Great Canadian Fire Census 2026
New Participant Questionnaire

Attached are the questions included in Census 2026 for those who wish to review or discuss them internally. Note that you will need to submit your data online. You can access the survey here: https://cafc.ca/page/2026CensusNewparticipants.

In this year's Census, there are some questions that are posed to fire departments from various federal departments. These questions are flagged for you. The data you provide will only be used in aggregate form and no organisation-specific data will be shared.

If this survey contains questions that you are not able to answer easily, then you may select I don't know and move on to the next question.

Step 1: Create your account

Part A: Let's get registered
a. Name b. Title c. Department d. Province
Part B: Let's create a password so you can save your work and come back later

Step 2: Tell us about your department and team

Part C: Tell us about your department
1. What is the approximate size of your population served on April 30, 2026? Please do not give a range; full numbers only. Estimates are acceptable.
2. What is the approximate square kilometres served on April 30, 2026? Please do not give a range; full numbers only. Estimates are acceptable.
3. In the Fire Service, the terms career, volunteer, and composite departments are used differently across the country. As of April 30, 2026, which of these terms, as defined below, best describes your department? **Volunteer:** departments whose firefighters are all volunteers (someone who is available or on-call to perform fire services, emergency services, and non-emergency duties for a jurisdiction as needed. They may receive nominal remuneration (e.i. not a livable wage considering hours and/or pay) for their time, and generally have other occupations) **Composite:** any combination of volunteer and career firefighters **Career:** Only career firefighters. No volunteer firefighters.

Please complete online

a. Volunteer
b. Composite
c. Career
d. I don't know

4. In the past year, has your department transitioned from only having volunteer/paid on-call firefighters to hiring career firefighters?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

5. What services does your department provide (check all that apply)?

a. Emergency Response
b. Emergency Management Operations
c. HazMat Response - Hazardous Materials (operations/technician or all levels)
d. HazMat Response - awareness level only
e. Vehicle Extrication/Machinery - Rescue of motor vehicle collision occupants
f. Wildlands Firefighting – Forestry; bush; scrub; and grassland fires
g. Wildfire long-duration campaign fires
h. ARFF - Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting
i. Airport Service (secondary public response, secondary tarmac and air response, or local aerodrome, scheduled flights)
j. Marine Firefighting - Shipboard fire and rescue on water
k. Marina Firefighting
l. Industrial Firefighting - i.e refineries, pulp mill, saw mill, production facilities
m. Fires on Commercial Properties - i.e everything from stores to offices
n. Water & Ice Rescue - Persons and animals trapped on water and ice
o. Fast Water Rescue - Flood waters and river rescue operations
p. High Angle Rescue - Rescue Operations above ground level
q. Trench Rescue - Rescue operations below ground level
r. Technical Rescue - Specialty rescue operations for unique situations
s. USAR - Urban Search and Rescue
t. HUSAR - Heavy Urban Search and Rescue

6. What is your Simple Fire Protection classification/Dwelling Protection Grade (1-2 dwellings) assigned to you by Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS). If you do not know your classification, you can look it up here.

a. 1
b. 2
c. 3A
d. 3B
e. 4
f. 5
g. Unable to Answer

7. Do you believe your community is at risk of losing its fire protection classification provided by FUS because of the loss of trained firefighters on your roster?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

8. Do you believe your community is at risk of losing its fire protection classification provided by FUS because of loss or aging of apparatus/equipment?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

Part D: Tell us about your team

Please complete online

9. As of April 30, 2026, what is the total number of members in your department (Include paid staff, firefighters, volunteers, support staff, auxiliary staff and management)?

10. As of April 30, 2026, how many firefighting positions do you have (include both vacant and filled for all types of firefighters: technical, tactical, specialized, and operational)?

11. As of April 30, 2026, how many of the firefighting positions reported in the question above are vacant (include all types of firefighters: technical, tactical, specialized, and operational)?

