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The evolution of training

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KPU students design tents to protect firefighters from wildfire smoke

A press release from Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) said KPU students designed sophisticated tents to protect firefighters from forest fire smoke and provide them with access to clean air.

“These professionals are often stationed far from their base camps and are constantly exposed to harmful smoke and poor air quality, even during breaks,” said Kevin Kang, a third-year student at the Wilson School of Design at KPU. “Our goal was to create a clean-air shelter that could help reduce the immediate dangers of smoke inhalation and address the long-term health risks.”

The shelters are said to have a three-layer air filtration system similar to advanced cabin air filters. The system has been engineered to remove a wide range of pollutants and create a breathable environment within the tent.

The university stated that there are two sizes of tent: a smaller model designed for two people and tailored for fire line use and a larger tent that provides space for up to 12 people and is meant for fire camp use.

The British Columbia Wildfire Service plans to test these clean-air shelter prototypes this summer at fire camps impacted by wildfire smoke.

“Finding a type of respiratory protection that is effective under extreme conditions is challenging. Historically, the BC Wildfire Service staff were not provided respiratory protection against wildfire smoke, ash and dust exposure on the fireline,” said Jesse Wallace-Webb, an initial attack crew leader and research analyst at the BC Wildfire Service. “Future iterations of these clean-air shelter prototypes might represent one potential tool, among many others, for addressing smoke exposure during wildfire response.”

\$1.2 million

has been invested by Natural Resources Canada for the Canadian Interagency Forest Centre to expand the Centre's wildfire prevention and mitigation capacity



New fire department 17 years in the making

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District Board in British Columbia voted unanimously to establish the region's fourteenth fire department at the Kicking Horse Mountain Resort. The CSRD received approval from 66 per cent of the property owners in the area before passing this bylaw.

An agreement has been reached for the Town of Golden to provide fire service until a full-service fire department can be established.

The resort owners will begin constructing a fire hall as soon as possible, and a fire truck will be stationed on-site to service the area.

Firefighter recruitment efforts for the new department will begin in early 2025.

Calgary receives Pierce's electric fire truck

Calgary Fire Department plans to put a Pierce Volterra Electric Pumper into service this summer, the first placement of the company's electric model in Canada. Calgary is the fourth department to receive the Volterra, following three cities in the U.S.A.

Manufactured on a Pierce Enforcer custom chassis, the pumper has a parallel-electric drivetrain with a 244 kWh-battery solution and a patented electro-mechanical infinitely variable transmission. Other features include a 500-gallon water tank, Waterous CMU 1500 GPM two-stage pump, Husky 3 foam system, and cold climate package.

The city of Calgary committed to transitioning to electric and low-carbon vehicle technologies in its Green Fleet Strategy. This strategy is part of the city's 2023 to 2026 Climate Implementation Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60 percent by 2030.

1,300

firefighters are employed by the BC Wildfire Service each year.



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