank of Captain.

Rob Garland and Ryan Best were promoted to the rank of Captain/ Acting District Chief.

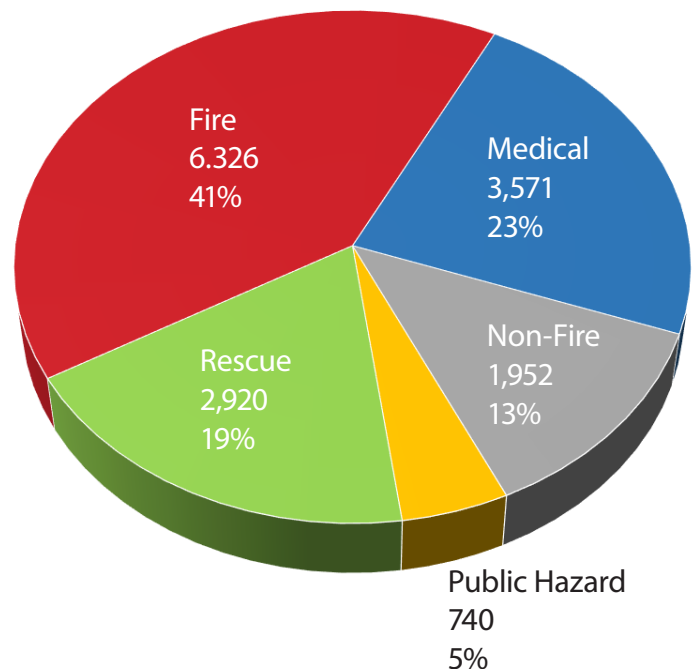
Marty Coutts and Jeremy Acton were promoted to the rank of District Chief.

Kent Mortson and Jeffery were promoted to the rank of Platoon Chief.

