



Alberta First Nations Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Communications Toolkit

2024



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

TOOLKIT FOR WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS MESSAGING IN COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Being prepared in case of emergency is essential for Alberta First Nations communities given the wildfire potential this season. This guide is intended for emergency management providers and Indigenous communities to assist in creating a public prevention and preparedness campaign for the 2024 wildfire season. This toolkit was developed to assist in:

- Planning campaign messages
- Locating informational resources for wildfire prevention and preparedness
- Providing examples to assist in delivering messaging
- Providing ideas to promote prevention and preparedness for emergencies
- Providing general messaging to share on social media pages



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PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

Target audience:

Consider tailoring your messages for particular audiences. Campers, recreationalists, youth, elders, and individuals planning yard maintenance or landscaping may respond to messages tailored for them.

Message frequency:

Consider the frequency of messages. Generally, messages need to be repeated for people to recognize and then act on the message. Consider posting information more than once and with different variations on the theme of the message.

Message timing:

Consider the timing of the message. Messages can have a stronger impact when it is associated to an event or a limited period of time e.g. upcoming heat wave, drought or peak wildfire season.

Spokespersons:

Consider who the spokesperson is for the message. First Nations leadership, trusted Elders, fire department or emergency staff are examples of people who are often seen as trusted sources of information in communities.

Ultimately, your own community experience will help guide you as you decide how best to plan your campaign, but in addition to the message or information that needs to be shared, please keep in mind: the audience, the spokesperson, the message, timing and the delivery platform.

ADDRESSING DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

The following section highlights different communication tools that can be used to target different audiences.

Different methods of communication are going to be more effective for different target audiences. Different target audiences may include families, children, schools, parents, and adults over 65.

For example, social media channels such as Tik Tok and Instagram are very effective for younger age groups, whereas Facebook is more useful for reaching an older demographic.



When planning your campaign, consider the social media channel and messaging you decide to use to target certain age groups.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

Examples of social media messages.

Click on the title to see the original post.

This is not an exhaustive list, but demonstrates the diversity of messages and how organizations use different message types to share the same information.

Emergency Preparedness Week

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo · Follow
May 9, 2023 · 🌐

🔴 It's Emergency Preparedness Week 🔴

This is an important time to prepare for emergencies, especially now during wildfire season. Dealing with emergencies can be extremely stressful. Preparing now can help reduce that stress.

- 📁 Have a personal preparedness kit and plan to be self-sustaining for 72 hours.
- ✔ Our website has a checklist of what you should have in your kit.
- 👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Have a household emergency plan that considers everyone in your household, including your fur-ever friends. Work with your neighbors and local organizations to ensure everyone is ready for an emergency.

Emergencies can be unpredictable, but you can control how you respond. Stay calm, follow your plan, and trust in your preparation.



RMWB.CA
Emergency Preparedness Week
Be prepared for an emergency with basic preparedness tips, a household emergency plan, and...

Recreational Vehicles

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
May 5, 2023 · 🌐

An Off-Highway Vehicle Restriction and Fire Ban are in effect for the entire Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo region. The extremely dry conditions are increasing the wildfire risk.

Most wildfires are human-caused, including the current wildfires near Anzac (MWF 009) and north of Fort McMurray (MWF 010). These wildfires are now being held and under control, but they could have been avoided. Everyone must be cautious while outdoors and follow the Fire Ban and OHV Restrictions to help prevent further wildfires.

What you need to know to stay informed and prepared during wildfire season:

- ✖ The OHV Restriction enacted by the Province prohibits OHV use on public lands, including designated OHV Trails. Patrols are increasing to ensure OHVs are not in use. More information: <https://www.albertafirebans.ca/>
- 🚫 The fire ban includes all wood campfires (including backyard fire pits & campgrounds), charcoal barbecues and fireworks. Propane/natural gas appliances are allowed. Fire ban information is available here: <https://www.albertafirebans.ca/>
- 👩‍🚒 Alberta Wildfire leads the response, management and updates on wildfires in the forested area. They provide daily local updates here: <https://srd.web.alberta.ca/fort-mcmurray-area-update>
- 📱 The status of wildfires and other important information is available on Alberta Wildfire's App and Wildfire Status Map: <https://www.arcgis.com/.../3ffcc2d0ef3e4e0999b0cf8b636defa3>
- 🌫 Wildfire smoke will be present until there is a change in conditions. Anyone being affected by smoke can call Health Link at 811 for assistance. Air quality is closely monitored throughout the region. Current air quality health index: <https://wbea.org/>
- 🗨 The presence of wildfires in the region can cause a wide range of emotions. There are many local public and professional mental health resources available for anyone who needs support. A list is available here: <https://www.rmwb.ca/.../fire-and.../fire-updates.aspx>



Home Ignition Zone



Town of High Level
April 14, 2023 · 🌐

There are many outside factors that add to your property's risk of wildfire. A property typically has a home ignition zone with the immediate, intermediate, and extended zone.

