

Community Update

Resources



Last updated: Sept 6, 2023

Returning Home After an Evacuation Order is Lifted

The SLRD has created a [Returning Home Guide](#) to help property owners re-enter an area impacted by wildfire after the Evacuation Order has been lifted.

The SLRD has made progress with regards to understanding the impact that wildfires have made to our region. We are working towards re-entry and recovery as quickly as possible, but our primary focus is the safety of residents and first responders. We appreciate your patience and will lift the Evacuation Orders as soon as the recommendation from BC Wildfire Service is provided and it is safe to do so.

Structure Loss

Structural Impact Assessments have been conducted. The SLRD is in the process of contacting residents whose property has experienced structure loss.

Both BC Wildfire Service and SLRD are collaborating to expedite this process.

Continuous Updates and Patience:

We will keep residents informed as we progress through this process. We understand the challenge of waiting and kindly request your continued patience.

Steps for Identifying Structure Loss

Step 1: Clearance to Enter Affected Areas:

The SLRD has received clearance from BC Wildfire Services to enter certain affected areas. This clearance allows our Emergency Operations Centre to initiate assessments.

Step 2: Rapid Damage Assessments (RDAs):

RDAs commenced on August 22 but were temporarily halted due to wildfire activity.

Step 3: Data Collection and Property Identification:

Information collected from RDAs will be analyzed, and property owners will be identified.

CURRENT STEP: Step 4: Communication with Affected Property Owners:

We will reach out individually to property owners who have lost or experienced damage to their structures.

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Step 5: Broader Public Communication:

Following direct communication with affected property owners, we will provide broader updates to the public.

Insurance

While on Evacuation Alert or Order - begin the process of contacting your insurance and familiarizing yourself with the steps you may need to take next. This information is also provided in the SLRD [Returning Home Guide](#) which includes steps property owners can begin prior to gaining access.

Learn more from the [Insurance Bureau of Canada](#).

Agricultural Support

Relocation of livestock for eligible farm businesses and First Nations is supported by the province during emergencies ([see policy](#) - which is not intended to address non-commercial livestock or pets.)

Relocation can commence during an evacuation alert stage.

The process provides for reimbursement of response costs invoiced from service providers for transportation, feed and housing. If you need assistance, please contact the SLRD's Emergency Operations Agriculture Liaison, Leslie MacDonald at C2@slrd.bc.ca or mobile at 326-999-2945.

Emergency Support Services

Even if you do not have immediate needs, we recommend that all evacuees register for ESS. ESS provides short-term basic support to people impacted by disasters. The ESS program is financed by the provincial government and administered by local governments.

Why you should register:

- It will help when claiming insurance
- Get support with emergency clothing, food vouchers and accommodations
- Other resources which could be useful now or in the future

Where to register or request assistance:

- Online registration: <https://ess.gov.bc.ca/>
- Canadian Red Cross 24/7 Disaster Assistance Line: 1-888-800-6493

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In-person registration:

Lillooet District Rec Centre

930 Main Street – Room 101, Lillooet BC V0K 1V0

Monday to Friday: 10am to 3pm

Saturday: 10am to 2pm Saturday

Sunday: closed

Outside of these hours call: 250-256-8524

ESS relies on volunteers to coordinate support services for people forced from their homes in an emergency. If interested in volunteering, visit [Emergency Support Services Volunteers](#).

Privacy and your personal information

Personal information collected, used, disclosed and retained by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District for emergency purposes is done so under the authority of the FOIPP Act (section 26). Personal information will only be used by authorized staff to fulfill the purpose for which it was originally collected or for a use consistent with that purpose unless you expressly consent otherwise. We do not disclose your information to other public bodies or individuals except as authorized by the FOIPP Act.

Wildfire Smoke

The best way to protect your health from wildfire smoke is to reduce your exposure to smoke and seek cleaner air:

- Stay indoors: Reduce time spent outdoors to protect your health.
- Reduce outdoor physical activity: Refer to the Air Quality Health Index and decrease physical exertion outdoors in when air quality is poor.
- Consider wearing a well fitted respirator if you cannot access cleaner air: Use a well fitted respirator (e.g., N95, KN95) properly to reduce exposure to particulate matter in smoke.
- [Learn more](#) about actions you can take to protect yourself and your family during times of poor air quality.

Taking Care of Yourself and Others

Create a support network. This may include family, friends, or professionals. If you are struggling, seek or accept help.

Speak with a counsellor at 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (youth) or www.wellnesstogether.ca.

If you or someone you know is in immediate crisis or has suicide-related concerns, please call 1-833-456-4566 or visit talksuicide.ca - both are available 24/7. Text CONNECT to 686868.

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211 is a free and confidential phone service that connects people to helpful and vital resources in their community such as basic needs like food and shelter, mental health and addictions support, legal and financial support for seniors and much more.

Calling the Telus Health Community Crisis Health Line 1-844-751-2133, available 24/7. Telus Health also offers access to a physician if you cannot access yours.

See dangerous conditions? Leave immediately!

A tactical evacuation may be initiated by first responders due to a sudden change in wildfire behaviour and imminent safety risk. Due to the urgency of the situation, tactical evacuations may not initially be accompanied by a written or online Evacuation Order from the SLRD. In these urgent situations, residents may receive an Evacuation Order by door-to-door notification or other means. These types of notifications still serve as formal, legally binding Evacuation Orders. That said, the SLRD will follow-up with a written and posted Evacuation Order as soon as possible.

A formal Evacuation Order is a legal process that may or may not have been preceded by a tactical Evacuation. Residents receiving notice of a tactical Evacuation, or a formal Evacuation Order must leave the area immediately.

If you see dangerous conditions, do not wait for an Evacuation notice. Leave immediately and get to a safe location.

Loss of Communications and Utilities

There has been a loss of power and communications in some areas. Residents are responsible for ensuring they can access information on the emergency through local contacts or by finding a location where they can access the internet to get updates.

If you see down power lines, assume they are live and keep a safe distance, and report to BC Hydro at 1-800-224-9376 or text *49376.

BC Hydro Support

BC Hydro has support and assistance programs available for those affected by the devastating wildfires in the Bridge River area. Should you have questions about your bill or next steps, please contact 1-800-BCHYDRO (1-800-224-9376). You can find more information on [bchydro.com](https://www.bchydro.com).

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Road Closures and Getting Out Safely

Wildfires continue to impact roads in the area, and roads have been closed due to dangerous and unpredictable conditions. Responders in the area have noted some roads are passable one moment and extremely dangerous the next. Please respect closures and protect your safety. All roads within evacuation order areas are closed to public travel.

Steep slopes affected by wildfire are vulnerable to rolling rocks and trees, impeding the safe passage of vehicles.

Please see www.DriveBC.ca for information about other road closures in the region.

Prepare your Property

You have a responsibility to prepare your property for wildfire. Move flammable objects away from structures. Clean debris from roofs and gutters. Close your windows. Learn more about what you can do: www.firesmartbc.ca.

Ways to Stay Informed

SLRD Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheSLRD

SLRD Twitter: twitter.com/slrd_bc

SLRD Emergency Alerts & Orders: <https://www.slrd.bc.ca/inside-slrd/notices/emergency-notices>

BC Wildfire Map: <https://wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca/map>

BC Wildfire Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo

Road impacts - Drive BC: www.drivebc.ca

SLRD Emergency Alert System <https://www.slrd.bc.ca/emergency-program/preparedness/slrd-emergency-notification>