

For immediate release
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Squamish-Lillooet Regional District expands FireSmart™ program with new farm and ranch wildfire preparedness support

Free assessments now available for agricultural producers across the region

Pemberton, BC – The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is launching the 2026 FireSmart season with a new focus on supporting wildfire preparedness for farm and ranch operations. Building on the success of previous years, the program now includes specialized assessments designed to help protect agricultural properties and local food systems from the growing threat of wildfire.

In January 2026, the SLRD secured \$800,000 in additional grant funding to continue FireSmart initiatives through 2026 and 2027. This funding supports free home assessments, rebate opportunities and community education events across all Electoral Areas, while also enabling the SLRD to conduct [FireSmart BC Farm & Ranch Assessments](#).

This work builds on the SLRD's Agriculture Emergency Plan, adopted in 2025, which was developed to strengthen emergency preparedness and response for the region's agricultural sector. The plan identified the need for targeted, farm-specific wildfire mitigation support and provided a range of recommendations to improve resilience across rural communities. The new Farm and Ranch FireSmart assessments are a direct outcome of this work, translating those recommendations into practical, on-the-ground actions for producers. The [Agriculture Emergency Plan](#) and related preparedness resources are available on the [Agricultural Emergency Preparedness](#) page on the SLRD website.

With support from the Union of BC Municipalities' Community Resiliency Investment program, the SLRD wildfire mitigation team has completed specialized training to assess agricultural operations and provide tailored recommendations. The training was developed by FireSmart BC in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and focuses on farm operation buildings, critical infrastructure and fencing, as well as open burning safety.

"Wildfire preparedness looks different for every property, and that is especially true for farms and ranches," said Jen Ford, SLRD Board Chair. "This program recognizes the important role local producers play in our communities and our food systems and provides farmers with the tools and support they need to reduce risk and build resilience."

Farm and ranch producers can now book a free [FireSmart BC Farm and Ranch Assessment](#), a customized assessment that identifies wildfire risks and provides practical, tailored recommendations to protect the property and operation. Assessments typically take between three and six hours so the SLRD Wildfire Mitigation Specialist can thoroughly review buildings, infrastructure and the land.

To support safe and respectful visits, FireSmart staff are trained in farm biosecurity practices to prevent the spread of disease. Only one farm or ranch assessment will be conducted per day to minimize impact.

Participants in the Farm and Ranch Assessment may also be eligible for the [FireSmart Rebate Program](#), which provides financial support for eligible mitigation work completed following an assessment. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis while funds last.

Free [FireSmart home assessments](#) continue to be available for residential properties across all four Electoral Areas in the SLRD. For homes located on agricultural properties, a separate visit is required to ensure both residential and agricultural risks are properly addressed.

The FireSmart BC program remains a key part of the SLRD's broader emergency preparedness efforts, supporting residents and communities in taking practical steps to reduce wildfire risk. The SLRD FireSmart team is now taking bookings; residents of the SLRD can book their free FireSmart assessment with a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist and find out more about hosting a FireSmart event in their community by emailing firesmart@slrd.bc.ca or phoning 604-384-7323. To learn more about the program, visit the SLRD FireSmart page at www.slrd.bc.ca/FireSmart.

It is important to note, the FireSmart program offers guidelines and actionable steps to protect homes and properties to reduce wildfire risk and improve resilience. Larger-scale wildfire mitigation activities, such as wildfire fuel management and wildland urban interface wildfire risk reduction on provincially managed land, are led by the Province in collaboration with local governments and First Nations.

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 Líl'wat. 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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