

# Homalco



# FireSmart

## Newsletter

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### Wrapping Up Our Program ... For Now!

We have made tremendous progress on protecting our homes from wildfire, and Homalco Leadership and Staff would like to thank every member and resident for your engagement and support.

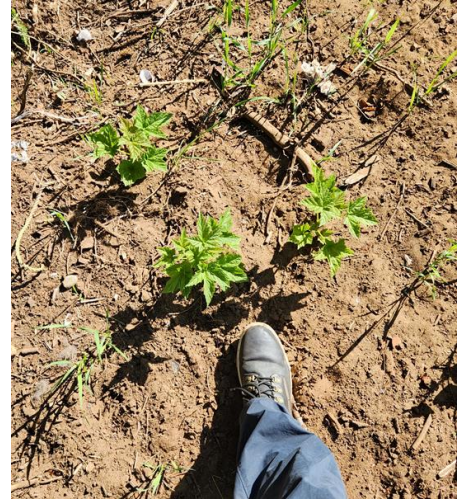
Having finished the clearing and clean-up along the north boundary of the reserve our final step was to hydroseed the bare earth to re-establish grass and other herbaceous plants. This is a critical step in winning the on-going competition with the blackberries.

The picture below was taken only a few days after hydro-seeding so there is no germination showing yet. What is worth noting is the sprinkler. These sprinklers were set up all along the treatment area and residents were asked to try to keep the area moist while the grass establishes itself. The weather this year is going to make this a bit of a struggle. A special thank you for your help goes out to those watering over the coming weeks and months.



## Cut Your Grass to Suppress the Blackberries

One thing we know for sure is that the blackberries will grow back. To win the battle we need to keep up the pressure! Residents are urged to cut young berry sprouts when you cut the grass in order to keep the berries from getting established.



## Future Work

We will be securing funding to continue our FireSmart program, both with regard to fire danger conditions outside your homes, and for addressing the house structures themselves. The Homalco emergency and housing teams will be collaborating to make our community as safe as possible. Standby for news.

## What is FireSmart all About?

Climate change is real and now. There is no longer a normal pattern of weather, but we do know that weather events will be more extreme and more frequent. Fire is a natural component of the forests surrounding Homalco, and in the future its presence and impacts will only be more strongly felt by the community. Excluding fire is not possible, but we can live with fire without disastrous loss of life, property, and resources. FireSmart gives us the tools to do this.





# What Can You Do Right Now?

Fire season is upon us and there are things that you can do right away to protect your home, your family, and your neighbours:

- Mow your grass;
- Clean out your gutters;
- Remove anything that can burn from within 1.5m of your home, garage, or shed;
- Remove any coniferous trees or shrubs (pines, firs, spruce, junipers) within 10 metres of your home;
- Space out and prune up from the ground any remaining trees to prevent fire spreading into the crown of the tree and from tree to tree; and
- Store your firewood at least 10m away from the home.



Please see the next page for a handy information sheet on what you might do as the fire danger rises or an evacuation alert is issued.








## Last-Minute Checklist for Protecting Your Home and Property from Wildfire



### Evacuation Tips







Monitor conditions and follow the advice of local authorities. **If ordered to evacuate, do so immediately.**

	<p>Review your evacuation plan for your family and pets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit <a href="http://www.getprepared.gc.ca">www.getprepared.gc.ca</a> for helpful tips and evacuation plan templates.</li> </ul>
	<p>Have your "ready to go kit" (emergency kit) ready and stocked with cash, portable radio, prescription medications, eye glasses, change of clothes, pet food, flashlights and batteries, etc. Make sure your phone numbers, insurance information and other important documents for your go bag are current.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit <a href="http://www.getprepared.gc.ca">www.getprepared.gc.ca</a> for a more complete list of emergency supplies.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Before evacuating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turn off air conditioning.</li> <li>Turn off your home water and electricity</li> <li>Close all doors, garage doors and windows. If weather seal or doors have gaps, seal with duct tape.</li> </ul>



### Quickly address outside surroundings




Complete a scan around your home and property and take steps to remove combustibles.

	<p>Remove leaves, pine needles and other debris from your roof and gutters.</p>
	<p>Mow grass and weeds within 10 metres of the house to 10 centimetres in length, or less.</p>
	<p>Clear all dead plants, leaves, and weeds within 10 metres of your home. Maintain a 1.5 metre non-combustible zone around your home and deck by sweeping or raking down to mineral soil, rock or concrete.</p>
	<p>Move combustible items such as toys, patio furniture, cushions, decorative items, firewood, and potted plants, that are on and under your deck and within 10 metres of your home. Move all combustible items into your home or garage.</p>
	<p>If you have a propane tank located on your property:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propane tanks should be moved to 10 metres away from structures.</li> <li>Remove weeds and other debris from area around large stationary propane tanks so there is no combustible material near tank.</li> </ul>
	<p>If you have a combustible fence that attaches to your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure gate in an open position.</li> <li>Clear vegetation and debris along both sides of combustible fence lines.</li> </ul>



### Check around the house

Check vents on roof, foundation and exterior walls to prevent embers from entering your home.

	<p>Check your attic and foundation (crawl space) vents to see if they are screened and in good repair. Use duct or metal tape to temporarily cover damaged vents and those with 3 millimetres mesh screening.</p>
	<p>If you store cardboard boxes and other easily ignited materials near a vent in your attic or crawl space, move them as far away as possible from vent(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Another option is to place tape over vent(s) at these locations. Be sure to remove tape when you return home.</li> </ul>
	<p>Cover dryer vents and wall-mounted make-up air openings for furnaces with a plywood cover, metal tape or duct tape.</p>



← Non-combustible Zone →



Visit [www.firesmartcanada.ca](http://www.firesmartcanada.ca) for additional resources and information.