

# 2022/2023 Annual Report

This 2022/2023 annual report covers the period of April 1st, 2022 to October 2023.

The following table addresses general goals set for the period.

2022/2023 Goals	Accomplishments
<b>Program Elements</b>	
Member communication on emergency preparedness using Facebook, newsletters, household preparedness planning, training to increase community awareness. Collaborate with housing.	Newsletters and information pamphlets were used effectively for FireSmart activities. A recommended work plan for the housing department was prepared.
Further develop our relationship with local response agencies including planning for unified command.	No advancement of this.
Enhancement of the <i>All-hazards Emergency Management Plan</i> with a robust ESS plan.	Completed.
Develop a robust training plan.	Tools developed. EOC training completed October 2023.
Update the <i>Homalco and Orford All-hazards Emergency Management Plan</i> .	Completed.
Prepare an annual report and renewed annual plan.	Completed.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Review status and supply fire and carbon monoxide detectors in all homes.	Not advanced.
Inventory, repair, and improvement to code as required all wood stoves in the community residences.	Not advanced.
Open a dialogue with Telus with regard to redundancy in the Homalco Community, including improved cellular service.	Not advanced.
Acquire a VHF radio system comprising a base station and hand-held radios for EOC members and work with outside agencies including EMBC for proper authorizations for appropriate frequencies.	Not advanced.
Review Orford communications systems and put forward recommendations. See the communications plan below.	Not advanced.
Investigate installation of transfer switch to enable EOC and reception centre to accommodate portable generator power.	Not advanced.



<b>2022/2023 Goals</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Look into emergency power generation for the Administration building and therefore the EOC. Modify the emergency power generator system at the health centre to power the entire building.	Not advanced.
Establish basic EOC facilities in a cupboard in the board room.	Not advanced.
As a priority, develop a second access/egress route for the community.	Not advanced.
Work with the SRD to establish their requested regional staging area in the soccer fields, including improving evacuation route A and a helipad.	Not advanced.
<b>Preparedness:</b>	
Install high visibility (reflective) house numbers throughout the community.	Completed.
Purchase basic supplies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicable Disease PPE</li> <li>• First aid kits for families</li> <li>• Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AEDs) for administration building and health centre</li> <li>• Level 3 first aid kit in the health centre</li> </ul>	Not advanced.

The following table lists funded activities and the associated accomplishments.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
<b>ESS - UBCM Funding (21/22)</b>	<b>Completed October 2022</b>
Begin building the ESS program with recruitment activities, training, and a tabletop exercise.	A volunteer workshop was delivered August 16th 2022 and ESS foundational training and a tabletop exercise were delivered on September 27th and 28th of 2022.
Obtain computer equipment to support ESS.	Already having computer and printer hardware available to the ESS program, an external hard drive was purchased, as well as other ESS support items
<b>FireSmart Program - UBCM CRI Funding (21/22)</b>	<b>Completed March 2023</b>
Promote education of members and residents with regard to FireSmart principles.	A FireSmart event was held in August 2022. Information was also shared at the Homalco open house, and in a website update. The Community FireSmart Plan was updated.
FireSmart assessment of 15 homes.	Completed.
Forest fire fuel reduction behind the homes along the north boundary of the reserve. (Twelve homes)	Initial clearing of woody debris and blackberries was accomplished with all materials left on site.



