

Community Update



Sept 15, 2023

ELECTORAL AREA A UPDATES:

Wildfire Debris Management:

Should your home or any other structure be affected by fire damage, it's important to recognize that burnt buildings and residual ash may contain hazardous substances, such as asbestos and toxic chemicals. In order to prioritize the safety and well-being of both workers and the general public, specific disposal regulations have been established for burnt buildings and ash.

How to Dispose of Burnt Materials Safely:

Step 1: Testing Requirement

- Burnt materials, including asbestos and suspected asbestos materials, must undergo testing.

Step 2: SLRD Asbestos Form

- Complete the [SLRD Asbestos Form](#) as part of the disposal process.

Step 3: Obtain Consent

- Obtain consent from the SLRD Environmental Coordinator before disposing of these materials.

Step 4: Contact Information

- For any questions or concerns, please reach out to:
 - Your insurance provider
 - SLRD Environmental Coordinator at 604-894-6371, extension 292 or email: utilities@slrd.bc.ca

These steps are crucial to ensuring the safe and responsible handling of burnt materials, reducing potential health risks associated with fire damage, and complying with disposal regulations.

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is actively in the process of formulating a debris removal plan tailored to distinct disposal locations for various types of wildfire debris. We anticipate providing further details in the upcoming days, stay tuned for additional information.

Community Update

Fridge and Freezer Disposal Program:

At this time, you can bring your fridge or freezer to the Gold Bridge Transfer Station. Tipping fees have been waived in support of re-entry. Fridges and freezers must be cleaned before being disposed of.

If residents require support with their fridge and freezer disposal, the SLRD has initiated a curb side pick-up program. Please reach out to the SLRD's Environmental Coordinator at 604-894-6371 extension 292 or at utilities@slrd.bc.ca to register.

More information and helpful tips for cleaning out your fridge and freezer can be found in the [SLRD's Re-entry Guide](#).

For more waste management information and regular updates, please visit: [The Gold Bridge Waster Transfer Station page](#).

Evacuations Orders, Alerts, and Updates:

Evacuation Alerts have been rescinded for all of Electoral Area A. No properties in Electoral Area A remain on Evacuation Alert.

Evacuation Order Downgrade Process:

- BC Wildfire Services recommends downgrading Evacuation Orders based on wildfire threats in the area.
- Prior to a downgrade decision, the SLRD receives recommendations from multiple agencies, including the Ministry of Transportation, Telus/Minto, and BC Hydro.

Reasons for Evacuation Order Downgrade:

The SLRD's decision to rescind the Evacuation Order was made once immediate public safety concerns were addressed.

This Evacuation Rescind decision was expedited to support the recovery process but involved addressing several variables due to significant structure losses in the area.

Public Safety Notice:

- Numerous hazards still exist in the area, including danger trees, ash pits, damaged hydro poles, inactive electricity wires, and fire-related hazards.
- Responders are actively working on restoration efforts; please maintain a safe distance from them. BC Hydro is still diligently working on restoration efforts, please adhere to potential road delays.
- Exercise caution and assess your own risk before re-entering your property.

Community Update

Summary of the Downton Lake Wildfire Impact:

Unfortunately, the Downton Lake wildfire resulted in extensive structural losses in the Gun Lake and Gun Creek communities.

- Total structure loss: 43 properties
- Partial structure loss: 11 properties

Downton Complex Wildfire Update:

All Evacuation Orders and Alerts relating to the Downton Lake fire have now been lifted. Wildfire activity remains present. In the coming days, residents may see smoke and fire activity from the Downton wildfire. This activity is not deemed a safety risk at this time.

Making an Insurance Claim:

- Contact your insurance provider.
- Create an inventory of items which have been damaged or destroyed.
- Take as many photos and videos of the damage as possible.
- Take note of dates, times, & names of people & organizations you speak with.
- Keep all receipts. Write a description on the back & store them away from heat & sun.

Park Closure:

Please note the South Chilcotin Mountains Park remains closed due to ongoing wildfire activity within the park boundary.

Transition to Recovery:

In the coming days, the SLRD will be moving from a response phase to a recovery phase and will continue to provide resources and updates.

Support and Resources:

- The SLRD is committed to supporting affected individuals during this challenging time.
- A network of support and resources is available, including assistance with understanding assessment reports, navigating recovery and rebuilding, and mental health support.
- Please don't hesitate to reach out for more information. Your well-being is our priority.

Community Update

Resources:

- The SLRD has created a [Re-Entry Guide](#) for those re-entering an area after a wildfire, please go through this extensively before entering your property.
- Visit www.DriveBC.ca and confirm that your intended route home is not obstructed by road closures.
- Visit www.BCHydro.ca and confirm your hydro status before re-entry or give them a call: 1-800-224-9376.
- If you are struggling with your mental health, you can speak with a counselor at no cost. For adults, please call 1-866-585-0445. For youth, call 1-888-668-6810. You can also visit www.wellnesstogether.ca.
- Visit www.mintocomm.ca or contact service@mintocomm.ca or call 250-256-1576 for any communications inquiries for the area.
- For waste management, please visit the SLRD Recycling and Waste Centre's page for more information and updates: Gold Bridge Transfer Station Information.
- The SLRD recommends testing water wells after a forest fire, even if your property wasn't directly affected. If you have concerns about water quality, please contact BC Interior Health (250) 851-7300 or 1-866-847-4372.
- For more information, visit SLRD.bc.ca/eoc or call the SLRD Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) toll-free line 1-888-213-0780.