

Appendix R—NEPP and FireSmart

When we think of neighbourhood preparedness, we generally think of how we will respond and support each other after a disaster such as an earthquake. But it has become very clear in BC that wildfires are a very real threat as well, and with the impacts of climate change, that threat may only be getting worse. FireSmart is a program designed to empower residents and increase neighbourhood resilience to wildfire.

Within BC we suffer substantial loss due to wildfires, almost annually. Although that loss happens primarily in the Interior, the risk of wildfire is very real here in the Comox Valley, and we need to be prepared. Did you know that the major cause of homes destroyed during a wildfire is wind-blown embers igniting materials on or near your home? And these embers can travel very long distances. Fortunately, you can take simple steps to lessen the risk to your property and that of your neighbours.

Before an evacuation is ordered, you can protect your home, farmland, or ranch from wildfire by simply carrying out a few quick chores such as moving firewood and lawn furniture away from your house, trimming branches near your roof, and cutting your lawn shorter.

One of the mandates of FireSmart is to promote education and awareness. If your community would like a neighbourhood assessment or presentation, or if you would like to work towards becoming a Recognized FireSmart Neighbourhood, contact the Comox Valley Emergency Program or your local fire department.

Find more information on FireSmart at FireSmartBC.ca or visit the CVRD website at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/firesmart

