

Every profession has a story shaped by its people, its challenges, and its achievements. As we launch the first SFPE-BC Newsletter, we invite you to be part of that story as we celebrate our community, share insights, and look ahead to the future of fire protection engineering in British Columbia.



This image is AI Generated .

What You'll Find in This Issue

- A message from the SFPE-BC Chapter President
- Upcoming webinars and learning opportunities
- Recent and upcoming events from across Canada
- Insights from the WUI Fire Engineering Summit 2026
- Project Spotlight: New St. Paul's Hospital
- Research highlights from UBC
- SFPE Canada news and updates

Connecting our community through knowledge, innovation, and the people shaping the future of fire protection engineering

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

In the four years that I have served on the executive committee of the Chapter, I have had the privilege of working alongside many of the people who have helped build this Chapter into what it is today. Through that experience, I have come to appreciate the significant effort required to organize events and provide educational opportunities for our members. I have seen firsthand the amazing dedication, knowledge, and countless volunteer hours that have sustained this organization and helped it grow over the years.

During this time there has been a gradual passing of the torch from the long serving and experienced leaders of this Chapter, including John Ivison, Samir Eidnani, and others, to myself, Henning White, and a new generation of fire protection engineers and Chapter members. I want to recognize and thank those who have helped shape this Chapter into the successful organization we have inherited, and express my gratitude to them, Henning, and all of you for your trust in me to help continue and push forward that work.

This year is an opportunity for all of us to take ownership of the Chapter's future. This Chapter has a strong foundation and a proud history, and it is now our responsibility to preserve what makes this Chapter amazing, while finding new ways to advance its mission of promoting awareness, education, and advocacy for fire protection engineering. I encourage everyone to consider how they might participate, whether it be through webinars or in person events, mentoring others, or raising awareness through outreach.

As President, my focus will be on ensuring that the Chapter is well positioned to continue serving its members and advancing the profession. I see three strategic objectives guiding our work over the coming year: becoming a more member-focused, sustainable, and resilient Chapter.

First, we want to be a more member-focused Chapter. The Chapter exists to serve its membership, and we want to ensure that the opportunities we provide reflect the interests and needs of our members. This means increasing communication, creating more opportunities for members to provide input, and ensuring that the membership has a greater voice in shaping the Chapter's activities and direction. We want to hear what matters to you and use that input to help guide the Chapter. We will be developing regular surveys to help ensure that the Chapter stays focused on your interests and needs.

Second, we want to build a more sustainable Chapter. Our ability to deliver meaningful educational opportunities depends on having the resources and relationships to support them. Last year, for the first time in decades, the Chapter concluded the year with an annual surplus, as a direct result of your continued and outstanding degree of support. This support has fundamentally expanded what we provide as a Chapter.



We intend to build on this progress by strengthening our relationships with other SFPE chapters, SFPE Canada, academic institutions, and organizations across the broader fire protection industry. Through collaboration, we can broaden the expertise available to provide educational content to our members and engage in awareness and advocacy opportunities that would not be possible for us to deliver on our own.

Third, we want to build a more resilient Chapter. Like many volunteer organizations, our ability to operate depends on the time, knowledge, and effort of the people who support it. We want to ensure that we have infrastructure and processes in place that are less dependent on individual people. This will allow roles and responsibilities to transition smoothly without affecting our ability to continue delivering the educational content and advocacy you have come to expect from this Chapter.

These objectives are interconnected. We can create more opportunities to deliver on our mission by listening more closely to our members and building stronger collaborative relationships. By strengthening the foundations on which the Chapter operates, we can ensure that the organization remains capable of delivering on our mission into the future.

These efforts are to provide tangible value for you, our members, in return for your generous and continued support. Over the coming year, we intend to expand our webinar program and in-person events and improve our communications through newsletters and surveys. We also intend to increase our engagement with other SFPE chapters, academic institutions, and related organizations to increase the opportunities that are available to our membership.