To learn more about each zone and what you can do to make them all more fire safe, check out the link below to our FireSmart Canada posters: <https://www.highlevel.ca/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=660>

HOME IGNITION ZONE

EXTENDED ZONE
10m to 30m

INTERMEDIATE ZONE
1.5m to 10m

IMMEDIATE ZONE
0m to 1.5m

FireSmart Canada

THERE ARE MANY FACTORS THAT MAY IMPACT YOUR PROPERTY'S RISK TO WILDFIRE
Check out the FireSmart Begins of Home Guide for an in-depth look at how you can build wildfire resiliency.

<p>IMMEDIATE ZONE 0m to 1.5m</p>	<p>The Immediate Zone is a non-combustible area that starts at the house and extends to a 1.5 metre perimeter around the house and attached structures, including decks. Reduce the chance of wind-blown embers igniting your home by starting with these proactive steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choose non-combustible building materials when constructing or renovating your home. ● Clear vegetation and combustible material down to ground level and cover with non-combustible materials, like gravel, bricks or concrete. ● Avoid piling nearby debris or items, if any are present, clean and maintain them regularly.
<p>INTERMEDIATE ZONE 1.5m to 10m</p>	<p>Fireworks in the intermediate zone are managed so they don't blow off fire to your home. Here are a few actions you can take to reduce your home's vulnerability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plant fire-resistant vegetation and select non-combustible landscaping materials. ● Avoid incorporating any nearby debris, including mulch. ● Keep combustible items like firewood piles, construction materials, patio furniture, tools, and decorative pieces out of this zone. ● Move trailers, recreational vehicles, storage sheds, and other combustible structures into the Extended Zone, if that is not possible, store firewood inside your finished garage, shed, or other similar weather structures. ● Create a non-combustible gravel cover, like a gravel pad, underneath and 1.5 metres around trailers, recreational vehicles and sheds.
<p>EXTENDED ZONE 10m to 30m</p>	<p>The goal in the Extended Zone is not to eliminate fire, but to reduce its intensity. If your property extends into this zone, a few important steps you can take include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regularly remove overgrown trees to create at least 2 metres of horizontal space between the single or grouped tree crowns. ● Remove all branches to a height of 2 metres from the ground.

Fire Permits



KTC Emergency Services
1h · 🌐

With Fire Season starting early, Fire Permits are Needed with Burning within the Forest Protection Area, the Exemption of Campfires. For more info on Acquiring a Free Fire Permit, follow the link. Stay Safe out there!



Now that wildfire season has started, you need a fire permit to take on any burning in the

Messages from leadership and health officials

Using community leaders or official social media accounts can broaden the reach and increase the level of trust in the messaging.

KTC Newsletter

WILDFIRE SEASON & WINTER UPDATE



Wildfire Season is coming...

Although it seems like it just ended, wildfire season is almost here in Alberta again. Alberta's official wildfire season runs from March 1 to October 31 annually, and this year has the potential to be a very active spring and summer.

Many of us have felt the impact of the ongoing drought conditions that are gripping Alberta. The scarcity of snow and the unusually warm weather in our region are clear signs of these challenging times.

The KTC region is experiencing above-average temperatures coupled with below-average snowfall levels as the "El Nino" climate phenomenon continues to impact the Northern Hemisphere. This combination can bring an early, active, long-lasting fire season.

While we can't control every aspect of wildfires, each of us holds the power to make a difference. Taking proactive steps can significantly reduce the risk of wildfires in our communities.

Please take some time to review our KTC Emergency Services Facebook page for ongoing updates and information about Emergency Management in our communities.

Reduce Wildfire Risk in Our Communities:

- Obtain the proper permits for backyard piles and burn barrels.
- Avoid "biking" or riding OHV's in areas with dry cured grasses, and clean the area around your muffler before and after rides.
- "FireSmart" areas around your home by trimming long grasses, and removing piles of dead stumps and branches/debris from close to buildings.
- Check Alberta's "Fire Danger Maps" Website to see what the risk level is like before starting campfires, burn piles, or risky activities in the bush. Link to Fire Danger Maps [HERE](#)
- Know your emergency contact numbers, if you see a Fire in your community, call the numbers below.

