



2024-2025

On-Reserve FireSmart™

Program and Application Guide

Provided by:



**First Nations'
Emergency Services Society**
O F B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A



BRITISH COLUMBIA
FireSmart™



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Canada

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INTRODUCTION

Who is FNESS?

The First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) is a charitable non-profit organization incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia. FNESS aims to create safer First Nations communities using the four pillars of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Who is ISC?

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) works collaboratively with partners to improve access to high-quality services for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Their vision is to support and empower Indigenous peoples to independently deliver services and address the socio-economic conditions in their communities.

What is FireSmart BC?

The FireSmart program in BC is directed by the BC FireSmart Committee (BCFSC), a group of partners and government agencies [listed here](#). The BCFSC's goal is to collaboratively maintain and improve the delivery of the FireSmart BC program to better support wildfire preparedness, prevention, and mitigation in BC. FNESS and ISC are both voting-members of the BCFSC

What is the On-reserve FireSmart Program?

The FNESS-ISC On-reserve FireSmart Program is designed to support First Nation- communities in building wildfire resiliency through implementing various FireSmart activities, including: residential and community assessments, mitigation activities, vegetation management, education and training, and community events. The program provides funding up to a maximum of \$150,000 for eligible FireSmart activities as outlined in appendix A.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

All Bands and Treaty First Nations in BC are eligible to apply. All lands under the management of First Nations are eligible for funding.

Maximum Grant Amount: \$150,000

Recommended FireSmart Activities

Before FireSmart mitigation activities are started they must [be assessed](#) at the residential/community scale. From there, FireSmart activities can move further out from the home or community over time. This is referred to as the 'closest-first' principle, which prioritizes the treatment of hazards that are closest to reserve structures and expands outwards over time. Note: Applicants may want to consider reserving some of their funding for education and outreach (ex. hosting a community event, open house, or purchasing books from the [FireSmart BC library program](#)).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

Requirements

1. Applicants must be in good standing with all FNESS-ISC programs, meaning that all prior approved applications/projects must either be completed or in good standing (i.e., not overdue), otherwise they will not be considered.
2. Applications must clearly outline the estimated costs for the proposed project/activities using the fillable application form on the website.
3. Before submitting your FNESS-ISC On-reserve FireSmart application, activities must first be assessed at the residential/community scale. Note: These assessments are fundable under this program. If your community does not have capacity to complete the assessment, discuss options with your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison.
4. Applications must clearly demonstrate how the proposed activities will address the recommendations from the residential and community scale assessments.
5. A high-level plan for all activities must be included in question six of the application, as well as a map showing the number of structures/sizes of the area to be mitigated. If needed, your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison can help you create this map or support you in outlining your plan.

Process

STEP 1: Contact FNESS at firesmart@fness.bc.ca to let them know you are interested in applying for FNESS-ISC funding. You will then be assigned a Mitigation Specialist/Liaison and FNESS FireSmart Staff member to help answer any questions and support you in preparing your application.

STEP 2: Complete the application and have it signed by an authorized Band signatory as per the Band Council Resolution.

STEP 3: Complete the supporting documentation:

1. Map of the project area showing the number of structures/sizes of area to be mitigated (your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison can help you create this map if needed).
2. First Nation Band Council Resolution (BCR), indicating: a) support for the application b) a willingness to provide overall grant management c) identifying a designated Band representative with signing authority for the project if awarded.
3. FireSmart residential or community assessment. Note: These assessments are fundable under this program. If your community does not have the capacity to complete the assessment, discuss alternative options with your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison.

STEP 4: Once all the above steps have been completed, applications must be saved as either a PDF or Microsoft Word document and submitted electronically to firesmart@fness.bc.ca

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the program year. Applications that meet the requirements listed on page four will be reviewed on a first-come, first-serve basis by a FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison and a FNESS-FireSmart BC team member.

Notice of Funding Decision

Generally, it takes approximately 30 days from the application submission date to receive a notice of decision. This will vary depending on the volume of applications. All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions via email, which will include the terms and conditions of the grant.

Notice of Revisions

In some cases, application revisions may be required, or an application may be approved in principle only. This would require the applicant to complete the requested revisions within 30 days from the date of written notice. Revisions that are not completed within 30 days may be declined. Note: Significant changes to either the scope or intent of an approved project may require a new submission.