As we take on the responsibility of carrying this organization forward, I hope all of you will continue to look for opportunities to participate, share your ideas, and help shape the future of both this Chapter and Fire Protection Engineering. Together we will build a safer world through Fire Protection Engineering.

Sincerely,
Vincent MacAusland
President SFPE BC



City of Vancouver Archives. Aftermath of the Great Vancouver Fire, June 1886.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Stay ahead of emerging trends, technologies, and best practices through upcoming SFPE webinars

SFPE BC NUMERICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EFFICACY OF STAIR PRESSURIZATION BY STACK EFFECT OCT 27, 2026	A virtual presentation by Evan Ford, P.Eng, CP, and Hong Tsui, Ph.D., P.Eng. of LMDG Building Code Consultants
NCR CHAPTER No Upcoming Events	
PRAIRIES CHAPTER FIRE CODE COMPLIANCE OF COMPLEX INDUSTRIAL OCCUPANCIES NOV 10, 2026	A virtual Event featuring Modusser Tufail, P.Eng of Strathcona County Emergency Services
SOUTHERN ONTARIO CHAPTER No Upcoming Events	
ST LAWRENCE CHAPTER No Upcoming Events	
CFAA NAVIGATING ULC STANDARDS FOR CODE COMPLIANCE NOV 4, 2026 FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS: FROM INSTALLATION TO INVESTIGATION: LIFE SAFETY, EVIDENCE AND LIABILITY FROM A FORENSIC PERSPECTIVE DEC 2, 2026	A virtual Event featuring Tess Esoejo A virtual Event featuring Melanie Cairns P.Eng., CFEI



City of Vancouver Archives, Demonstration of
 Vancouver's First Fireboat "J.H. Carlisle", ca. 1928.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Explore the conferences, seminars, and industry gatherings advancing fire safety and engineering practice.

SFPE ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO 2026

OCTOBER 6 – 8, 2026 | ATLANTA, GEORGIA, USA



The SFPE Annual Conference & Expo 2026, hosted by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE), brought together fire and life safety professionals from around the world in Atlanta, Georgia, from October 6-8, 2026. The conference served as a premier forum for knowledge sharing, professional development, and collaboration within the global fire protection engineering community.

The event featured a comprehensive program of technical and educational sessions covering the latest industry trends, research advancements, innovative technologies, and practical approaches to emerging fire and life safety challenges. Attendees gained valuable insights from leading experts, participated in meaningful networking opportunities with industry peers, and explored new products and services showcased by exhibitors from across the sector.

As one of the profession's flagship events, the [SFPE Annual Conference & Expo 2026](#) highlighted the continued advancement of fire protection engineering and reinforced the importance of collaboration, innovation, and knowledge exchange in enhancing fire and life safety worldwide.

BC FIRECON 2026

SEPTEMBER 24 - 25, 2026 | LANGLEY, BC, CANADA



The BC FireCon 2026, hosted by the Fire Protection Association of British Columbia (FPABC), brought together a diverse group of fire and life safety professionals for BC's premier fire protection conference. Held on September 24-25, 2026, in Langley, BC, the conference focused on the theme "Life Safety Systems: Integration, Collaboration, Standardization - Strengthening British Columbia through a Unified Industry."

The event provided a valuable forum for engineers, code consultants, Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs), fire officials, technicians, contractors, building owners, property managers, and other industry stakeholders to exchange knowledge, explore emerging challenges, and discuss best practices in fire and life safety. Through technical presentations, industry exhibits, networking opportunities, and specialized training sessions, attendees gained insights into the evolving regulatory environment and advancements in fire protection systems and technologies.

A particular highlight of the conference was its emphasis on collaboration across disciplines, recognizing that effective fire and life safety outcomes depend on coordinated efforts among designers, regulators, installers, operators, and emergency responders. The conference reinforced the importance of standardization, innovation, and professional development in supporting safer and more resilient communities throughout British Columbia.

For fire protection professionals across the province, BC FireCon 2026 once again demonstrated its role as a leading platform for learning, networking, and advancing the practice of fire and life safety.