Number of Incidents in 2019



Number of Vehicles Dispatched in 2019



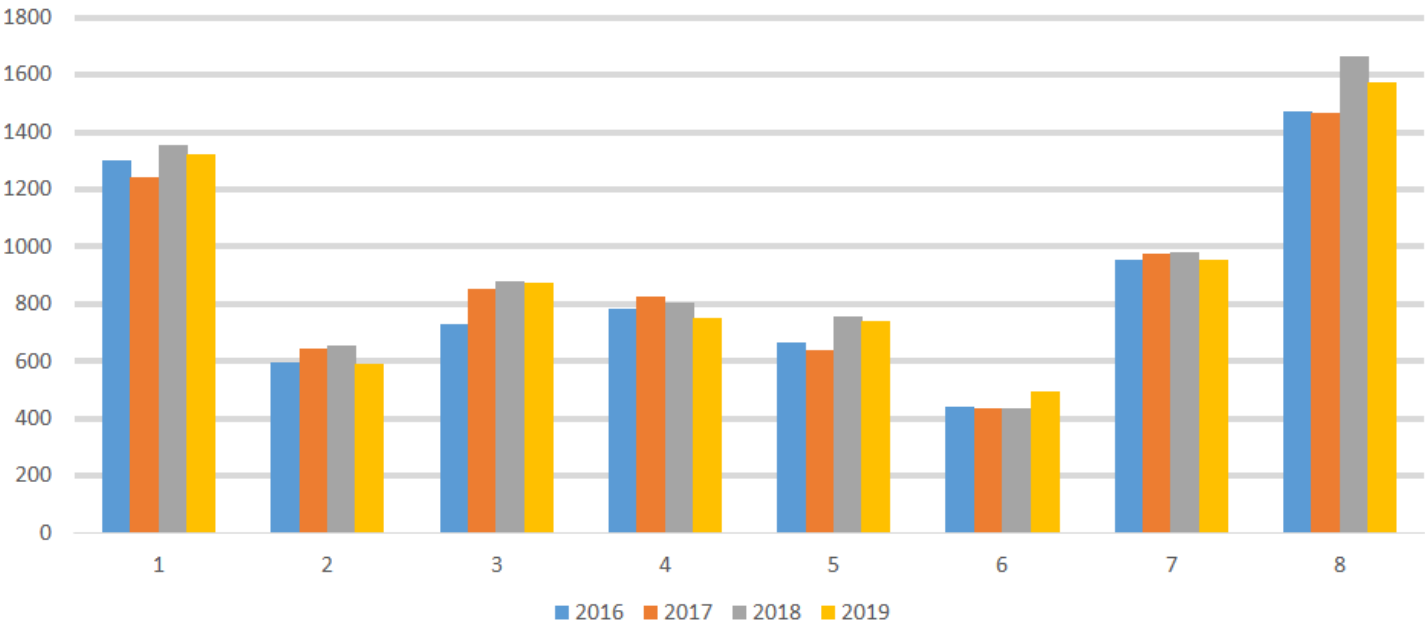


April - Townhouse Fire in Ward 2

# MAJOR FIRES IN 2019

DATE	ESTIMATED LOSS	LOCATION	WARD
9/28	\$20,000,000	Hwy 7 East	4
3/25	\$2,000,000	York-Durham Line	5
7/26	\$1,700,000	Schooner Court	2
5/30	\$1,200,000	Annina Crescent	3
4/26	\$600,000	Legends Way	2
7/07	\$450,000	Cairns Drive	4
4/04	\$400,000	John Street	1
6/03	\$300,000	Fred Varley Drive	3
6/11	\$300,000	Green Lane	1
8/1	\$250,000	Walter Scott Crescent	2
7/26	\$200,000	Richwood Drive	4

2016-2019 Number of Incidents By Ward





# COMPASSION

The best way to reduce the number of fires and protect Markham residents in their homes is to provide them with the education they need to protect themselves and their families. We deliver our public education programs to our ethnically diverse community, offering our materials in a number of different languages. We partner with local media groups to get our message out to Markham residents as efficiently and effectively as possible.

In the event of a fire, our firefighters, fire investigators, and education officers all act in the most sensitive manner possible. We know that we encounter our residents on one of the worst days of their lives – related to either a fire or some other emergency situation. We understand the value of working with the homeowner to determine the events leading up to the fire and then trying to assist them with the next steps once the scene has cleared. When children are involved, we give them a cuddly bear as part of our Buddy Bear program - this helps ease the trauma they may have suffered as a result of the emergency.

## Education

### COOKING FIRE SAFETY PROP

Markham Fire and Emergency Services was honoured to be a recipient of a grant from TransCanada which was used to purchase a cooking fire safety prop. Careless cooking is the number one cause of fire in the City of Markham. Many of these fires are caused by human error in the adult that is doing the cooking and are easily preventable. The cooking safety prop was utilized throughout the 2019 year engaging adults in the community where they work and play in order to help reduce our leading cause of fire.





From left to right: Deputy Fire Chief Adam Grant, Cadet Jeyaratnam, Cadet Abbate, Cadet Fraser, Fire Chief Dave Decker

## Cadet Program

The Fire Department Cadet program was designed specifically for developmentally delayed high school students. This program allows for teenagers who, by nature of our work, would not be able to be hired by the fire department to experience all aspects of the work we do. The program was 10 weeks long and the Cadets spent one day a week with us learning job related skills that they could apply to a career they may pursue in the future. The focus of the program was the soft skills associated with employment i.e. - respect, professionalism, punctuality, chain of command, etc.

A graduation was held in the Council Chambers where the Mayor and members of council provided the Cadets with a certificate of completion and congratulated them on a job well done. The Cadets were also provided with plaques from the fire service which they will be able to reflect on for years to come.

The program is the first of its kind and was recognized by the Board of Education with the “Applause Award” which is for employers that go above and beyond to provide opportunities for special needs students.

The entire department embraced this program and everyone came together to provide these students with the best possible experience we could offer.





Fire safety superheroes recognized by Markham Fire staff

## HERO Program

Many people perished in home fires were overcome by smoke while trying to escape. Having a home fire escape plan is one of the best ways to ensure you and your loved ones get out safely. During the 2019 Fire Prevention Week, Markham Fire and Emergency Services launched the new HERO program in partnership with four local businesses to encourage all employees to be a fire safety superhero.

