

For immediate release
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FIRESMART™ program returns to SLRD

Agricultural FireSmart Workshops and Rebates available for a limited time

Pemberton, BC– The FireSmart program is returning to the regional district with new initiatives aimed at empowering residents to keep their properties, neighbourhoods and communities safe from wildfire.

With grant funds from the Union of BC Municipalities through the Community Resiliency Investment Program, the SLRD can offer seasonal FireSmart initiatives to all four Electoral Areas in the regional district – at no cost to residents. Two Local FireSmart Representatives (LFR) and a contractor will help progress this work throughout the region until the fall.

A change in approach

The SLRD first introduced the [FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition](#) program in 2023. It will continue to expand in 2024 with assessments, tailored work plans and local events for ten communities in the SLRD. The program focuses on bringing neighbours together to help address threats on individual properties, and those in common areas within the community.

“FireSmart principles are most effective if an entire community applies them. The FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition program provides the SLRD with an efficient process for identifying risks and mitigation actions specific to each community, and a framework for implementing those actions that motivates and engages residents,” said Maude Lussier, Wildfire Mitigation Lead. “We are working closely with FireSmart champions in selected communities, and we hope to continue until every neighbourhood in the region has a clear multi-year FireSmart plan in front of them.”

“Electoral Area A experienced the devastating impact of a wildfire last year,” said Electoral Area A Director Sal DeMare. “Our communities know first-hand what it’s like to lose homes to wildfire. It’s devastating impact to the land and the community,” he said. “Doing this preventative work is something we should all take very seriously and I encourage everyone to take part in Fire Smart activities.”

FireSmart Assessments and Rebates

Beginning in April and continuing through to the fall, property owners in Electoral Areas A, B, C, and D can receive a free FireSmart Home Assessment conducted by a qualified Local FireSmart Representative (LFR). The assessment provides homeowners with a tailored FireSmart work plan and helpful emergency preparedness tips. For a limited time, SLRD residents can receive up to \$1,000 in rebates for completing FireSmart work on their property based on recommendations from the assessment. The number of rebates available is limited and will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. To request a FireSmart Home

assessment, email firesmart@slrd.bc.ca. Home Assessment requests can be made at any time, but it may take multiple weeks for a FireSmart Representative to visit a property, depending on demand.

“We are pleased to see the FireSmart rebate program being offered again this year throughout the regional district,” said Russell Mack, Electoral Area C Director and Chair of the Electoral Area Directors (EAD) Committee. “No part of the regional district is free from wildfire risk. We’ve had some good momentum with the FireSmart program in recent years, and it’s great to see that continue.”

“Wildfires are expected, and that means we also need to be prepared by taking the steps to protect our homes and our communities,” said Tony Rainbow, Electoral Area D Director.

Farm & Ranch Wildfire Preparedness Workshops

On May 2 and 3, the SLRD Wildfire Mitigation Program will host [Farm and Ranch Wildfire Preparedness Workshops](#) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the BC Wildfire Service. The interactive workshops are designed to engage regional producers in a two-way conversation about fire safety on the farm. Participants will learn how to protect their property, livestock and crops in the event of a wildfire emergency.

“We know the devastation that wildfire can cause,” said Electoral Area B Director Vivian Birch-Jones. “Our rural and agricultural communities, in particular, are at great risk,” she added. “The FireSmart program is a way to do some hard work upfront, to make sure your property, and your community, is as safe as it can be from the threat of wildfire.”

Workshop details:

SLRD Electoral Areas C and D

Thursday, May 2, 2024 - 6 PM-8:30 PM

Pemberton Community Centre - Activity Room B

7390 Cottonwood Street, Pemberton

[Register](#) before April 25

SLRD Electoral Areas A and B

Friday, May 3, 2024 - 1:00 PM-3:30 PM

Lillooet Recreation Centre - Mezzanine

930 Main Street, Lillooet

[Register](#) before April 25

More information about the FireSmart program activities is available on the SLRD website: www.slrd.bc.ca/FireSmart

About the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Located in southwestern BC, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is a local government federation consisting of four member municipalities (the District of Lillooet, the District of Squamish, the Village of Pemberton and the Resort Municipality of Whistler) and four unincorporated, rural electoral areas (A, B, C, and D). Headquartered in Pemberton, which is the approximate geographic centre of the region, the SLRD delivers a wide range of local, regional and sub-regional services to approximately 50,496 residents (2021 Census as certified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs).

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District is found within the traditional territories of several First Nations, including the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), St'át'imc and Lílwat. Small parts of the SLRD also overlap with the traditional territories of the Stó:lō, Tsleil-Waututh, Nlaka'pamux, Tsilhqot'in, and Secwepemc Nations. While the SLRD does not provide direct services to the residents of the First Nations communities located within the region, the organization is committed to enhancing relations with the Indigenous communities and First Nations within whose territories the SLRD operates.

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