Post-Grant Approval Meeting

Once the application is approved, all applicants must attend a post-grant approval meeting with a FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison and a FNESS-FireSmart BC team member to map out the next steps.

Eligible Costs and Activities

Eligible costs are direct costs that are identified in the approved application and paid by the applicant to carry out the eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of the application approval until the date that the final report is submitted. A list of eligible and non-eligible FireSmart activities can be found at the end of this guide in appendix A and B.

Grant Term

Applicants have two years from the date of approval to complete their FireSmart activities/project and submit a final report. If projects are completed in less than two years, applicants may submit an additional application in the same grant year.

APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Bi-annual Project Check Ins

Applicants are responsible for providing a status report on their project/activities twice per year. This can be done through a written report or simply a verbal update over the phone. Note: any changes to the project scope should first be discussed with the FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison. Depending on the specific scope changes, the applicant may be required to submit an amended application for approval.

Financial Management

Applicants are responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining accounting records for the project (invoices, receipts, timesheets, etc.). FNESS and/or ISC (Canada) reserve the right to audit these records.

Transparency

To ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, applicants are responsible for declaring all other financial contributions which cover 'eligible costs' of a project. Clients who are in receipt of CRI (Community Resiliency Investment) funding for similar activities must disclose the nature and geographic focus of their CRI project(s) to note any synergies.

Changes to Approved Projects

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Any significant variations from the approved project will require approval from FNESS. To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- A description of the new or revised activities and area (if applicable).
- A description of new or revised expenditures.
- Written rationale for changes to activities and/or expenditures.
- Please note that the applicant may be required to submit an updated, signed application form.

PAYMENTS

Advance Payments

If your community requires funding upfront to start the project, contact your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison. An **advance payment of 25% of the project total will be considered and discussed at the time of the post-grant approval meeting.**

Progress Payments

If your community desires progress payments rather than payment at the end of the project, contact your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison. Progress payments will be considered if rationale is provided, and expenditures-to-date are confirmed. Progress payments will be capped at 75% of the total approved grant amount which includes any previously approved advance payments.

Other Grant Contributions

If your community has received other financial contributions (such as FireSmart Community Funding and Support Stream CRI) which cover 'eligible costs' of a project, you must advise your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison.

Final report/payment process

Upon completion of the project, applicants must submit a final report to firesmart@fness.bc.ca using the final report template, including the required supporting documentation. Final payment will be provided once the report has been reviewed to verify that all the requirements have been met. Note: Payment requests must come from the Band. Consultants/contractors cannot submit requests on behalf of the Band.

Final Report Checklist:

- A completed final report form, including the signature of the authorized Band signatory.
- Financial expenditure reports. Note: FNESS-ISC reserves the right to request an audit on financial reports.
- A map of the project area showing the number of structures/sizes of the area that was mitigated (your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison can help you create this map).
- A summary of the completed work/activities, including whether the project objectives were met, and lessons learned.
- A minimum of four pre- and post-treatment photographs for FireSmart activities for each structure or vegetation modification activities. Note: Photos are not required for work undertaken on culturally significant site.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF ELIGIBLE FIRESMART ACTIVITIES

All FireSmart activities must contribute to reducing your community's wildfire risk. If there is something not listed that would benefit your community, please discuss it with your FNESS Mitigation Specialist/Liaison or FNESS FireSmart team member.

Eligible FireSmart Activities

There are five categories of eligible FireSmart activities:

- 1) Education and Outreach
- 2) Assessments and Mitigation Treatment
- 3) FireSmart Programs
- 4) Training
- 5) Positions
- 6) Other activities

1. EDUCATION & OUTREACH ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:
Promote/Distribute FireSmart educational resources: FireSmart 101, FireSmart Ambassador Training, Wildfire Risk Reduction Basics, FireSmart BC Education Program, FireSmart BC Materials, and social media.
Organize, host, or support a FireSmart event in your community (ex. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Community FireSmart Event) to raise awareness and understanding of the FireSmart Program. (up to \$6,000 per event) .
Purchase FireSmart Promotional Items to support FireSmart community events and programs (up to \$8,000 per application) .
Purchase books that are part of the FireSmart BC library program (up to \$300.00) .
Educate your community about the FireSmart BC program through FireSmart graphics, social media channels, applicant websites, and/or newsletters. (up to \$10,000) . *FNESS FireSmart Team can assist

Attend the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit (Eligible costs include conference fee and travel, including accommodations and per diems). **(up to 4 people per eligible applicant up to \$2,200)**. Additional funding can be approved based on travel needs.