Who to Call:

If fire is within a community (9-1-1)

If fire is in the forest or community lands.

AB Wildfire: 310-FIRE (3473)

Additional Contacts:
KTC Emergency Services Office
1 (587) 415-1818 (Ext. 301)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE NEWS - [HTTPS://KEETASKENOW.CA/EMERGENCY-SERVICES](https://keetaskenow.ca/emergency-services)

KTC Emergency Services - Emergency Kits



KTC Emergency Services
May 5, 2023

Here are some suggestions when preparing 72 Hour Emergency Kits. Feel free to share

72-HOUR EMERGENCY KITS

No one knows when disaster will strike, but we can be prepared. Create your own 72-hour preparedness kit to have the items you'll need during an emergency. Here's a list of items you may want to include in your kit.

Please note the contents of each kit will vary depending on the needs and size of your family. You may find it cheaper to assemble your own instead of buying a pre-made one.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Update your kit every six months (put a note in your calendar) to make sure that food, water, and medication haven't expired, clothes fit, personal documents and credit cards are up-to-date, and batteries are charged.
- Small toys and games can provide comfort and entertainment during what could be a stressful time.
- Some items may leak, melt, or break open. We recommend dividing groups of items into individual plastic bags.

SUGGESTED ITEMS

- Emergency Blanket
- Emergency Radio/Text
- First Aid Kit
- Camping stove
- Water Bottles
- Radio (crank or battery)
- Batteries
- Water purifying tablets
- Utility Knife
- Matches
- Bungee Cords
- Carrots (in a jar or can)
- Whistle
- Compass
- Multi-Purpose Tool
- Duffel Bag
- Document folder
- Pens
- Crayons
- Note/Address Book
- Deck of Cards
- Flashlight
- Glow sticks
- Short Mask
- Work gloves
- Garbage bags
- Duct Tape
- Instant Noodles
- Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate
- Plastic food containers (2)
- Granola Bars
- Chisel
- Utensils
- Coin Operated (masks)
- Moist wipes
- Toilet paper
- Hygiene Kit
- Hand sanitizer

5

123 shares

Siksika Health Services - Heat Warning

Siksika Health Services
June 26, 2021

litamiiksanootoni Siksika,

This weekend and going into next week, Southern Alberta will enter into a heat wave that is expected to last at least until July 3rd. Daytime temperatures are forecasted to be near 36°C and overnight lows near 20°C. It is possible for a few communities in Southern Alberta to set new all-time record high temperatures.

During periods of extreme heat, everyone is at an increased risk, including your pets. These conditions can increase heat related illness and increase the risk of fire and power outages.

We can all prepare for extreme heat by:

- Keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids like water (about 1 cup for every 15-20 minutes that you're in the heat). This is the most important thing you can do to stay healthy and safe during a heat wave.
- Know the signs of heat stroke and heat exhaustion: feeling dizzy and light headed is a sign of heat stroke. Lack of sweating is also a sign of heat stroke, that could require a visit to the hospital.
- Limit exposure outdoors. Stock up on key supplies such as groceries, medications, and drinking water to avoid the need to take extra trips outside.
- Keep devices charged so you can communicate and stay informed in the event of a power outage
- Ensure you have extra cooling options by freezing ice or ice packs, and chill water in spray bottles so you can cool yourself down.
- Check that cooling appliances are in working order (fans, air conditioners) and have back-up options that don't require power (i.e. cold washcloths).
- While it's tempting to access public water ways such as the Bow River, please be mindful of the potential dangers of strong current, debris, and visibility as the spring runoff is still occurring.

For more information on weather conditions, visit the Environment Canada website or download the WeatherCan app to your smart phones or devices.



Enoch Cree Nation



Enoch Cree Nation
October 10, 2023

Join us for School Fire Education and Preparedness Week, October 9-13, 2023!

We're excited to announce that we're gearing up for a fantastic week dedicated to teaching our young ones about fire safety and preparedness.

We're committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our community, and educating our future generations about fire safety is at the heart of it.

Let's work together to create a safer environment for everyone!

hiy hiy Enoch Cree Nation First Responders



Reposting messages from government officials

Using community leaders or official social media accounts can broaden the reach and increase the level of trust in the messages.

Emergency Ready in Canada

GCIndigenous August 3, 2023



Wildfire Preparedness

#GetPrepared

Canada

Emergency Ready in Canada August 3, 2023

The Canadian Wildland Fire Information System monitors dangerous wildfire activity across Canada. Make sure to stay informed on wildfire occurrences in your reg... See more

Alberta Wildfire

Alberta Wildfire 4d

Now is the time to FireSmart your home! The actions you take today can minimize wildfire damage to your home and property in the future. Don't know where to start? Visit www.firesmartalberta.ca for tips and resources.



