

**For immediate release
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FREE FIRESMART™ PROGRAM FOR 65+ RESIDENTS EXPANDS to AREA C of the REGIONAL DISTRICT

Program aims to reduce wildfire risk in the regional district

Pemberton, B.C. – Property owners of Electoral Area C in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District now have access to a free program that will help protect their properties, and the extended area, from wildfire risk.

In October 2021, the SLRD, in partnership with the District of Lillooet, and with support from a provincial FireSmart™ funding program, launched a project to help residents aged 65 and over in Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and the District of Lillooet, reduce the risk of wildfire on their properties. Now, that program has expanded to include Electoral Area C of the SLRD.

The focus of the project is to conduct FireSmart property assessments for homeowners age 65 and older and then get the recommended yard work done, with a follow-up FireSmart assessment to complete the project for each homeowner, all covered within the funding received for this project.

Properties must be located in the District of Lillooet, Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B or Electoral Area C of the SLRD, and must be the homeowner's primary residence to qualify.

"Wildfire risk is something we face throughout the SLRD, and we're pleased to be able to extend this program to Electoral Area C," said Russell Mack, Electoral Area C Director. "Now is the time for residents to be thinking about, and preparing for, the upcoming wildfire season. This work is an important step to take in reducing your property's risk for wildfire. We've seen in the north that once the work begins on a property, there is an increase in demand, as neighbours see the work being done. I hope that there is that same level of interest here in Electoral Area C," he said.

Homeowners can apply through the SLRD and, if eligible, the local FireSmart representative will arrange with the homeowner for a time to conduct the FireSmart assessment, and make recommendations on the work required. If the homeowner agrees, a time will then be scheduled for a crew to visit the property to do the recommended work, with a follow-up assessment afterwards.

Residents with questions about the program, or who wish to apply, can contact a SLRD FireSmart™ representative directly, by calling the SLRD administration office at 604-894-6371 x262 (toll-free: 1-800-298-7753 x262) or by email at FireSmart@slrd.bc.ca

Additional information is also available on the SLRD website: www.slrd.bc.ca/firesmart

About the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Located in southwestern B.C., 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 42,665 residents (2016 Census).

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