<https://www.bcfirecon.ca/>

CANADIAN FIRE ENGINEERING SUMMIT 2026

NOVEMBER 3, 2026 | VAUGHAN, ON, CANADA



The 2026 Canadian Fire Engineering Summit is expected to attract all major stakeholders in the fire protection industry in Canada and will be one of the largest events of its kind. Last year's event was a full house with overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees. Created and organized by the Canadian Fire Alarm Association (CFAA), Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE), Canada Branch, and Society of Fire Protection Engineers, Southern Ontario Chapter (SFPE-SOC) collaboratively, it is an event not to be missed in Canada.

Membership in these 3 organizations covers the entire fire protection industry spectrum, including Fire Chiefs and Fire Prevention Officers, Fire Protection Engineers/Architects, insurance companies, system manufacturers, national testing agencies (ULC, CSA, ETL, FM, etc.), Commercial Property Owners and Managers, and Fire Protection Contractors. It is expected to be well attended, all from this important and niche sector.

This whole-day in-person (or live online) event will consist of keynote speakers and panels on timely topics related to fire engineering in Canada. There will also be exhibit booths at the Summit, providing excellent opportunities for manufacturers, contractors and consultants to showcase their products and services.

The dinner reception is a chance to mingle with the speakers, panelists and organizers over a delicious meal and drink. This is a rare opportunity to network with all industry peers in attendance. Register at <https://www.canadianfireengineeringsummit.com/>

FIRE PROTECTION: THE ENGINEERING DISCIPLINE HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

NOVEMBER 23, 2026 | VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA



If this is the first time you've heard of fire and life safety engineering, you're probably not the only one.

The Society of Fire Protection Engineers, British Columbia Chapter (SFPE-BC) is coming to UBC for an in-person info session. Practicing engineers will talk about the projects they work on, the problems they solve and how engineers from different backgrounds find their way into the field. If any of the questions above caught your attention, come meet the people who work on them.

"Fire marks were among the earliest visible symbols of organized fire protection, linking insurance, firefighting, and risk management centuries before modern codes and standards."



2026 EMERGING ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES SUMMIT

DECEMBER 3-5, 2026 | OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA



The SFPE Foundation, in partnership with the National Research Council of Canada (NRC), is pleased to announce the 2026 Emerging Energy Technologies Summit, taking place in Ottawa, Ontario, from December 3-5, 2026.

This important event will bring together researchers, practitioners, regulators, and industry leaders to discuss fire safety challenges and emerging risks associated with evolving energy technologies. The Summit will provide a platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and the advancement of best practices in this rapidly developing field.

The Call for Abstracts and Registration are now open.

- Submit an Abstract: <https://www.sfpe.org/2026eisummit/cfa>
- Register for the Summit: <https://www.sfpe.org/2026eisummit/register>
- Explore Sponsorship Opportunities: <https://www.sfpe.org/2026eisummit/sponsors>

Attendees are encouraged to check the event website regularly for updates on the program, speakers, and networking opportunities.

For additional information, please contact FoundationEvents@sfpefoundation.org

EVENTS WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

Feel free to reach out to info@sfpe.bc.ca or any of the SFPE Executive team members. Contact information is available at the end of the newsletter



"Long before social media and mass communications, fire prevention posters played a crucial role in educating the public about fire safety and wildfire prevention."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

Biswadeep Ghosh

The 2026 WUI Fire Engineering Summit brought together researchers, engineers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to discuss emerging challenges and solutions related to wildfire risk in the built environment. Discussions highlighted the growing importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, data-driven risk assessment, resilient community planning, and practical mitigation strategies as wildfire impacts on communities located within the wildland-urban interface continue to increase.

A key theme throughout the summit was the need to bridge the gap between research and implementation, ensuring that advances in engineering, modelling, risk assessment, and community resilience are translated into practical tools that can be adopted by decision-makers, regulators, and practitioners.