Public Safety Canada

Public Safety Canada @Safety_Canada · Apr 3

If you live in a #wildfire hazard zone, make sure to:

- prepare your emergency plan and #EmergencyKit
- plan escape routes out of your community, and
- monitor local weather conditions and advisories in preparation of wildfire season

Learn more: getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/wldfrs...



Canada

Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Services


Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Service @ABPublicSafet · Apr 10

Remove items that can burn from within 5 feet of your home, such as:

- dried branches
- leaves
- lawn furniture
- firewood
- debris

Be careful when smoking outside, extinguish fire pits and burn barrels, and obey local fire bans.

Learn more: firesmartalberta.ca



Protect your property during wildfire season

IDEAS TO PROMOTE WILDFIRE PREVENTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Local campaigns

Consider promoting local preparedness events or campaigns through social media. The Indigenous Services Canada Alberta Region Communications Team can provide support in the development of posters and other materials that can be customized for each community. To the right, please find an example of an emergency preparedness event held in 2022.

Timing of social media

Typically, one or two social media messages a day for a week in advance of a campaign or event can raise awareness of the event.

FireSmart campaign

Host a FireSmart campaign. The FireSmart Canada website has many resources to host a campaign in your community at [Resources | FireSmart Canada](#).

Identify ambassadors

Engage with community leadership, Elders, fire department or emergency staff and ask them to be ambassadors for a campaign by sharing their message on social media.

Share personal stories

Identify individuals who have experienced a wildfire or evacuation. Ask them to speak about how being prepared helped them and their loved ones. This could be a short note with a photo or a short video shared on social media, where the individual talks about their experience.

Research shows that storytelling is a highly engaging form of communication. Many people won't remember a statistic, but they will remember a story.



RESOURCES FOR PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

Please use these resources and customize to suit your needs and target audience or simply re-share directly on your social media accounts.

UNBRANDED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

*To customize the social media resources for your community, create a free Canva account and follow the below instructions:
Open link. Select 'File' and click 'Make a copy'.
Customize the resource with your community's branding or any additional information that may be needed.
Once complete select 'Share' and click 'Download'.*

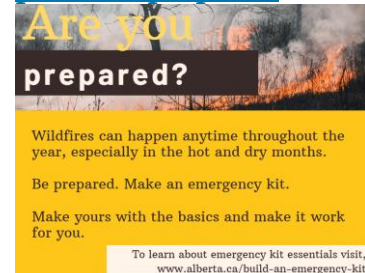
Customizable Facebook post - preventing wildfire



Customizable Facebook post - campfire safety



Customizable Facebook post - be prepared



Stay connected and informed:

- www.albertafirebans.ca
- <https://www.alberta.ca/firesmart>
- [FireSmart Alberta - FireSmart Alberta](#)
- <https://firesmartcanada.ca/resources/request-to-use-firesmart-logos-and-images/>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/wildfire-prevention-and-mitigation>
- Anyone can also sign up for updates by clicking on the Forest Area Updates (and enrolling for updates by forest area) at <https://www.alberta.ca/wildfire-status>
- [Canadian Wildland Fire Information System](#)
- [FireSmoke.ca](#)
- [Public Safety Canada - Wildfires](#)
- [WeatherCan App](#)

Public Communications Resources:

Posts for re-sharing on social media

- [Campfire Safety - Facebook - Alberta Wildfire](#)
- [Safe Burning - Facebook - Alberta Wildfire](#)

- [Alberta Wildfire \(@albertawildfire\) • Instagram - Campfires](#)
- [Alberta Wildfire \(@albertawildfire\) • Instagram - Off Highway Vehicles](#)
- [Alberta Wildfire YouTube - Prevent Spring Wildfires](#)
- [How can you prepare for a wildfire - GOA Youtube Video](#)
- [How can you prepare for an emergency or disaster without spending a lot of money? - GOA Youtube Video](#)
- [FireSmart Canada - YouTube](#)
 - [Last-Minute Wildfire Checklist - YouTube](#)

Alberta Government Publications

- [Safe campfires : wildfire prevention tips \(2019\)](#)
- [Off-highway vehicles : wildfire prevention tips \(2019\)](#)
- [Brush piles & windrows : safe burning practices \[2019\]](#)

FireSmart Campaign Resources

- [Resources - FireSmart Alberta](#)
- [Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Resources | FireSmart Canada](#)
- [FireSmart Wildfire Evac Checklist PDF](#)



