

THE FIRESMART COTTAGE

FOCA encourages landowners to be aware of and protect their homes from forest fires and follow safe burning guidelines for brush and campfires.

‘FireSmart’ your home with this seasonal checklist:

Winter:

- plan the activities you want to do this year to make your property safe and encourage others to do the same (see more on the back of this sheet)
- check your fire insurance annually to make sure it is adequate to cover a fire loss

Spring:

- do a home assessment to help you prepare for the threat of wildfire prior to spring fire season
- move firewood and lumber piles to at least 10m away from your buildings
- clean dead vegetation out of shrubs and other foundation plantings
- connect your garden hose to an outdoor spigot and attach a nozzle; make sure other firefighting tools like shovels, rakes and buckets are handy

Summer:

- clean gutters and remove any flammable debris from roof
- keep grass cut around propane tanks and buildings; this provides a green barrier that fire will not burn
- keep area in 10m diameter of buildings relatively clear of combustible materials
- enclose soffits and areas under decks; replace flammable roofing, siding, and foundation enclosures with fire resistant materials
- post road signs or house number in reflective materials so they can be clearly seen in the dark

Fall:

- prune trees after leaves fall; pruning branches up to 3m above the ground will help prevent fire from climbing branches into tree crowns
- prune branches that are overhanging roof and wires
- make sure your home is fire safe on the inside; check chimneys, smoke alarms, and fire extinguishers

More tips...

YOUR ROLES:

- **read** FOCA Fact Sheets about important cottage-country topics.
- **share** this information with someone you know at the lake or river!
- **get on the FOCA E!ert (e-news) list**, for monthly updates in your inbox -sign up on the FOCA website, or at http://bit.ly/FOCA_E!ert

PREPARING FOR WILDFIRES

FOCA encourages lake communities to discuss wildfire preparedness, and to create a community action plan.

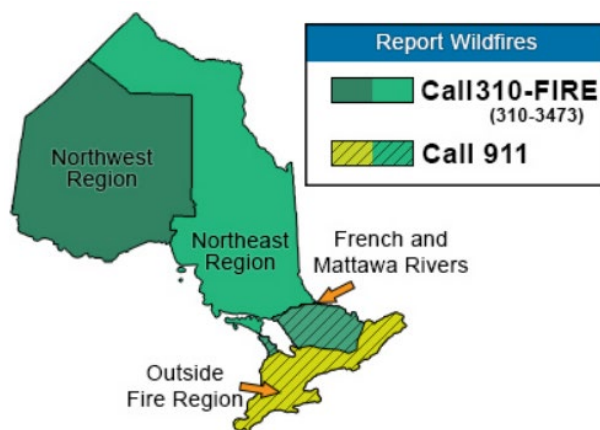
Create an action plan by considering the following questions:

1. What will you do if a fire is approaching yours or a neighbour's residence?
2. Who will you call, and how do you sound an alarm to notify the community?
3. Does your community have fire equipment in strategic locations on the lake? Who is in charge of maintaining this equipment, and who has access to it?
4. Are there emergency exits clearly marked in community buildings?
5. Do you have a home (cottage) escape plan? Does everyone in the family know it?
6. Have you located fire safe areas in the community such as lakes or other wet areas, rock outcrops, and roads to set as a meeting place?

Report a Wildfire:

- Be prepared to give fire officials the following information; a detailed description of the fire location, how firefighters can access the fire, types of buildings in the area cutting operations or other activities in the area, and the time fire was discovered.

Forest fires are naturally caused by lightning, BUT also by human carelessness.



Safe Burning:

- check with your municipality before you burn leaves and debris; you may be required to get a permit
- if a restricted fire zone (RFZ) is in effect, or you may be only allowed to burn at certain times in the day
- choose a safe day; burn during the coolest, calmest, dampest time of day; do not burn when its windy
- a pile to be burnt must be no more than 2 metres in diameter and less than 2 metres in height
- never leave your fire unattended!

Safe Campfires:

- use a fire pit for campfires; dig a hole, ensure the area around the pit is free of combustible materials, surround your fire pit with rocks or stone slabs, and keep a bucket of water nearby
- make sure all glowing embers are extinguished before you leave your fire; in a fire pit add water and stir into ashes; if water is not handy, mineral soil also works well to extinguish fire.

For more about what you can do on your own property & how you can inform others in your community, visit: www.firesmartcanada.ca