Creating a home escape plan is a quick, easy but important step to keep themselves and those around them safe from fire. The participating businesses encouraged employees to submit a copy of their home escape plan for a prize.

Winners who submitted their home escape plan were selected by Markham Fire and Emergency Services staff and formally recognized as superheroes.

## Fire Prevention Week Puck Drop

Markham Fire and Emergency Services had the chance to perform the ceremonial puck drop at center ice before a Markham Royals home game. Fire staff were also present before the game to promote Fire Prevention Week.



# PROTECTION

Keeping Markham residents safe is accomplished on many levels – from offering fire safety education to fighting fires. Our protection also extends to fire prevention. Providing fire protection to our residents is a key component of the services we provide. The Fire Prevention team inspects Markham buildings on a regular basis to ensure they meet the current fire code regulations. Our team works side by side with property owners to ensure they explore every avenue possible for compliance - legal action is a last resort. Our prevention team consistently performs inspections in a thorough and respectful manner. We also review pre-construction site plans to ensure that any new building being built in Markham meets the most current fire regulations and that these regulations are adhered to during the construction and occupancy phases. Our dispatchers are trained professionals who are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to take your information and ensure that fire trucks respond as quickly as possible when an emergency arises. Our staff handle thousands of calls every year and treat each of them with the same urgency and professionalism.

## Fire Prevention

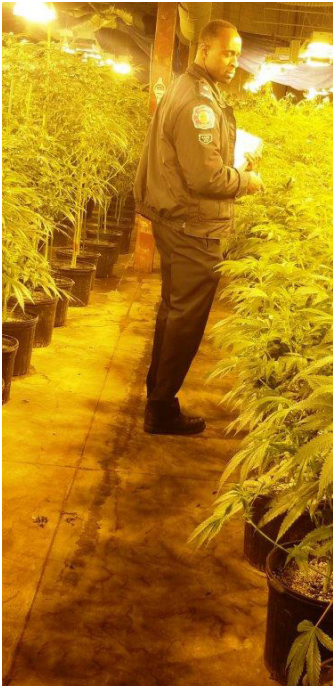
**Fire Prevention Officers** have expert knowledge about the Fire Code and its application. Their knowledge and good judgment is called upon to make assessments and decisions about the fire and life safety in the buildings in our community. These decisions may involve immediate threats to life, building closures, and fire and environmental issues. Fire prevention officers ensure fire protection systems in buildings operate, enabling people to evacuate safely in the event of an emergency. They contribute greatly to public safety.

Our **Plans Examiners** review and comment on plans and specifications submitted to the Fire Services for compliance with Provincial Acts and Regulations such as the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA), the Ontario Fire Code, the Ontario Building Code, Municipal By-laws and other related fire and life safety standards. They also conduct comprehensive fire prevention inspection/surveys and acceptance tests of fire protection and life safety systems for all classes of buildings and occupancies in the City.



