

## Limerick hosts successful EV car fire demo



By Michael Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Limerick fire department hosted a successful demonstration at their fire hall on April 29 on EV car fires and using a specialized fire blanket from Bridgehill to put out the conflagration. CAO Victoria Tisdale and Limerick fire prevention officer and bylaw enforcement officer Cindy Fuerth comment on this event.

Fire Chief Greg Maxwell told council about this demonstration at the April 23 council meeting, that they'd be using a special blanket to put out an EV car fire.

"We will be lighting a car on fire with two parked beside it to demonstrate how this works. Because we are hosting, we will be receiving a free blanket which would cost around \$2,200," he said in his report.

Tisdale told Bancroft This Week that they had eight fire departments; Highlands East, Hastings Highlands, Faraday, Bancroft, Wollaston, Tweed/Stirling, Madoc Township and Limerick there for the training, and confirmed they will get a free fire suppression blanket as they hosted the event.

"The training officer was from Norway, Paul Amundsen, head of sales in Europe for Bridgehill (which produces the fire blanket). Alex Caldwell from 1200 Degrees helped connect us with Paul and organize the event, and is our supplier for Limerick Fire. We did not use an actual EV for the demo, but rather just a regular car. You can see in the pictures how quickly and effectively the blanket works. EV cars cannot be put out with water alone, so this blanket is necessary," she says.

According to [www.blazestack.com](http://www.blazestack.com), water as a fire suppression method to put out an EV fire is often inadequate, as water struggles to penetrate the compartmentalized design of battery packs, potentially leaving internal fires unaffected.

"Tens of thousands of gallons may be required to cool the battery sufficiently and the fire may reignite. Specialized suppression agents like Class D extinguishers or fire blankets for lithium-ion fires can isolate the fire and neutralize the heat source more effectively than water alone," they explain on their website.

Cindy Fuerth, bylaw enforcement officer, says that Maxwell had spoken of EVs and their potential dangers when ignited, and that Caldwell, a sales representative from 1200 degrees, suggested that Limerick should consider hosting a demonstration using a Bridgehill fire blanket for other fire services in the North Hastings area.

Alex arranged for Amundsen, head of sales for Bridgehill out of Norway, to conduct the in-class and hands-on training at the Limerick Fire Hall. Amundsen is attending the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) Conference and Trade Show with the Bridgehill fire blanket; the timing was perfect. Chief Maxwell emailed the surrounding fire services invitations, inviting them to attend, participate in hands-on training, and enjoy a light lunch. The attendance was overwhelming. The following day, Chief Maxwell received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the other attending services, validating the event's success and the training's value, she says.

Fuerth told Bancroft This Week that the most significant advantage of a rural volunteer service to invest in a Bridgehill fire blanket is its unique feature of not requiring water for operation.

This is a game-changer for Limerick Fire, which has a water tanker that carries 3,000 gallons of water fully loaded. The tanker must be filled at different dry hydrant locations within the township. A typical EV fire will take up to 20,000 to 50,000 gallons of water to extinguish. The data was the selling feature; the Limerick Fire Department can now confidently handle an EV fire, she says. Looking ahead, the Limerick Fire Department is committed to hosting joint training events.