KEY MESSAGES

1. Be prepared in case of wildfire. Make an emergency kit that works for you.
2. Wildfires can be prevented by taking precautions when selecting a camp ground and making camp fires.
3. Recreational vehicles such as ATVs, quads, dirt bikes, trikes and snowmobiles can cause wildfires when debris (dry grass twigs) are ignited by hot exhaust pipes.
4. Homes can be protected from wildfire spread through proper maintenance around the property and yard of the home.
5. Certain landscaping designs can decrease the likelihood of wildfire spreading to a home.
6. Keep recreational vehicles clean of debris before and after use to prevent wildfires.
7. Choose a spot free of debris and overhanging branches for a campfire. Make sure it is cool to the touch before walking away from your firepit. Soak it, stir it and soak it again.
8. Don't use mulch or dry plants when landscaping around your home. Keep your yard tidy and free of debris to prevent a wildfire from spreading to your home.
9. Don't throw cigarette butts out of your vehicle windows. Wildfires and grassfires can be prevented by disposing cigarettes in an ashtray and making sure it is out.

These messages can be formatted into a social media post. Consider including an image or short video with the message, as these posts often get more views.

SAMPLE RADIO AND VIDEO SCRIPTS

These scripts could be used by ambassadors to record messages for local radio, or a cellphone video that could be shared on social media.

Emergency Kits

Do you have an emergency kit in case of a wildfire or flood?
Make a basic emergency kit by packing these items:

- identification
- water
- a radio
- non-perishable food
- clothes
- a battery pack
- a flashlight
- safety equipment
- and personal protection and other personal items



Make your kit work for you. Wildfires can happen anytime throughout the year, especially in the hot and dry months. Be prepared; make an emergency kit.

Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.

Campfires

Going camping this weekend?

Help prevent wildfires by making sure your campfire is FireSmart.

- Use designated stoves, rings, or fire pits.
- If there are none, choose an area free of debris or overhangs.
- Build your fire close to a water source or keep a large amount nearby and ready.
- Extinguish your campfire! Let it burn down before putting it out. Add water, add dirt, and stir.
- If it's still smoldering, it can reignite!



Think FireSmart, don't walk away from your campfire until it's cool to the touch.

Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.

Recreational Vehicles

Did you know recreational vehicles like ATVs, quads and trikes can cause wildfires?

Here's three things you can do to make sure your recreational vehicle does not cause a wildfire:

- make sure your exhaust is free from debris such as grass or moss
- clean out hotspots before and after riding
- stop frequently to check for hotspots and debris
- if the debris is smoldering, soak it or cover it in dirt and make sure it's cool to the touch.

Have fun, be safe and be fireSmart.

Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.



Wildfire Smoke

This wildfire season, pay attention to the Air Quality Health Index and special air quality advisories.

If there is a wildfire event near your community, stay indoors and keep your windows and doors closed unless there is a heat event occurring at the same time, then, prioritize cooling. Consider getting a certified portable air purifier. If you need to be outdoors, wear a well fitted N95 or equivalent face mask.

Stay informed about the air quality in your area at airquality.alberta.ca.

Learn about effective face masks and air purifiers at Canada.ca/wildfiresmoke.



Burn Barrels and Fire Pits

Help prevent wildfires by making your burn barrels and fire pits FireSmart!

- Burn barrels should be placed as far as possible from structures and trees.
- Keep them at least 3 meters away from combustible materials
- Ensure they have proper ventilation and have a screen cover on top.
- And always check if your community requires permits for both fire pits and burn barrels.

Always think FireSmart when using burn barrels and firepits!

Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.



Landscaping around your home – what to avoid

Thinking about doing some landscaping this spring or summer? Try making it FireSmart!

Here are three things you can do to help your home survive a wildfire:

- Choose low-density and fire-resistant plants and shrubs. Those are plants that feel moist, don't smell and have a low amount of sap.
- Avoid plants with dry leaves or needles, have loose papery bark or have a lot of sap.
- And avoid using bark mulches which are highly flammable.



Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.

Maintenance around your home – what to do

90% of homes damaged by wildfires are ignited by embers and sparks, which can blow up to 2 km ahead of a wildfire. Protect your home by creating a buffer zone.

- Remove all combustible materials around the immediate area surrounding your home.
- Including removing all leaves, pine needles, and dry grass.
- Thin and prune trees around your property.
- and remove fallen branches and dry grass.



A clean buffer zone and regular maintenance around your yard will leave nothing for embers to ignite.

Check out firesmartcanada.ca for more tips.