

At the end of a rope, a rescue

Members with Edmonton Fire Rescue Services' Technical Rescue Team conducted training exercises today from the roof of a downtown 36-storey office tower.

Firefighters used ropes to lower each other down the west side of Telus house at ATB Place, practicing specialized skills required for midair rescues. This training in "long lower" techniques represents one of eight core competencies for qualified firefighters.

The Technical Rescue Team is an elite group of specialized firefighters. They require 2 years of firefighting experience, but most applicants have 6 years or more. They participate in quarterly training for a two-year period, learning rescue techniques for the more complicated emergencies they can encounter when on call.



"We're very happy that Triovest Realty Advisors Inc. partnered with us this year," said Technical Rescue Team Coordinator Bruce Dreany. "By allowing us to use Telus house at ATB Place, they've helped us to use more complicated techniques from a greater height, and really let the team test their rope skills. The practice runs prepare us to better protect the safety of Edmontonians."

The Technical Rescue Team responds to emergencies involving people stranded at a great height. Window washers are the most common rescue on high-rise buildings, but the same skills apply to rescues from cranes, bridges or even the steep banks of the river valley.

In 2013, Edmonton Fire Rescue responded to 39,700 calls, and 10,000 involved protecting public safety by responding to vehicle collisions, hazardous materials calls and technical rescues.

Media contact:

[Dale Shekooley](#)
Senior Communications Advisor
Community Services Communications
780-944-0433

3rd Floor, City Hall
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square NW
Edmonton, AB
T5J 2R7
www.edmonton.ca



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