2. FIRESMART ASSESSMENTS & MITIGATION ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

Complete any of the following Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) assessments **(up to \$200/structure)**.

[FireSmart Home Ignition Zone Assessment](#)

*This assessment must be performed by someone whose completed Local FireSmart Representative online training

Complete a [Critical Infrastructure Assessment](#) **(up to \$850/structure)**.

This assessment must be completed by someone whose completed Local FireSmart Representative online training.

*See the [Critical Infrastructure Assessment Guide here](#).

Complete a [Cultural Significant Sites and Green Spaces Assessment](#) **(up to \$850)**.

Complete a [FireSmart Neighbourhood Hazard Assessment](#) and [FireSmart Neighbourhood Plan](#)

*FireSmart Neighbourhood Assessment and Plan must be completed by a Local FireSmart Representative (LFR).

*This assessment is required as part of the FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program.

Mitigation:

- Completion of recommended mitigation activities identified in a completed FireSmart Assessment limited to labour costs.
- Provide off-site vegetative debris disposal for mitigation activities identified in a completed FireSmart Assessment (provide a dumpster, chipper, or other collection method).
- Waive tipping fees and/or provide curbside debris pick-up.
- Removal of flammable trash and non-vegetative debris from FireSmart Zones.
- Pile burning
- Adding a 1.5 m non-combustible area (immediate zone) around the structure
- Animal Grazing to reduce fuel load within the FireSmart Zones.

Mitigation activities can extend past the 30 meters (Extended Zone) but not exceed 100 meters but will need to be identified in a FireSmart Assessment.

Activities are limited to:

- Selectively remove evergreen trees to create a least 3 meters of horizontal space between the single or grouped tree crowns.
- Remove all branches to a height of 2 metres from the ground.
- Regularly clean up accumulations of fallen branches, dry grass, and needles to eliminate potential surface fuels.

3. FIRESMART PROGRAMS ELIBIBLE ACTIVITIES:

[FireSmart Canada Neighborhood Recognition Program](#) (FCNRP).

- Focusing on a neighbourhood approach, the FCNRP teaches people how to live with wildfire and increase their home's chance of survival through proactive actions, while encouraging neighbours to work together to reduce losses and damage. This program includes:
 1. [FireSmart Neighbourhood Hazard Assessment](#)
 2. [FireSmart Neighbourhood Plan](#)

*FireSmart Neighbourhood Assessment and Plan can be completed by a Local FireSmart Representative (LFR).

[FireSmart BC Library Program.](#)

- The Library Program helps children understand what it means to live with wildfires and the role they can play in mitigating the impacts of wildfires on their home and community.
- This program includes Wildfire Resiliency Literacy Kits, Ember Activity Packages, Colouring Contest materials, and access to Storytime Videos with Ember. **(up to \$2,000).**

[FireSmart BC Education Program](#)

- The FireSmart BC Education Program is an all-in-one teaching resource to introduce students to FireSmart concepts, including how to make homes and communities more resilient to wildfire.
- This includes promotional materials for contests, banners, targeted education events, print costs, material costs to support outreach **(up to \$2,000).**

4. FIRESMART TRAINING COURSES ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

Complete the free, online [FireSmart 101 course](#)

Complete the free, online [FireSmart Canada FireSmart Ambassador Course](#)

Complete the free, online [Local Firesmart Representative Workshop](#)

Complete the free, online, self-paced [Wildfire Risk Reduction Course](#)

For reference, below are the FireSmart BC positions with links to the job descriptions.

5. FIRESMART JOB POSITIONS

The primary focus of these positions is to support eligible FireSmart activities, but other duties related to emergency management (i.e. EOC, ESS evacuations), structural fire and/or forestry (i.e. Indigenous Guardians) are eligible no more than 20% of job duties

FireSmart Coordinator	Job description
Local FireSmart Representative	Job description
FireSmart Crew Member	Job description

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: OTHER

- Purchase of tools (e.g. hand saws, loppers), power tools (e.g. chainsaws, brush saws, walk-behind lawn mowers, string trimmers) required for mitigation activities. **(up to \$5,000)**.
- Purchase of IT Equipment (limited to tablet computers (IPADS)) that support required eligible activities. **(up to \$2,500)**.
- Purchase of caulking, metal flashing, and 3mm metal mesh to support mitigation recommendations based off the FireSmart Assessment **(up to \$5,000)**.

