

MEDIA RELEASE

City of Williams Lake



For Immediate Release

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Tel: 250-392-2311
Fax: 250-392-4408
450 Mart Street
Williams Lake, BC
V2G 1N3

Community Fire Smarting Plan Update

The City of Williams Lake initiated its fuel mitigation and fire smarting plan in early April 2019 with funding from UBCM's Community Resiliency Investment Program. This project has allowed the City to engage forestry consultants to perform several activities throughout the city to increase community wildfire preparedness. These activities include fuel and vegetation management, FireSmart activities, FireSmarting education, and planning activities.

Ken Day of KDay Forestry Ltd. has been engaged to manage the Community Resiliency Initiative program for the City of Williams Lake. "At this time, we have identified 10 separate public buildings for assessment of FireSmart status and a plan for completion of each site. We also have the funding to perform around 24 home assessments for citizens and will be identifying high-risk areas where these will be carried out. Finally, we will be working on 6 areas around Williams Lake that are high priority for fuel reduction treatment and will be removing excess vegetation and fuel to reduce the effect of fire and increase the effectiveness and safety of fire-fighting efforts," explains Day. "We also look to provide public education sessions; we strongly believe that FireSmarting should be a community project and one that is executed throughout neighbourhoods by neighbours themselves. In order to assist with this, we are working with the Cariboo Regional District to defray tipping fees for FireSmart fuels that are delivered to the landfill as a result of FireSmart work on one's property."

A number of projects are scheduled for the City throughout the rest of 2019. In the coming months, fuel reduction work will take place in an area off the Dairy Fields adjacent to Midnight Drive.

"The wildfires of 2017 and 2018 have shown that forest fires have the ability to enter communities and cause severe damage. One of the best ways to mitigate this potential damage is through proactive fuel treatment and FireSmart activities on private and public property," stated Mayor Walt Cobb. "We need to take steps today to ensure that we are protected from the fires of tomorrow."

As Fire Smarting activities continue throughout the City, the City will inform residents through its media channels where possible. For more information on FireSmart initiatives, see <https://firesmartbc.ca/>

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For more information, contact:

Guillermo Angel
Corporate Engagement Officer
250-392-8489 – gangel@williamslake.ca