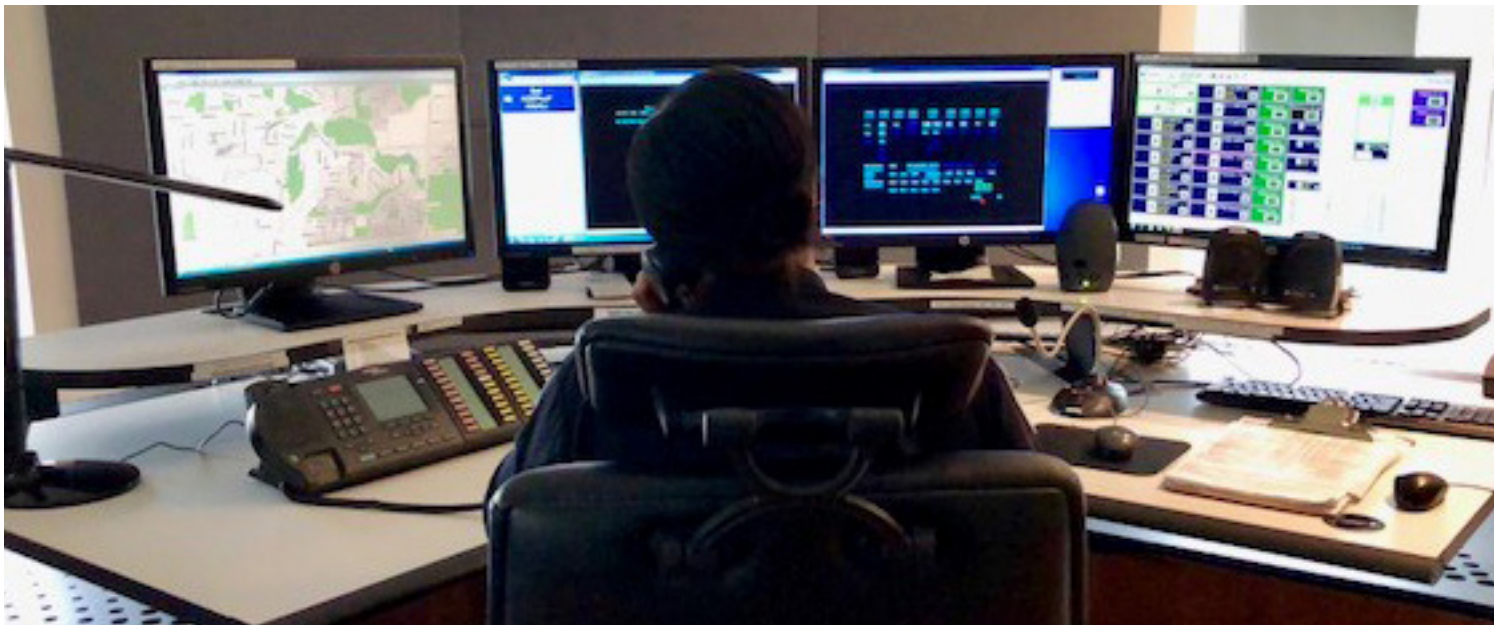
Fire Prevention staff was at various locations in Markham to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House during McHappy Day





In 2019, the members of the Fire Prevention Division worked diligently to accomplish this mission by engaging in the following activities:

- 1500 property inspections and related activities were conducted and 3000 re-inspections were conducted to maximize the safety of people in existing buildings.
- 182 plans were reviewed and 67 inspections were conducted with the Building Department to ensure new fire protection and life safety systems were properly installed.
- 156 fire safety presentations were delivered by Fire Prevention and Suppression staff to promote fire safety lessons and training to people ranging from children to seniors, from office staff to factory workers, and from residents to businesses
- 93 files were opened producing 226 inspections of accessory apartments to make sure people were safe in their own homes.



# Communications

Communications plays a critical role in assisting Markham residents with emergency and non-emergency service requests. The team, ranging in years of experience from 1 to 30, handled over 60,000 incoming and outgoing telephone calls to assist Markham residents in 2019. Of these, over 7,400 emergency responses were generated and managed by the Communications Division.

The Alarm Room Operator is the first point of emergency contact for someone who is often having one of the worst days of their lives. These members of the team have to be compassionate and empathetic, yet able to be firm enough on the telephone to get key information from callers during stressful circumstances, to be able to generate the proper response to the emergency. Listening and interpretive skills are of the utmost importance, as is the ability to work as a part of the team, with the goal of providing whatever assistance is possible to those in need.

Communications also liaises with allied agencies including police, ambulance, utilities and neighboring departments working together to provide a coordinated and effective response.

In 2019 we welcomed Jennifer Wagner and Shelley Marshall to the Communications Division.