Firewood Structure – must be addressed in a FireSmart assessment and be built to align with FireSmart principles. **(\$2,000 per structure)**.

*FireSmart BC has developed a [FireSmart Firewood Shed Guide](#) and [FireSmart Firewood Shed Self-Assessment](#) to offer communities seasonal recommendations and design examples for firewood sheds.

Purchase of FireSmart trees and plants – must be from the [FireSmart Landscaping Guide](#).

Costs – associated with maintenance of earlier FireSmart projects.

Lease of equipment and/or vehicles (must be related to the FireSmart project).

Administrative cost related to the community FireSmart activities.

APPENDIX B: NON-ELIGIBLE FIRESMART ACTIVITIES

Any activity that is not outlined above or is not directly connected to activities approved in the application by FNESS is not eligible for grant funding. This includes:

NON-ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: OTHER
Emergency plans or related activities. Email preparedness@fness.bc.ca to see what other funding is available that support activities under preparedness.
Community Wildfire Protection Plan or Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan preparation.
Local fire department training. Note: Wildland Fire training is available through the FNESSWildfire Division . Contact wildfire@fness.bc.ca for more information.
Purchase of heavy equipment and machinery.
The purchase of animals and/or fencing for grazing.
Removal of non-flammable trash or debris.
Activities for purposes other than fuel treatment (e.g., building of recreational trails without fuel management objectives).
Staff training costs including safety and first-aid training.
Work undertaken by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (including BCWS).
Structural protection equipment or suppression (e.g., hoses, sprinklers, fire extinguishers, fire blankets).
Work undertaken to fulfill the Ministry of Forests, Land, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) hazard abatement obligations under the Wildfire Act .

Note: If the funding you are looking for is not eligible through the On-Reserve FireSmart program, please contact FNESS' FireSmart Division at firesmart@fness.bc.ca.

APPENDIX C: ELIGIBLE COSTS REFERENCE GUIDE

Appendix C functions as an example of **Table 1: Worksheet for Applicants** that is a requirement in the 2024-2025 ISC On-Reserve FireSmart Program application.

Table 1: Worksheet for Applicants		
Activity	Estimated Cost	Details
Promote/Distribute FireSmart Educational Resources.	\$0	Click here to order Free FireSmart Resources If you need more resources than what is available for free, you can purchase those by clicking here .
FireSmart Event (up to \$6,000 per event).	\$2,750 x 3 events \$8,250	Events will vary by scale. Consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff hours • Equipment rental (chipper, bin, BBQ, hand tools) • Fuel • Landfill tipping fees • Prizes/giveaways (Must be items that support mitigation activities: i.e. Rakes, wheelbarrow, pruning tools, hand saw, spade, shovel, garden fork, hoe) • Personal protective equipment (Safety glasses, gloves). • Vendor fees. • Food and refreshments. • Facility rental.
FireSmart Promotional Items (up to \$8,000).	\$6,000	• The size of your community will determine estimated costs of promotional items.
Purchase books from the FireSmart BC Library Program (up to \$300).	\$300	
FireSmart Education through community	\$8,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banners: up to \$1,600. • Posters: \$250.

social media channels, applicant websites, graphics or newsletters. (up to \$10,000).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videos specific to community wildfire resiliency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ up to \$10,000 each per year. • \$3,000 Create FireSmart graphics. • Tents, including walls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ up to \$2,200 each. • Vehicle decals: up to \$750. • Ember mascot: up to \$9,000.
Attend the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit (up to \$2,200/person). (up to 4 people).	\$4,400 Two community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference fee. • Travel. • Wages and per diems.
FireSmart Assessments and Mitigation		
Activity	Estimated Cost	Details
FireSmart Home Ignition Zone Assessments (up to \$200/ structure).	Staff time or if hiring a consultant \$200 per structure	FireSmart staff position is performing the assessments -staff hours.
FireSmart Critical Infrastructure Assessments (up to \$850 per structure).	Staff hours or if hiring consultant \$850 per structure	FireSmart staff position is performing the assessments – staff hours.
<u>Cultural and Significant Sites and Green Spaces:</u> Assessment: (up to \$850).	Staff hours or if hiring consultant max of \$850 per structure	FireSmart staff position is performing the assessments – staff hours.
Mitigation Activities		
Completion of	\$20,000	Limited to labour. For a detailed list of eligible