12. Please provide a breakdown of your firefighters according to your department's use and understanding of the following categories as of April 30, 2026 :

a. Full-time paid
b. Part-time paid
c. Paid on-call
d. Paid honoraria
e. Paid expenses only
f. No remuneration or expenses

13. How many of your volunteer firefighters retired or left the service in the past year?
a. Not applicable (I don't have any volunteer firefighters)

14. How many total years of volunteer firefighter service did those individuals serve?
a. Not applicable (I don't have any volunteer firefighters)

15. As of April 30, 2026, how many non-firefighter volunteer staff members do you have?

16. As of April 30, 2026, how many non-firefighter paid staff members do you have?

17. As of April 30, 2026, approximately how many of your firefighters are women?

18. As of April 30, 2026, approximately how many of your firefighters are over the age of 50?

19. How many of your firefighters are career unionized (official labour agreement certificate)?

20. In the past year, has your department had turnover in the Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chiefs?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

21. Do you believe that your fire department currently has diverse individuals in the following groups (select all that apply)?

a. Race and colour
b. National Origin or ancestry
c. An individual who has come to Canada in the past 5 years
d. Sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity)
e. Physical or mental disability
f. Other
g. Not sure

22. Do you offer personal protective equipment (PPE) that is fitted for women firefighters?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

23. Does your department have any of the following policies related to women in the fire services that is beyond what legislation requires?

a. Parental leave
b. Breastfeeding
c. Menopause
d. Pregnancy
e. Other:
f. No
g. I don't know

24. Does your department have any of the following separate facilities for women firefighters (select all that apply)?

a. Sleep quarters

Please complete online

b. Change rooms
c. Bathrooms
d. No
e. I don't know

25. Do you provide service to an Indigenous, Metis, or Inuit Community?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

26. Are the majority of your firefighters Indigenous, Métis, or Inuit?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

27. Is your department or service in an Indigenous Community?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

Part E: Firefighter Fatalities

28. What is the number of firefighter line-of-duty deaths due to fatal injury during or immediately following a fire or all-hazard response call in the last 12 reporting months?

29. What is the number of firefighter line-of-duty deaths due to presumptive illness in the last 12 reporting months?

30. What is the number of firefighter line-of-duty deaths due to succumbing to psychological injury in the last 12 reporting months?

Part F: Firefighter Health and Safety

31. What is the number of firefighter injuries resulting from active duty during a call or during training in the last 12 reporting months?
a. Unable to Answer

32. In which of the following contexts have these injuries occurred? Check all that apply.
a. Fire Suppression
b. On Scene not fire suppression
b. Training
c. Fire Station
d. Mental Health
e. En route to or returning from a call
f. I don't know
g. Not applicable

33. In which of the following categories would these injuries fall under?
a. Physical
b. Occupational Disease
c. Psychological
d. I don't know
e. Not applicable

34. How many reported days were lost for mental health (per provincial/territorial policy on lost time) in your department in 2026 or the last 12 month reporting period?**
A. Unknown / don't report

35. Is your department's lost days for mental health higher or lower in the last 12 months than in the previous 12 month reporting period?
a. Higher
b. Lower
c. I don't know
d. Not applicable

Please complete online

36. Do you currently have members on leave due to cancer treatment?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

37. Do you currently have members on leave due to mental health issues?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

38. In your view, which one mental health investment is MOST needed to help the front line?
   a. Access to one-on-one therapy with a therapist (in-person or virtual)
   b. Access to self-directed therapy with supervision (online)
   c. Group programming (courses, information, or group therapy)
   d. Prevention
   e. Research (generation, dissemination, translation)
   f. Awareness training
   g. Other

39. Does your fire department have a formalized firefighter cancer prevention plan?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

40. Does your department have a firefighter cancer screening program?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

41. To what extent are you aware of projects related to the National Cancer Framework?
   a. Very high
   b. High
   c. Medium
   d. Low
   e. Very low
   f. I don't know

42. Are your firefighters trained and equipped to fight fires in tall wood buildings (6 story or higher)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

43. Do you believe that the front line firefighters at your department has benefited from the federal funding provided to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and to the Canadian Institutes of Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know.