Dispatch Supervisor  
Janet Clarry (25 years)

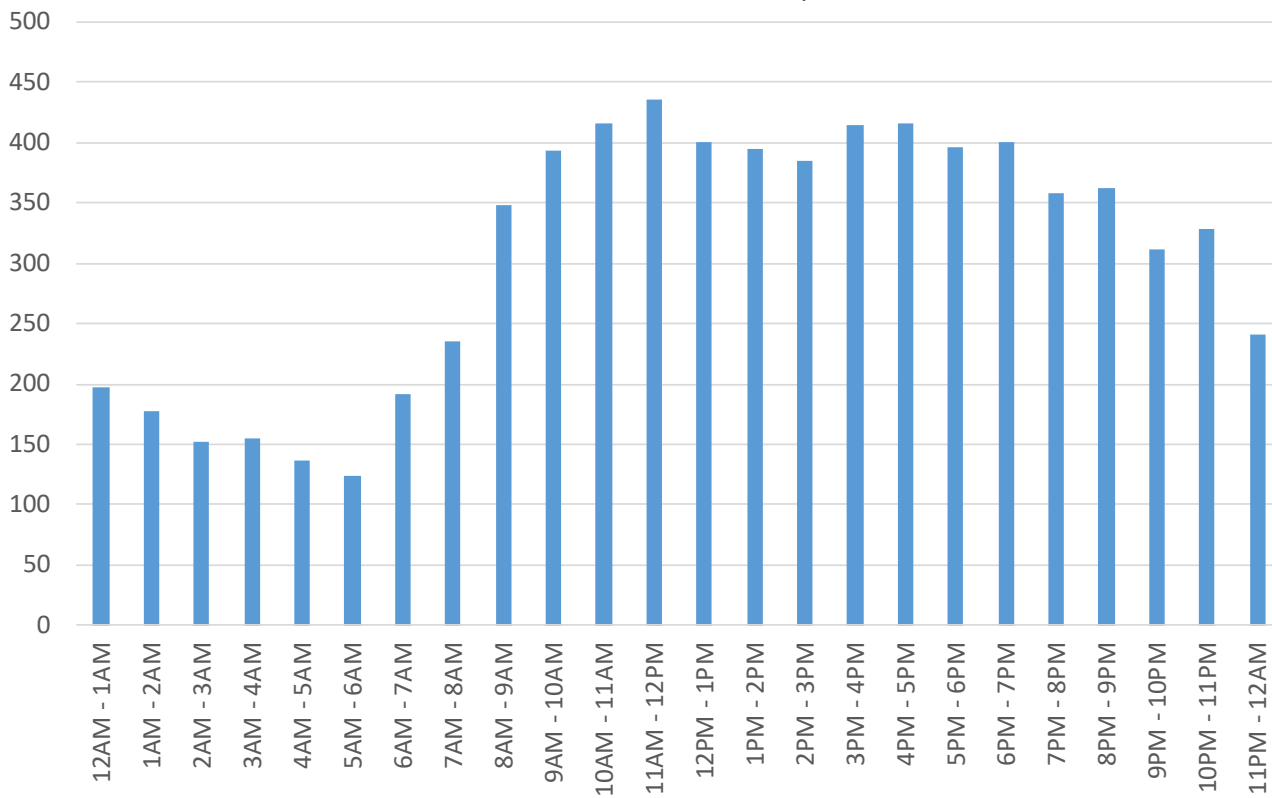


Alarm Room Operator  
Chris Lawton (30 years)

