



July 23, 2009

## **Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Urges Homeowners to Become Fire Smart**

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George is advising residents who live in or near a forested area in our region to be proactive in reducing the risk of loss, damage or injury due to wildfire. With the current hot, dry weather, the risk of wildfire has increased, so the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George wants to encourage residents to take preventative measures.

Keep a minimum space of 10 metres around your home free of shrubs, trees, deadfall or woodpiles and keep your grass mowed and watered. Any kind of vegetation is combustible and could easily ignite with an advancing fire. Beyond the initial 10 metres, remove or reduce the number of evergreen trees. Evergreens such as pine and spruce are much more combustible than deciduous trees like aspen, poplar and birch. Remove any deadfall, thick shrubbery and mature trees.

Assess the building materials used in your home. The most fire resistant roofing materials are metal, clay, tile and asphalt singles. Exterior walls of stucco, metal, brick and concrete offer superior resistance to wildfire. Logs and heavy timbers are less effective while wood and vinyl siding offer very little protection.

Ensure chimneys are constructed to meet current building code requirements and have approved spark arrestors. Vegetation should be cleared well back from power lines, propane tanks and other fuel supplies. Keep eaves troughs clean of debris as the dry debris is like kindling to flying embers. Prune trees up 2 meters to lessen the chance of fire climbing up into the trees.

More information about how to protect your home from wildfire is available in "*The Home Owners FireSmart Manual, BC Edition*" which can be downloaded from Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General website (<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/firecom/pdf/homeowner-firesmart.pdf>). Hard copies of the manual are also available at the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George office at 155 George Street in Prince George.

-30-

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Reneé McCloskey, APR  
Manager of External Relations  
Phone 250 960- 4453  
Cell 250 961- 4421