44. Due to new construction modalities, do you believe that your department's firefighting practices, training and equipment need to evolve?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

Step 3: Tell us about your call volume and public safety

Part G: Tell us about your call volume

Please complete online

45. What is the total number of incidents or calls for service to which you've responded in the last calendar year (or last 12 months of available data)?
   a. Unable to answer

46. Of the total incidence calls, what percentage do you estimate are due to extreme weather events not usual to your region (i.e grass fires, winter storms, heat-related medical calls, etc.)?
   b. Unable to answer

47. Of the total incidence calls, what percentage do you estimate are medical-related?
   c. Unable to answer

48. Of the total number of incidence calls, what percentage do you estimate are related to active suppression calls (do not include false alarms)?
   d. Unable to answer

49. How many residential/structure fires did your department respond to in 2026 or the last 12-month reporting period ?
   a. Unable to answer

50. During the last 12 reporting months, were there periods during when your call volume exceeded your capacity?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not sure

Part H: Infrastructure and Housing Development

51. Have investments in housing development and infrastructure increased the caseload on your department?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

52. Have you observed a rise in construction fires in the past year?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

53. Have you been given additional resources considering an expected increase in infrastructure and housing development?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

54. Approximately how many high rises (6 story and higher) are in your area?
   a. I don't know

Part I: Public and Consumer Safety

55. In the last 12 reporting months, has your department seen an increase in response to any of the following calls?
   a. Holiday Season fire due to a holiday decoration
   b. Fires caused by a BBQ
   c. Fire, CO, or other related calls due to inappropriate heating measures
   d. Fire in a homeless encampment
   e. Lithium-ion, mobility, thermal runway, or electric vehicle fires
   f. None of the above
   g. I don't know

56. To what extent do you believe that federally funded firefighter training relies on fire department equipment and resources?
   a. Very high
   b. High
   c. Medium
   d. Low
   e. Very low
   f. I don't know
   g. Not applicable

57. Does your municipality have bylaws prohibiting or regulating the use or the sale of consumer fireworks?

Please complete online

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t Know

58. Do you consider single egress construction a concern?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

59. To what extent are you able to meet NFPA 1710, now 1750?
a. Very high
b. High
c. Medium
d. Low
e. Very low
f. I don’t know

Part J: Dangerous Goods

60. Do you feel confident that your community can respond adequately to an incident involving the transportation of dangerous goods by air, water, rail and road?
a. Air
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. I don’t know
b. Water
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. I don’t know
c. Rail
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. I don’t know
d. Road
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. I don’t know

61. Does your department carry dedicated Dangerous Goods PPE and Equipment?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

62. Have you responded to a Hazmat Call that was beyond your capacity in the last year?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

63. What is your greatest need for improving dangerous goods response (select up to 3)?
a. More training opportunities
b. Updated PPE
c. Access to detection equipment
d. Updated procedures & SOPs
e. Regional coordination / mutual aid
f. Funding support
g. Other
h. I don't know

Please complete online

64. Which types of dangerous goods incidents are most common in your coverage area (select all that apply)?
   a. Flammable liquids/gases
   b. Corrosive
   c. Toxic/poisonous materials
   d. Radioactive materials
   e. Explosives
   f. Other
   g. I don't know

65. To what extent do you believe that your department is trained, ready, and equipped to address lithium-ion battery fires?
   a. Very high
   b. High
   c. Medium
   d. Low
   e. Very low
   f. I don't know
   g. Not applicable

66. Does your department have a personnel policy for after responding to lithium-ion fires?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

Part K: Electric Vehicles

The next questions related to lithium-ion batteries will be shared in aggregate with Natural Resources Canada.

67. Has your department received any of the following specific supports related to electric vehicles, electric vehicle-charging, or lithium-ion battery incidents? Select all that apply:
   a. Formal training
   b. EV-specific policies and protocols
   c. Specialized equipment
   d. None of the above
   e. Not sure

68. Where has your department obtained most of its knowledge on electric vehicle or lithium-ion battery fire response?
   a. Vehicle manufacturers
   b. Online/peer sharing
   c. Internal experimentation
   d. Provincial/municipal sources
   e. Other (please specify)
   f. Not applicable

Step 4: Resources, Training and Equipment

Part L: Let us know your resource needs

69. What were your total expenditures in the last full 12 months budget cycle, or last 12-month reporting cycle? Include wages, benefits, operating expenses, and other, except capital or one-time equipment expenditures.