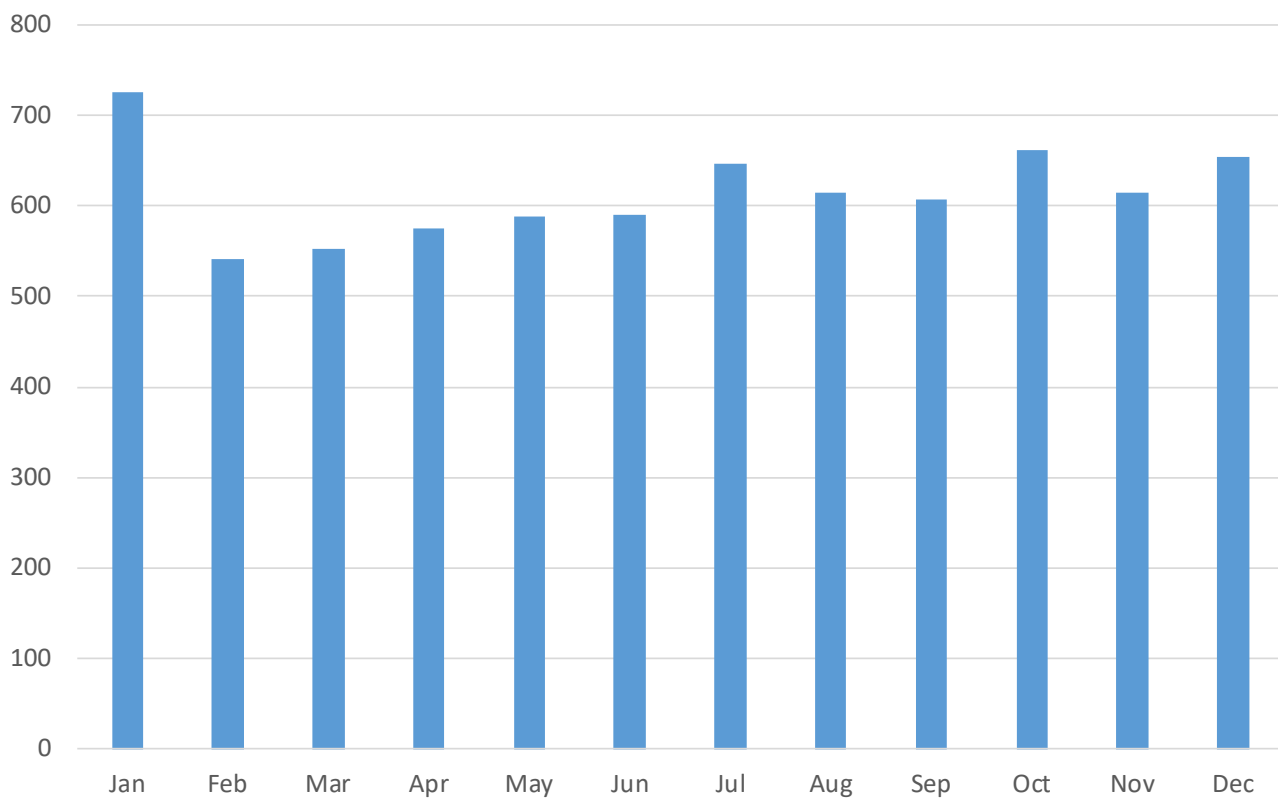


Alarm Room Operator / Firefighter  
Shelley Marshall (30 years)

24-hour Incident Distribution By Volume, 2019



12-month Incident Distribution By Volume, 2019





# Departures

The City of Markham appreciated your dedication and the services you have provided to its citizens to keep the community safe.



