

Chilliwack Fire Department: Managing High Risk, Low Frequency Rescues

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Why don't Chilliwack firefighters provide high-risk, low frequency rescue services such as swift water or high angle rescues?

A1: A fundamental risk management principle is to eliminate risks when possible. The Chilliwack Fire Department (CFD) Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) were hired by the city to manage Chilliwack's risks. The CFOs proactively assess all risks within our city and decide to either take a risk on and manage it, or to transfer the risk to other agencies who have the expertise to manage these risks and related hazards. The CFD core value of safety guides us to ensure our firefighters are not exposed to any unnecessary risks. Firefighter and public safety are key factors we consider when making these decisions.

Low frequency/high severity risks are challenging incidents to train and adequately equip for. Two key examples of these types of risks are swift water and high angle rescues. These rare incidents expose our firefighters to unnecessary danger because they happen so infrequently, are very risky to respond to and there are already expert local agencies who specialize in conducting these rescues. These agencies are fully equipped, regularly train for, and expertly provide these specialized rescues.

Q2: Who does provide Chilliwack with high-risk, low frequency rescue services such as swift water and high angle rescues?

A2: Swift Water Rescue - The City of Chilliwack is currently well served by **Chilliwack Search and Rescue (CSAR)** whose highly trained experts have the specialized equipment, training and experience required to safely provide swift water rescues.

High Angle Rescue - The contractors who bid on construction jobs with the potential to require high-angle rescues are responsible to proactively manage this low frequency/high severity risk. They are required to build the response costs for high angle rescue services into their business plans and hire experts to provide this high-risk rescue.

As always, Chilliwack Fire Department firefighters and officers stand ready to support and assist Chilliwack Search and Rescue and the high angle rescue service providers who respond to and deliver these highly specialized rescue services in our city.