70. Have you deferred the purchase of capital or equipment for more than 24 months due to fiscal pressure
   a. Yes
   b. No
   Not sure

71. Have you deferred training needs due to budget constraints?

Please complete online

a. yes
b. No
Not sure

72. Does your department have any of the following (select all that apply)?
   a. A dedicated washing machine for turn-out gear
   b. Industrial washing machine
   c. A personal protective equipment extractor
   a. None of the above
   b. Not sure

73. Has your department needed a new fire truck for longer than 2 years?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not sure

74. Is your department using primary turn-out gear that is older than 10 years old?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not sure

75. Is your department using any of the following equipment that is more than 15 years old (select all that apply)?
   a. Pumpers
   b. Hoses
   c. Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
   d. Radio Network/Communications equipment
   e. None of the above

76. Is your department using any of the following equipment that is more than 20 years old (select all that apply)?
   a. Aerial Devices
   b. Rescue Unit
   c. Support vehicle
   d. Hydraulic Rescue Tools
   e. Tankers
   f. None of the above

Part M: Training, Gear and Equipment

77. Is your department aware that the Government of Canada and a firefighting union offer free hazardous materials (HAZMAT) training?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

78. Does the provision of federally funded training (ex. hazardous materials (HAZMAT), Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)) introduce operational costs for your department?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

79. Is your department aware that the Government of Canada and one of the unions offer free Responding to the Interface Training?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

80. Does your department require International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Responding to the Interface Training?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

81. Does your department require training provided by the Wildfire agencies/Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC)?

Please complete online

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

82. Does the provision of Responding to the Interface Training incur any costs to your department?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

83. Would the department have any concerns about having a union offer training in a non-unionized environment?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

84. To what extent do you believe that firefighting unions should be the lead facilitators for HAZMAT, Wildfire Urban interface, or Emergency Management Related Training?
a. Very high
b. High
c. Medium
d. Low
e. Very low
f. I don’t know

85. To what extent do you believe that fire chiefs should be consulted on the training that firefighters at their departments receive?
a. Very high
b. High
c. Medium
d. Low
e. Very low
f. I don’t know

86. Would your department benefit from the sharing of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) best practices across fire departments?
a. Yes
b. No
c. Maybe
d. I don’t know

87. Does your fire department have a direct relationship with one or more firefighting schools?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

88. Has your department had access to training on Canadian Transport Emergency Centre (CANUTEC) services?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

89. Did your fire department receive any provincial or territorial funding for equipment (any type or any use) in the last 12 months?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

90. For which of the following do you offer made-to-measure gear (select all that apply):
a. PPE
b. Station wear
c. Face-pieced
d. Other
e. I don't know

Please complete online

f. None of the above
91. Does your department have an individual dedicated to data collection? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t know
92. Has your department's senior leadership (chief officers) team received labour relations/union management training? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know

Step: 5. All Hazards Response

Part N: Wildfires
93. Does your fire department need additional resources for FiresmartTM purposes? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t Know
94. Over the past 12-month period, was your fire department involved in campaign fires/long-duration wildfires (either for your catchment area or outside your catchment area)? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t Know
95. Does your fire department have firefighters who are also employed, or have employment with wildland agencies, or who have disclosed that they are designated wildland agency assets? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t Know
96. As it pertains to campaign or long-duration wildfires in the last year, was your organization able to fulfill its mutual aid agreement? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t know d. Not applicable
97. Does your department have adequate access to specialized wildfire firefighting training? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t Know
98. Has your department been provided in the last 12 months with resources for wildfire equipment from the provinces/territories? a. Yes b. No c. I don’t know
99. Does your department need wildfire-specific equipment and material to deal with the wildfire threat? a. Yes b. No c. Not applicable d. I don’t know
100. Does your department need training to operate recently acquired wildfire equipment? a. Yes

Please complete online

b. No
c. I don’t know

101. Does your fire department have experience with private wildfire protection companies in wildfire?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

102. Do you feel your department currently has the resources/access to resources to predict wildfires?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don’t know

Part O: Wildfire/WUI

These next questions related to wildfires will be shared in aggregate form with the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center (CIFFC).