One notable addition to the 2026 summit was the inaugural Student Pitch Competition, supported by the United Engineering Foundation and the SFPE Foundation. The competition awarded more than US\$20,000 in grants, including one US\$10,000 grand prize and two US\$5,000 awards, to support innovative student-led research projects addressing key wildland-urban interface fire challenges. Attendee engagement was particularly strong, with approximately two-thirds of summit participants voting for their preferred student pitch.

Biswadeep Ghosh had the privilege of serving as one of the judges for the Student Pitch Competition alongside an accomplished panel of industry and academic professionals. The quality of submissions received was exceptionally high, demonstrating the depth of emerging talent and innovation within the wildfire and fire engineering research community. The judging panel noted that the proposals were of a remarkably high standard, making it particularly challenging to narrow the field and select the three finalist teams that advanced to the live pitch competition.

The grand prize was ultimately awarded to a team from the University of Colorado Boulder for their project, "WUI-LLM: A Decision Support Dashboard for High-Quality Wildland-Urban Interface Data". The proposed platform aims to enhance access to high-resolution WUI mapping and wildfire exposure information, providing decision-makers with improved tools to understand and assess wildfire risks at community and property scales.

The introduction of the Student Pitch Competition was a welcome and successful initiative that not only showcased the next generation of wildfire resilience and fire engineering research but also provided meaningful funding and visibility to help transform promising ideas into impactful real-world solutions.

Judge's Perspective

"The quality of the proposals submitted was exceptionally high and reflected a strong commitment to addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing WUI communities. The level of innovation and interdisciplinary thinking on display made the evaluation process both rewarding and challenging. Selecting the final three teams was no easy task, as many of the submissions demonstrated significant potential to contribute to future wildfire resilience efforts."

– Biswadeep Ghosh, Student Pitch Judge

This year's summit demonstrated the continued growth of the WUI fire engineering community and reinforced the value of collaboration between academia, industry, and public-sector stakeholders in advancing wildfire resilience.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT - NEW ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL (NSP)

The New St. Paul's Hospital project consisted of the design and construction of a new hospital to replace the existing St. Paul's Hospital located in Downtown Vancouver at Burrard and Comox Streets. The new hospital is located at the northwest corner of the False Creek Flats area.

The approximately 120,000 m², 11-storey facility includes 548 inpatient beds, with all inpatient rooms designed as private rooms, each with its own bathroom. This represents a significant change from the existing hospital, where approximately 15% of the rooms are private. The new facility also includes the clinical Support and Research Centre (CSRC), approximately 1,200 parking spaces, and extensive information technology and building systems.

The project incorporated extensive use of wood, consistent with the Wood First Act (British Columbia), including engineered wood products and innovative applications of wood and mass timber assemblies in building elements such as beams, columns, walls, and floors.

GHL was responsible for providing Building Code and Fire Engineering consulting services for the New St. Paul's Hospital project, as well as acting on behalf of the City of Vancouver as the Certified Professional (CP) for the project. GHL reviewed and coordinated the Building Code and fire and life-safety requirements, assisting the Professional Design Team in demonstrating compliance with the applicable Building Bylaw requirements. In addition, GHL developed a number of Alternative Solutions to address project-specific conditions where prescriptive Code requirements presented design challenges.

The project was successfully completed on schedule in July 2026.

Andrew Harmsworth and Dean Skalski were the Certified Professionals (CPs) responsible for the development of Alternative Solutions and demonstrating Building Code compliance, with Wendy Morrison serving as the Principal in Charge.

GHL Consultants

Client	PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc Providence Health Care
Architect	HDR Architecture Associates, Ltd Stantec Architecture Ltd



Recent Academic Research at UBC

Dr. Felix Wiesner

Fire safety research at the University of British Columbia is ongoing and has recently been enhanced through the opening of the "Fire Resilience and Wood Ignition Safety Evaluation" (FIREWISE) Laboratory within the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Stewardship. Currently the laboratory is going through the commissioning of its equipment, and the first burn experiments have already begun. This lab operates as a unique fire safety lab in Western Canada capable of designing and analyzing bespoke, controlled fire scenarios.

