



# 2023 TOOLKIT



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# WHAT IS WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY?

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, also known as Prep Day, is a national program by FireSmart™ Canada that encourages everyone to increase resilience to wildfire for their homes, neighbourhoods, and communities.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Prep Day is for everyone! Neighbourhoods, community groups, businesses, Indigenous groups, fire departments, local governments, etc. are encouraged to organize Prep Day events. FireSmart Canada, in collaboration with the National Fire Protection Association, the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, and the Co-operators support Prep Day by offering \$500 awards to fund neighbourhood events. Groups can apply for the award on the [FireSmart Canada website!](#)

## WHEN IS PREP DAY?

Each year, Prep Day takes place on the first Saturday in May. In 2023, Prep Day will fall on Saturday, May 6. While this is the “official” Prep Day, participants are welcome to hold events at any time between May and October 2023.



# GET STARTED!

# 1




## **INVOLVE YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Anyone can participate in a project that reduces wildfire risk, increases resilience, and helps neighbourhoods become FireSmart. Projects can range from hour-long work sessions to full-day activities, or even weekend undertakings!

Enlist the help of friends, relatives or a youth organization! Challenge a club, athletic team or faith-based group, etc. to develop a project, and see who can make the largest impact.

# 2

## MAKE A PLAN




















-  Come up with an idea for your event or project that suits your neighbourhood's needs. Check out our list of project suggestions on the following page for inspiration.
-  Gather neighbours, friends, and family members who want to participate.
-  Pick a time and location for your event. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day 2023 is May 6, but events can be held at any time until October 31.

**Apply for the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day award for \$500 toward your project! The application period runs from November to January.**

**CLICK HERE TO APPLY!**



# IDEAS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITIES

-  Rake and remove pine needles, dry leaves and combustible debris from within 1.5 metres of neighbourhood homes. As time permits, continue up to a 10-metre distance around each home.
-  Grab a measuring tape and see how close wood piles are located to homes. Woodpiles must be at least 10 metres from structures.
-  Clear leaves, needles and debris from roofs and gutters.
-  Sweep porches and decks clearing them of leaves, pine needles, and combustible matter. Rake under decks, porches, sheds and play structures, and dispose of debris.
-  On mature trees, use hand pruners and loppers to remove low-hanging branches up to two metres from the ground (be careful not to remove more than one-third of the branches).
-  Collect downed tree branches and take them to a disposal site.
-  Move items under decks and porches to garages, basements, or sheds that are enclosed with screened vents (maximum three millimetre screening) to prevent ember intrusion.
-  Screen or box-in areas below decks with wire screening (no larger than three millimetres) to help keep embers out during a fire.
-  Work with neighbours to assess homes and properties using the FireSmart Begins at Home app. Help each other perform recommended activities or simple, cost-free renovations.
-  Pool neighbourhood resources to pay for a chipper service to remove slash.
-  Spend the day with neighbours building or updating 72-hour emergency kits for each household.
-  Work with neighbours to ensure that the addresses of all homes in the neighbourhood are visible from the street.
-  Help neighbours with mobility challenges FireSmart their homes.
-  Locate two routes out of your neighbourhood (besides the one normally used), and plan and practice an evacuation drill. Review the FireSmart Canada evaluation checklist with neighbours.
-  Work with local emergency management authorities to develop and practice a neighbourhood evacuation plan.
-  Work with neighbours to develop a phone or text tree to alert everyone about a fire or evacuation.
-  Invite a horticulturist to review the *FireSmart Guide to Landscaping* with you and your neighbours and suggest which types of FireSmart plants might work best in your neighbourhood.
-  Identify and remove high flammability plants (junipers and cedars) from within 1.5 metres of neighbourhood homes.
-  Host a BBQ and invite your Local FireSmart Representative to run a FireSmart workshop to learn about the Neighbourhood Recognition Program and FireSmart principles.

# We want you to stay safe while having fun on Prep Day! Check out our list of tips and gear recommendations.

## TIPS

**WORK TOGETHER:** Many projects are best accomplished by two or more people. It's always good to work in pairs.

**GET PERMISSION:** Remember to always ask for and receive permission from a land/homeowner before doing work on property that is not your own.

**BENDING:** Keep feet shoulder-width apart and move your whole body as one unit; bend at the hips and knees, not at your waist.

**LIFTING:** If an object is too difficult to lift, ask a friend for help. Use slow, smooth movements while lifting and keep your body facing the object. Twisting can hurt your back. Keep the load close to your body between your shoulders and waist.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:** Take special caution when moving and storing hazardous items (gasoline, portable propane tanks, etc.). Many products can be dangerous if handled or stored incorrectly, and can harm your health and the environment. Contact local and/or provincial/territorial authorities for more information.

**HAND TOOLS:** Always wear eye protection. Handle sharp-edged and pointed tools carefully, keeping them close to your side, and with the points and heavy ends downward. Never carry sharp hand tools in your pocket. Discard tools that are broken.

**AWARENESS:** Minors should never accept a stranger's invitation to enter a home unless accompanied by a trusted adult.

**BE SAFE:** Before getting started, make sure everyone has reviewed the safety gear and safety tips.

## GEAR

**PPE:** Always follow good safety practices, including wearing the proper clothing and personal protective equipment, especially when operating power tools.

**EXTREMITIES:** Wear work gloves, trim-fitting long pants and shirts, and non-slip closed-toed shoes.

**EYES:** Always wear eye protection/safety goggles.

**EARS:** Industrial style ear plugs/earmuffs need to be worn in loud work areas.

**HEAD:** If you are cutting overhead branches, wear a hardhat.

**TOOLS:** Ensure people are properly trained in the use of required tools. Have a buddy when using ladders.

# 3

## SHARE THE WORD!

Once you've chosen a project, tell others what you're doing to create a safer neighbourhood. Promote your project by involving local officials, and contacting local media. Check out our [resources page](#) for a media advisory template and other tools you can use to promote your project or event.

Use Facebook groups or other social media platforms to invite participants and spread the word!

Apply for the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day award to help fund your project! The application period runs from November to January. Visit [the link](#) to apply!

Take lots of action photos during your event!  
Afterward, post photos and video of your activity on social media; tag and share with FireSmart Canada. We're on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter!  
And don't forget to use the hashtag,

# #WildfirePrepDay





# KEEP A GOOD THING GOING!

## BECOME A RECOGNIZED FIRESMART NEIGHBOURHOOD

Contact your provincial/territorial Provincial Liaisons, who can help you learn more about FireSmart resources and programs, like the [Neighbourhood Recognition Program](#).

Hold your neighbourhood's first FireSmart committee meeting as a step toward becoming a Recognized FireSmart Neighbourhood.

[FIND YOUR PROVINCIAL LIAISON](#)

## LINKS TO RESOURCES

[FireSmart Canada](#)

[Wildfire Community Preparedness Day overview](#)

[FireSmart 101](#)

[FireSmart Canada FireSmart Begins at Home Manual](#)

[FireSmart Canada Last-minute Wildfire Checklist](#)

[FireSmart Canada Guide to Landscaping](#)

[FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program](#)

[Contact us](#)