



## REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

### INFORMATION RELEASE

December 11, 2020

#### Emergency 911 repeater expands radio communications

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) is upgrading and improving its Emergency 911 (E911) two-way radio network within the Kaleden Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD) response district. A repeater system is in the process of being installed adjacent to the Transport Canada beacon tower site located on Greyledge Mountain. The new repeater location is expected to improve the ability to safely respond to emergencies within the Fire Response District. A 10'x8' 'sea-can' will be moved to the site to house telecommunications equipment, instruments and antennas. The RDOS is working with fire departments, property owners, engineers and subject matter experts to ensure the success of the project.

"The upgraded system will significantly improve reception," says Kaleden Fire Chief Denis Gaudry. The improvement project will expand the current communication zone and enhance first responder communications to outlying regions such as Twin lakes and St Andrews. "Upgrading the E911 system will allow valued KVFD community volunteers to do what they do best," says Electoral Area "I" Director Subrina Monteith. "And that is keeping the community safe and ensure firefighters return home safely."

It is important to note, this communication project will not emit frequencies on the 5G band (5<sup>th</sup> generation mobile network). The system will use VHF frequencies which are commonly used to communicate with portable, two-way radios. VHF frequencies are a primary form of communication wave band used by Police, Ambulance, Fire Departments, Search and Rescue, and private industry as well as personal use. The E911 network provides regional emergency telecommunications for seven RDOS fire departments, five municipal fire departments, and six societies and brigades within the RDOS. In 2019, the RDOS funded the Kaleden Fire Department Radio Coverage Improvement Study that identified the benefit of moving the repeater system from KVFD fire hall to Greyledge Mountain to provide better service throughout Electoral Area "I".

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Karla Kozakevich, Chair  
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