In June, FIREWISE PhD Candidate Arwa Abougharib and her co-authors published progress on "FIRECAT: a public data catalogue of mass timber compartment fire tests". Uniquely, for the first time, this database collates solid-phase temperatures that arise in structural timber members in compartment fires. This will allow greater insights into compartment fire development, notably, the inclusion of many different experiments will enable researchers to validate their models against a broad range of conditions, designers to check case-studies similar to their proposed design, and AHJs to amend codes by examining the results of a diverse set of experimental campaigns. The relational data structure, variable definitions, and a public online dashboard were presented at the 15th Symposium of the International Association for Fire Safety Science (IAFSS) in La Rochelle, with the accompanying paper noted above published in Fire Safety Journal. New data is being added to FIRECAT with the help of data donations from fire research groups across the globe. Additional information can be found at UBC General Research Data Collection.

At the same conference, the head of FIREWISE, Dr. Felix Wiesner, presented an invited keynote paper on the effects of fire and elevated temperatures on the mechanical properties of wood across different scales. The paper titled 'From nano-to megastructure: A review of mass timber load-bearing capacity in fire' provides important insights for the consideration of the load-bearing capacity of mass timber in fires. It highlights that deformations of heated wood can be traced back to the heat-induced movement of water in the wood components (especially cellulose) and reiterates that deformations in a fire are not recovered, even after removal of any applied loads. These findings are important for better analysis and design of mass timber buildings for non-standard fires and their post-fire resilience.

In addition, Dr. Wiesner recently co-published a paper in Fire Safety Journal noting that the term 'Fire Safety Strategy' is frequently employed yet rarely formally defined. The paper proposes a formal definition of the term as 'the ensemble of building elements, features, and attributes combined with a narrative explaining how they work together to achieve satisfactory fire performance throughout a fire event' to help transition fire engineering toward a cohesive, system-wide discipline rather than a series of isolated compliance measures. While this definition was heavily inspired by performance-based design frameworks in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, the idea of a more holistic integration of fire safety into building design is also highly relevant for objective-based design in Canada.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Faculty of Forestry & Environmental Stewardship

Idea for an Article?

Feel free to reach out to info@sfpe.bc.ca or any of the SFPE Executive team members.

Contact information is available at the end of the newsletter

Content deadline for next newsletter: JAN 15, 2027

SFPE Canada Update

The recently formed [SFPE-Canada](#) branch has had a busy year. The Board of Directors was selected over the summer of 2025 and announced at the 2025 SFPE conference in Vancouver. The Board consists of:

- Chair: Kieran Ager
- Chair-Elect: Lindsay Ranger
- Director-at-Large: Alana MacLellan-Bonnell
- Director-at-Large: Beth Weckman
- Director-at-Large: Leslie Sims
- Secretary: Christopher Anderson

The Board has worked over the past year to develop a Strategic Plan for the branch and updating the governance documents. The inaugural Annual General Meeting was held (virtually) on September 22nd with great participation from all of the member regional chapters.

The Board is excited to work with the Member Chapters and interested industry professionals to implement the goals identified within the strategic plan and foster the continued growth of the fire engineering community within Canada.

The SFPE-Canada governance documents and strategic plan are available [online](#)



OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED IN THE CHAPTER

There are many opportunities if you'd like to contribute to any of the committee activities of the SFPE-BC. These committees provide a great way to meet and contact other SFPE-BC members, promote personal development and the activities of the SFPE and fire engineering, and to help resolve issues affecting the profession. Feel free to reach out to info@sfpe.bc.ca

Contact the chairs of the committees you are interested in participating to learn more.

President Vincent MacAusland: vmacausland@lmdg.com

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Secretary Chris Anderson: canderson@senezco.com

Membership Barry Qui: barry@cardinalfire.ca

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