



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District receives FireSmart funding

PORT ALBERNI – The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD), Hupačasath First Nation, Tseshaht First Nation, and the City of Port Alberni are pleased to announce they have received a FireSmart grant.

The 2023 grant from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) is for \$663, 248 and offers FireSmart program funding for two years, ending in April 2025. The partnership ensures the region will benefit from FireSmart prevention, mitigation, and preparedness. Beginning in May, the project will be offered in the Bamfield, Long Beach, Sproat Lake, Cherry Creek, Beaver Creek, and Beaufort Electoral areas, the City of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation, and Hupačasath First Nation.

“Last year the FireSmart program coordinator brought more awareness to the region and helped educate people about what it means to be FireSmart. It is exciting to receive the 2023 grant so we can build on the success of this program and support even more people as they make their properties FireSmart,” explains ACRD Chair John Jack. “Wildfires continue to be a growing threat in our community, and this partnership allows us to work together to mitigate that threat.”

Grant funding will be used to:

- Hire a FireSmart coordinator
- Offer public education
- Host FireSmart events
- Carry out residential and critical infrastructure assessments
- Offer homeowner rebates of \$1,000 for completing recommended FireSmart work
- Provide training and exercises for emergency agencies
- Undertake critical infrastructure mitigation projects
- Offer curbside pick-up of yard waste.

"Tseshaht has the sacred responsibility to look after their hahoulthee (territory), through partnerships such as this and the FireSmart grant," says Chief Wahmeesh (Ken Watts), elected chief councillor for Tseshaht First Nation. "We can all work together to address the serious threat wildfires in our territory. "

"We have all seen the devastation that wildfires can cause and the impact that has on communities," says Port Alberni Mayor Sharie Minions. "Thanks to this grant from UBCM, we can work on prevention and resiliency through the opportunities the FireSmart program offers."

"Offering education and a focus on prevention is the most effective way to decrease the risk of forest fires in our community," explains Chief Brandy Lauder, elected chief councillor of Hupačasath First



Nation. “The FireSmart program offers our members a way to become more informed about the risks, and that awareness could save our community from falling victim to wildfires like we have seen in the news recently.”

More information can be found at [Emergency Services \(acrd.bc.ca\)](https://www.acrd.bc.ca).

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