103. Does your local government have any bylaws, regulations, or development requirements that require the integration of FireSmartTM principles into building development and/or landscaping?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

104. How prepared/resilient do you feel your community is to enduring a wildfire event?
a. Wildfire is not viewed as risk in my community
b. Wildfire is viewed as a risk and we are not prepared/resilient
c. Wildfire is viewed as a risk and we are somewhat prepared/resilient
d. Wildfire is viewed as a risk and we are very prepared/resilient
e. I don't know

105. Does your local government have a Community Wildfire Protection or Resiliency Plan?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

106. Is your department included in preparedness or seasonal planning activities?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

107. Does your department have a designated liaison or point of contact with a provincial or territorial wildfire agency?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

108. Would you be in favour of fire service training schools offering a program on fighting forest fires?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

109. Would you be in favour of fire service training schools offering courses related to FireSmartTM?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

Please complete online

110. Does your fire department own or have access to specialized WUI structure protection equipment (e.g., structure protection trailer, wildfire sprinkler trailer, or equivalent)?

a. Yes – owned by the department
b. Yes – access through mutual aid / province / third party
c. No
d. I don't know

Part P: Emergency Management/Humanitarian Response

111. Is the department Fire Chief or Deputy Chief the designated emergency management leader for the jurisdiction in the event of a state of emergency?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't Know

112. Does the fire department run the emergency management operations center?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't Know

113. During a state of local emergency, where the fire department is primarily involved, to what extent is the fire chief or a member of the fire department engaged in evacuation planning?

a. very much
b. somewhat
c. very little
d. not at all
e. I don't know

114. In a state of local emergency, to what extent do you feel your community is ready for an evacuation?

a. very much
b. somewhat
c. very little
d. not at all
e. I don't know

115. Does your fire department need civilian response capacity that may not be trained firefighters?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't Know

116. Does your department or region have Memorandums of understanding with any of these Non-governmental organizations (NGO)? (select all that apply)

a. Red Cross
b. St. John Ambulance
c. Ground Search and Rescue
d. The Salvation Army
e. Humane Society
f. Animal Welfare Groups
g. Air Search and Rescue
h. All of the above
i. Other
j. None of the above

117.Are you currently trying to recruit volunteer/paid on call firefighters?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

Please complete online

d. Not applicable

118. Do you run a youth program to engage youth in firefighting?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know
d. Not applicable

119. Do you see a role for non-firefighter volunteers at your fire department (i.e.youth core, civilian workforce, etc.)?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know
d. Not applicable

120. Have you had a state of local emergency declared in the last 3 years?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

121. Did your department participate in the emergency management of a situation that could have resulted in catastrophic losses?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

122. In the last 12 months, have you had an emergency that led to one or more of the following [check all that apply]:
a. Declaring a state of local emergency
b. Requiring regional resources
c. Requiring provincial/territorial resources
d. Requiring federal resources
e. None of the above
f. I don't know

Part Q: Search and Rescue

123. Does your department perform formal Search and Rescue (i.e. marine, air, ground, urban, etc.) beyond regular smoke-filled Search and Rescue?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

124. Does your jurisdiction have access to a separate Search and rescue organisations?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

125. Are any of your firefighters search and rescue volunteers?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I don't know

126. What level of interaction has your local department had with your local Ground Search and Rescue team?
a. None
b. Initial conversation
c. Formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
d. I don't know

127. What level of interaction has your local department had with your local Air Search and Rescue team (Civil Air Search and Rescue Association)?
a. None
b. Initial conversation
c. Formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

please complete online

d. I don't know)

128. Can you sustain the incident command station for more than 2 operational periods?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

129. Have you had an incident where having search and rescue available would have been helpful but was not available?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

130. When was the last time your department has undertaken a multi-stakeholder exercise and or resource mapping?
   a. In the last year
   b. In the last 2 years
   c. In the last 5 years
   d. More than 5 years ago
   e. Never
   f. I don't know

131. Do you believe that the training is interoperable with these search and rescue organizations?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

132. Are there any gaps in operations that search and rescue can fill?
   a. Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)
   b. Logistics
   c. Traffic management,
   d. Other:

Part R: Emergency Medical

133. Does your fire department provide medical response?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I don't know

134. If yes, what type of medical response does your department offer (select all that apply)?
   a. Amalgamated fire and EMS service
   b. Fire-based EMS service
   c. Medical first response
   d. Lift assist
   e. Medical transfer
   f. Light medical response unit
   g. Dedicated medical response unit
   h. Other
   i. I don't know
   j. None of the above

135. Is your department compensated for emergency medical calls?
   a. Always
   b. Never
   c. Sometimes/In some ways
   d. Not sure

Please complete online