



September 15, 2025

## Campbell River FireSmart™ Program and Funding Supports Community Wildfire Preparedness

**City uses grant funding from UBCM to deliver FireSmart activities and learnings for residents.**

The City of Campbell River, in partnership with We Wai Kai Nation and Wei Wai Kum First Nation, has been working proactively to support wildfire preparedness and help residents take steps to mitigate wildfire risks through the Campbell River FireSmart Program, part of the FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program. This essential work got a boost when the City and We Wai Kai Nation successfully applied for funding from the Union of BC Municipalities' (UBCM's) FireSmart Community Funding and Supports grant program in 2023. The City received \$158,479.72 in funding, which is being paid in installments. The City has been working under the grant in partnership with both We Wai Kai Nation and Wei Wai Kum First Nation since 2024. With all grant requirements having now been met, the City received the final installment of \$58,481.15 this year.

*"Fire safety is important at any time of the year. With hot and dry conditions increasing the wildfire risk, wildfire preparedness is top-of-mind for many Campbell Riverites right now," says Kermit Dahl, City of Campbell River Mayor. "With funding support from UBCM's FireSmart program, the City has enhanced its Campbell River FireSmart initiatives to support community safety and wellbeing in a fiscally responsible way."*

The City has used the funding from UBCM to deliver a robust program focused on public safety, engagement and inter-agency collaboration, which included working with local First Nations to support wildfire resiliency efforts in a culturally respectful and collaborative way.

Some key accomplishments achieved with the grant funding include:

- Hosting **nine community events**, and distributing more than 700 educational items
- Helping **three neighbourhoods** become FireSmart Recognized Neighbourhoods, a process that starts with a neighbourhood champion who gathers support from the neighbours and works with a FireSmart Coordinator to have a wildfire danger assessment completed and action recommendations. This is an important step to help make properties and neighbourhoods more prepared and resilient in the event of a wildfire and it also helps firefighters concentrate their efforts on fighting wildfires. (Plus, it's a great way to get to know your neighbours!)
- Completing **24 home ignition zone assessments** to assess wildfire resiliency and issuing homeowner rebates totalling \$14,266.85 to help with implementing recommendations from FireSmart Home Assessments
- Delivering specialized training, including **Wildfire Mitigation Specialist and WSPP-WWF1** (Wildland Firefighter 1) courses, to local firefighters
- Purchasing **structure protection equipment** for the Campbell River Fire Department, to help protect buildings and other critical infrastructure

*"Through this program, we're working to strengthen the community's wildfire resilience and reduce wildfire risks by connecting residents with valuable information, providing training and purchasing needed equipment," says Jeff Ford, Director of Community Safety. "This has been a collaborative effort, and we appreciate the dedication and support of everyone who contributes to Campbell River FireSmart efforts in the community."*

Several supporting organizations contributed to the Campbell River FireSmart program by participating in the Wildfire Resiliency Committee and in community events. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Strathcona Regional District, Greenways Land Trust, Homalco First Nation, BC Wildfire Service and BC Hydro.

**Help protect your property and your neighbourhood!**

Campbell River FireSmart offers a variety of free resources and tools to empower residents with proactive steps they can take to improve wildfire resilience on their properties. Here are some simple tips to get you started:

- Keep your gutters and roofs clear of debris.
- Trim back branches that overhang your home.
- Keep wood piles, plant matter and other flammable materials at least 10 metres away from structures.
- Use fire-resistant plants and landscaping around your property.
- Contact Campbell River FireSmart at [firesmart@campbellriver.ca](mailto:firesmart@campbellriver.ca) or 250-286-6266 to request a free home assessment.
- Contact Campbell River FireSmart at [firesmart@campbellriver.ca](mailto:firesmart@campbellriver.ca) or 250-286-6266 to ask about how your neighbourhood can achieve recognition from FireSmart Canada.

For more information, contact Campbell River FireSmart by emailing [firesmart@campbellriver.ca](mailto:firesmart@campbellriver.ca), calling 250-286-6266 or visiting [campbellriver.ca/firesmart](http://campbellriver.ca/firesmart).

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**Photo:** Some of the equipment used by the Campbell River Fire Department to combat wildfires, including structure protection equipment purchased with funds from UBCM's FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program. (Photo by Island Life Photographics)



**Photo:** Andy Stewart, FireSmart Coordinator at the Campbell River Fire Department, with structure protection equipment purchased with funds from UBCM's FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program. (Photo by Island Life Photographics)

