



Quick! Name the largest, international sporting event coming to British Columbia in the next year.

If you said the **2009 World Police & Fire Games (WPFG)**, you're right—making you eligible to compete for (and against!) 10,000 other firefighting and law enforcement officers this summer! Or, to volunteer, or simply be a fan.

Whatever you choose, BC is playing host to the **2009 World Police & Fire Games** (www.2009wpfg.ca) July 31 to August 9. Don't miss this unbelievable line-up of 63 world-class sporting events taking place from Chilliwack to Whistler. All sporting events are open to the public with **FREE** admission. There's hockey and soccer, boxing and tug-o-war, and everything in between—plus an endless host of entertainment and social options, all set against the backdrop of beautiful BC.

"To date, our online registration system has processed more than 8800 unique athlete entries from over 50 countries," says Stu Ballantyne, CEO for the Games. "Our hockey tournament sold out in the first few hours, so we had to drop everything and go out and secure more ice time." Ballantyne advises if you plan on entering, be sure to register online (www.2009wpfg.ca) as soon as possible, as many sports are filling up quickly. Registration will remain open until June 15, 2009 without penalty.

Athletes are employees or retirees of the law enforcement and firefighting communities, which includes Corrections and Customs officers.

What events are attracting the most athlete registrations? Golf, Cycling, Soccer, Softball and Track & Field are all near the top. Also popular for spectators will be some of the more unique sports such as the Toughest Competitor Alive, Muster and Tug-o-War.

"These Games are attracting competitors in their 20s...and in their 70s," says Ballantyne. "To be eligible to compete, you must be an employed or retired member of a fire, police, corrections or border services agency."

What may draw athletes at first is the competition—the chance to show their stuff against the best in the emergency services community—ends up being one big party after the medals are handed out. The Games experience also includes athlete villages, concerts, nightly entertainment, beer gardens and many opportunities to renew old friendships and ignite new ones.

Yes, there is some world-class training involved. However, athletes are invited to try something new just for the fun of it. For example, there is still a chance to compete for a medal in wrist wrestling, table tennis and the Grouse Grind race.

For many, it will be their first taste of the WPFG experience, and it seems likely that it won't be their last. History shows that competitors tend to return, even after they have retired. The



Games began in 1985 in San Diego and are held every two years. For some participants coming to BC this year, it will be their 8th or 9th trip to this world competition.

The Opening Ceremonies will be held at General Motors Place in Vancouver on July 31 and the Closing Ceremonies will be at Swangard Stadium in Burnaby on August 9. On August 3, the Games will host an outdoor concert at the picturesque Deer Lake Park in Burnaby featuring Sam Roberts and other musical entertainment, allowing athletes, their friends and family the chance to pull up a lawnchair beside favourite teammates—or greatest rivals!

Two days prior to the Opening Ceremonies, a professional Congress & Trade Show will take place at the new Convention Centre in Vancouver.

Event sponsors play key roles in funding the Games and delivering a world-class experience. For example, Chevron is the official fuel supplier for all the vehicles. Another “fuel” supplier is Granville Island Brewing. Granville Island Brewing is selling distinctive “Proud Sponsor” packs of Granville Island Brewing’s Island Lager, available in BC Liquor Stores and privately run liquor stores around BC. Partial proceeds from each specially-marked package of Island Lager will go to the 2009 World Police & Fire Games Legacy Fund supporting three designated legacy organizations: Kidsport, The Burn Fund and The Law Enforcement Torch Run.

BCAA has also established a program to benefit firefighters and law enforcement officers in BC, while supporting the Games Legacy Fund. They have created a Group Affinity Program where every time you purchase insurance and travel products—you save money and you’re helping to leave a legacy. And to kick it off, BCAA is offering all firefighters and law enforcement officers in BC a free BCAA membership. To activate, call 1-888-268-5154 or visit any BCAA office.

Other corporate supporters of the 2009 World Police & Fire Games include TELUS, Translink, and more. For a full list, log onto www.2009wpfg.ca

In addition to competing, attending the Congress, or simply being a “raving fan” and helping to spread the word, there is another important way to get involved: volunteer. The 2009 World Police & Fire Games will not be possible without the time and talent of more than 2500 volunteers. From key leadership roles to on-the-ground taskmasters, volunteers will play an integral role in hosting the world for 10 days—and during many events leading up to the Games.

Get involved: To register as a competitor or volunteer, visit www.2009wpfg.ca

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