recommended mitigation activities identified in a completed FireSmart Assessment limited to labour costs.		activities, visit the FireSmart Begins at Home Guide . Costs to mitigation 15 structures that were assessed using the FireSmart HIZ Assessment.
Provide off-site vegetative debris disposal for mitigation activities identified in a completed FireSmart Assessment.		Offer off-site vegetative debris disposal services to communities that have independently implemented FireSmart vegetation management on a home-based scale, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharpening services for gardening hand tools. • Provide a dumpster, chipper, or other collection methods. • Waive tipping fees. • Provide curbside debris pick-up.
Waive tipping fees and/or provide curbside debris pick-up.		
Removal of flammable trash and non-vegetative debris from FireSmart Zones.		Needs to be identified in an assessment.
Adding a 1.5 m non-combustible area (immediate zone) around the structure.	\$5,000	Creating a 1.5m non-combustible area around 5 homes by removing all vegetation and lay gravel and paving stones.
Animal Grazing to reduce fuel load within the FireSmart Zones.		
FireSmart Programs		
FireSmart Neighborhood Recognition Program	\$1,500	Includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Neighbourhood Wildfire Hazard Assessments. 2. FireSmart Neighbourhood Plans.

FireSmart BC FireSmart BC Library Program (up to \$2,000).		Purchase one FireSmart BC library program:
FireSmart BC Education Program (up to \$2,000).	\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printing costs • School visit coordination • Promotional giveaway items for school visits, banners and visual promotion costs.
FireSmart Training		
Activity	Estimated Cost	Details
FireSmart 101	\$0	Free, online. Staff hours.
FireSmart Canada FireSmart Ambassador Course	\$0	Free, online. Staff hours.
Local FireSmart Representative Training	\$0	Free, online.
Wildfire Risk Reduction Training	\$0	Free, online.
Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility Training to staff.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training space/venue. • Education materials/instructor. • Optional: Lunches/snacks for students.

FireSmart Positions		
Activity	Estimated Cost	Details
FireSmart Coordinator	\$80,000	<p>**Can be either a new position or incorporated into an existing position within your community administration.</p> <p>Click on the job description to learn more about the duties of a FireSmart Coordinator.</p> <p>Must also complete a roles breakdown.</p>
Local FireSmart Representative		<p>**Can be either a new position or incorporated into an existing position within your community administration. It can be a part- time or full-time position.</p> <p>Click on the job description to learn more about the duties of a Local FireSmart Representative.</p>
FireSmart Crew Member		<p>**Can be either a new position or incorporated into an existing position within your community administration.</p> <p>Click on the job description to learn more about the duties of a FireSmart Crew Member.</p>
Other FireSmart		
Activities	Estimated Cost	Details
Purchase of tools, power tools (up to \$5,000).	\$2,000	Power saws, weed whackers, pruning shears, loopers, personal protective equipment.
IT Equipment (up to \$2,500).	\$2,000	iPad/Tablet and software programs. iPad/Tablet is required for FireSmart Assessments for FireSmart staff position.

Purchase of caulking, metal flashing, and 3mm metal mesh to support mitigation recommendations based off the FireSmart Assessment (up to \$5,000).		Based on FS assessment – purchase of caulking, metal flashing and 3mm metal mesh to support FireSmart recommendations from assessment.
Firewood Structure. (up to \$2,000 per home).	\$10,000	Building materials and labour for 4 woodshed structures. FireSmart Firewood Shed Guide FireSmart Firewood Shed Self-Assessment
Purchase of FireSmart trees and plants.		These trees and plants must align with the FireSmart recommendations found in the Landscaping Hub .
Animal Grazing (including temporary fencing rentals).		Contact FNESS regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing rental • Animal rental • Animal transportation
Maintenance costs of previous FireSmart Projects.		Labour and debris removal.
Equipment Leasing (up to \$5,000).		Costs will vary depending on the scope of the project. Equipment may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stump grinder • Bobcat • Backhoe • Pickup truck
Other Mitigation activities:		

Total Costs of FireSmart Project:		\$149,950
Other grants applicable to your project.	No other grants applicable to this project	\$0