



BOARD REPORT

TO:**Chair and Directors****File No:** 7200 01**SUBJECT:**

Fire Smart Initiatives

DESCRIPTION:

Derek Sutherland, Team Leader, Protective Services, dated August 17, 2017. Information update on current Fire Smart Initiatives and Preparedness.

RECOMMENDATION #1:

THAT: the Board receive the report dated August 17, 2017 from Derek Sutherland, Team Leader, Protective Services as information on current Fire Smart initiatives and preparedness.

INFORMATION UPDATE:

With the current wildfire situation in British Columbia at the worst it has been in 60 years, wildfire mitigation has become top of mind for many of our residents.

Residents within the region have chosen a lifestyle that brings them close to nature. As we continue to move our homes closer to forested areas, we become more exposed to the danger of wildfire. When urban lifestyle meets environments prone to wildfire, it is referred to as wildland urban interface.

In 2010, the CSR D Board chose to leave the Community Wildfire Protection Plans to the provincial realm and focused on delivering educational campaigns to inform residents about mitigation efforts that they could employ to reduce the wildfire risk on their properties.

Fire Smart Canada is a program that helps property owners reduce the wildland urban interface fire risk to their properties through vegetation management, development considerations, emergency planning and education. Currently, the CSR D has a regional fire prevention group that is actively delivering Fire Smart programs to community members. The CSR D has a supply of Fire Smart brochures in stock that have been made available to fire departments for dissemination in the community. The Fire Smart brochures provide information to property owners to help reduce the risk of a wildland urban interface fire affecting their property.

In special circumstances, some CSR D fire departments have gone as far as offering on-site Fire Smart assessments. The CSR D has instructors available to teach Fire Smart techniques and assessments to larger groups as requested. Additionally, the CSR D has trained personnel that are open to providing Fire Smart evaluations to the public on a pay-for-service basis between the resident and the contractor.

In 2012, the CSR D Board elected to fund the purchase of two structural protection units (SPU), one for the Revelstoke and Golden areas, and one for the Shuswap area. The SPU's have added substantial capacity to help protect property during wildland urban interface fires. In 2017, a third unit was purchased for the Shuswap area. The sole purpose of a SPU is to create a water barrier zone that fire has difficulty penetrating.

The CSR D Protective Services division is dedicated to helping CSR D residents maintain a lifestyle that includes interaction with the natural environment. The prevention, preparedness and response

capabilities in place aid in the reduction of risk from wildland urban interface fires. These fires are not only destructive and devastating to our homes, but to the environment that we have chosen to make part of our daily lives.

Residents who would like more information on how to Fire Smart their properties should contact the CSRD Operations Management Department at 250.833.5950. If residents are interested in having a Fire Smart assessment of their property conducted, they can contact the Team Leader of Protective Services, Derek Sutherland directly at 250.833.5945 for further information.

The Home Owner FireSmart Manual is also easily accessible to the public on the CSRD's, as well as the Province of BC, websites. Refer to link to The Home Owners FireSmart Manual:

<http://www.csr.bc.ca/sites/default/files/homeowner-firesmart%202016.pdf>

Lastly, in response to a recent request from the Electoral Area C Director to have the Fire Smart Manual directly mailed to all property owners within Electoral Area C, Administration estimates a high cost associated with this task.

FINANCIAL:

A direct, personalized mailing of the Home Owners FireSmart Manual to all property owners, using Electoral Area C as an example, is:

Postage (\$1.70 per 6,766 properties in Electoral Area C)	\$11,500
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Given other costs such as staff time, letterhead/envelopes/labels combined with postage costs versus the ease of on-line access to the FireSmart Home Owner Manual and the other educational opportunities available directly from the CSRD, staff is not recommending a direct mail out of the FireSmart Manual to residents.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Social media has proven to be effective in delivering messaging to the public. Over the upcoming months; CSRD staff will regularly push out/message the availability of the Home Owners FireSmart Manual through the CSRD website News, Twitter and Facebook.