Firefighter  
Phil Harrison  
29 Years of Service



Firefighter  
Dave Job  
29 Years of Service



Firefighter  
Steve Hollands  
29 Years of Service



Firefighter  
Phil Eades  
28 Years of Service



Firefighter  
Harold Wideman  
32 Years of Service



Captain  
Jim Jenkins  
29 Years of Service



Captain  
Ron Yakeley  
33 Years of Service



Captain  
Blaine Dobson  
32 Years of Service



Platoon Chief  
Scott Daniel  
32 Years of Service



Captain  
Barry Vesh  
30 Years of Service



Training Officer  
Glenn Ambrose  
30 Years of Service



District Chief  
Marty Coutts  
30 Years of Service



Firefighter  
Ken Fisher  
33 Years of Service





Fire Staff Serving on McHappy Day



Digital fire display board installed in front of fire stations



1932 Rugby leading the Fire crew at the Santa Claus Parade



Fire safety message on City zambonis to promote home fire escape plan



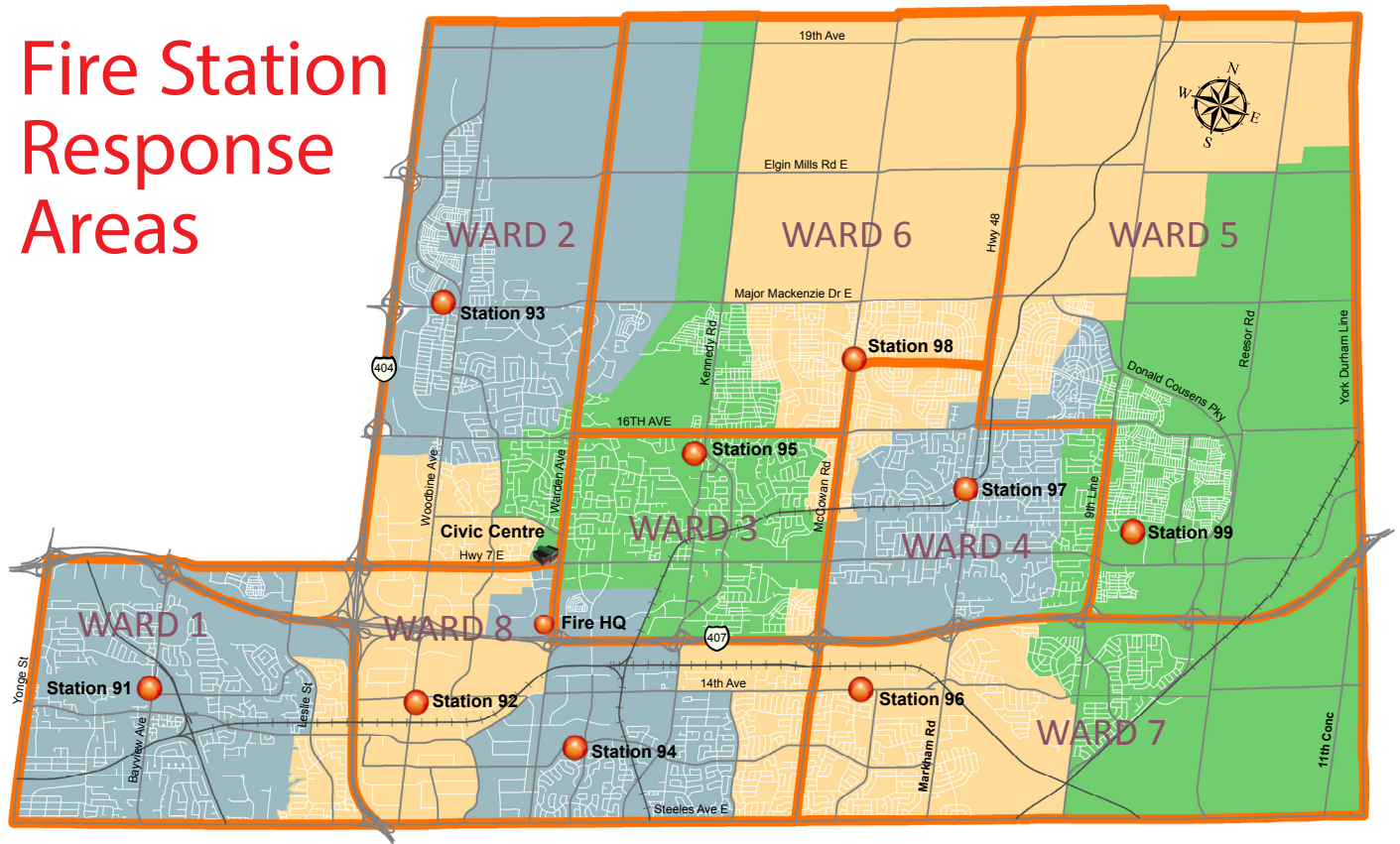
Fire Chief Decker and Ward 6 Councillor Collucci presenting a certificate of appreciation to a local business



Markham Fire staff at the 2019 Canadian Firefighters Memorial Ceremony



# Fire Station Response Areas



**Station 91**  
7801 Bayview Ave.

**Station 92**  
10 Riviera Dr.

**Station 93**  
2930 Major MacKenzie Dr.

**Station 94**  
7300 Birchmount Rd.

**Station 95**  
316 Main St., Unionville

**Station 96**  
5567 14th Ave.

**Station 97**  
209 Main St., Markham

**Station 98**  
650 Bur Oak Ave

**Station 99**  
3255 Bur Oak Ave.

**Fire HQ**  
8100 Warden Ave.

