

Calgary firefighters being trained on pet CPR

New pet-rescue program officially starts this week

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[CBC News](#)

Firefighters in Calgary are being trained to perform CPR on animals and administer oxygen to them as part of a new program announced Wednesday, a day after crews rescued eight animals from a house fire.

"It's important that firefighters have the skills and tools that allow them to perform as many successful rescues as possible — and that includes pet rescues," said fire Chief Bruce Burrell in a release before the official launch of the program Thursday.

"This pet-rescue program will enhance their ability to assist pets in distress because of a fire, vehicle collision or other emergency."

All firefighters, including new recruits, are being trained in pet CPR and oxygen delivery for animals, the release said.

The Calgary Animal Referral and Emergency Centre (C.A.R.E.) Animal Hospital helped the fire department develop a training module, teaching crews to assess the animal, open the airway, provide ventilation and compressions.

Additionally, since April, specialized equipment such as pet oxygen masks for various sizes of dogs and cats has been available on all fire trucks and rescue boats.

Firefighters had been administering oxygen to animals when required, but didn't have specific equipment and training, the fire department said, noting that every year, it encounters "numerous" pets in distress when responding to calls.

Pet-control crates and leashes will be carried aboard fire vehicles, allowing crews to handle pets on the scene and transport injured animals to a nearby veterinary clinic.

The announcement of the new program, in collaboration with C.A.R.E. veterinarians and the city's Animal and Bylaw Services, follows an animal rescue on Tuesday afternoon. Crews responded to a fire on Manora Drive N.E. around 5 p.m., when they were told that nine animals were missing.

Firefighters succeeded in rescuing three dogs and five cats, one which had to be rescued twice after it escaped and darted back into the home. One cat died from the smoke.

The program will be officially launched Thursday morning with an event at Animal and Bylaw Services on Portland Street.

Animal and Bylaw Services will be handing out leaflets on responsible pet ownership and window stickers for pet owners to put in their home to alert first-responders that there may be animals needing rescue.