<b>Goals</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Reduce wildfire risk through fuel reduction on residential properties identified for this project. (Eight homes)	A tree service contractor undertook brush removal and tree removal and pruning following FireSmart principles.
FireSmart Program - FNESS/ISC Funding (21/22)	Complete June 2023
Ensure that members and residents are fully informed and promote education on FireSmart principles.	Education and Liaison with residents took place during all site treatment work. Newsletters and treatment notice/information sheets were distributed. The website pages and the Community FireSmart Plan were updated.
Forest fire fuel reduction behind the homes along the north boundary of the reserve. (Thirteen homes)	Mechanical and manual removal of brush, wood and other flammable debris was accomplished. All material was taken off-site. The area was cleared to bare soil, leveled, and hydro seeded.
Reduce wildfire risk through fuel reduction on residential properties identified for this project. (Fifteen Homes)	A tree service contractor undertook brush removal and tree removal and pruning following FireSmart principles.
EMAP Program (22/23)	Complete October 2023
Governance and Administration - The Emergency Management Committee will meet once.	No formal Emergency Management Committee meeting was held.
Update of the Homalco and Orford plans.	August 2023 marked the delivery of the updated all-hazards plan and an expanded territorial response plan. Training plans were developed.
Acquire fireproof filing cabinets.	Un-necessary as these were purchased outside of this project.
Install reflective house numbers to facilitate response agency wayfinding.	Completed throughout the community in August of 2023.
Advance EOC training for the support team.	A suite of courses for the whole team delivered in October 2023 (EOC Essentials, EOC Operations, and EOC Planning).
CCEM Community Capacity 23/24	
Fund an Emergency Program Coordinator.	Successful and complete.
CEPF UBC ESS 23/24 (In conjunction with SRD)	
Acquire additional ESS supplies.	Successful and complete



# Plan November 2023 to March 2025

This plan covers the time period November 2023 to March 2025. This timeframe will return annual reporting and planning to the standard fiscal years.

The following table addresses goals we have set for the period.

<b>2024/2025 Goals</b>
<b>Program Elements</b>
Governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Emergency Management Committee will meet twice.</li> <li>• Obtain Council adoption of the all-hazards plan.</li> </ul>
Member communication on emergency preparedness using Facebook, newsletters, household preparedness planning, training to increase community awareness. Collaborate with housing.
Further develop our relationship with local response agencies including planning for unified command.
Implement the training plan including personal training plans and the all-hazards plan training record.
Update the <i>Homalco All-hazards Emergency Management Plan</i> and the <i>Territorial Response Plan</i> .
Consider establishment of a Homalco Occupational Health and Safety Committee including integration with the emergency program. Integrate staff, response team, OHS team training plans.
Prepare an annual report and renewed annual plan.
<b>Mitigation - FireSmart</b>
Implement FireSmart Emergency Program recommendations (see below).
Implement FireSmart Housing Program recommendations (see below).
<b>Mitigation - Housing and Infrastructure</b>
As a priority, develop a second access and egress route for the community.
Work with Housing and contact Matica at Barclay to mesh home inspections with emergency support.
Review status and supply fire and carbon monoxide detectors in all homes.
Inventory, repair, and improvement to code as required all wood stoves in the community residences.
Open a dialogue with Telus with regard to redundancy in the Homalco Community, including improved cellular service.
Acquire a VHF radio system comprising a base station and hand-held radios for EOC members and work with outside agencies including EMBC for proper authorizations for appropriate frequencies.
Review Orford communications systems and put forward recommendations.
Investigate installation of transfer switch to enable EOC and reception centre to accommodate portable generator power.
Look into emergency power generation for the Administration building and therefore the EOC.
Modify the emergency power generator system at the health centre to power the entire building.
Establish basic EOC facilities in a cupboard in the board room.
Consider the establishment of a free-standing building and compound for emergency program assets and storage.
Work with the SRD to establish their requested regional staging area in the soccer fields, including improving the evacuation route and establishing a helipad.



<b>2024/2025 Goals</b>
Preparedness:
Purchase basic supplies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicable Disease PPE</li> <li>• First aid kits for families</li> <li>• Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AEDs) for administration building and health centre</li> <li>• Level 3 first aid kit in the health centre</li> </ul>
Updated the supplies inventory and implement improved labelling in the seacan and trailer Consider moving the marine spill trailer to Orford.
Further develop the emergency response team (volunteer) program and expand it to include fire and medical response. Train and equip the team.

The following table presents funding opportunities targeted for the 2023 calendar year.

<b>Goals</b>
EOC - UBCM Funding (23/24). Funding secured.
Build and distribute EOC role kits.
Deliver a tabletop exercise.
DRR-CA Climate Adaptation 23/24. Funding secured through SRD.
Understanding and mitigating the risk of overland flooding within our residential community. Identify, assess, and plan for the mitigation of risk associated with increased and unpredictable flows of water in Willow Creek and its tributaries within the bounds of Homalco IR No. 9.
FireSmart Program - UBCM CRI Funding - Application to be completed.
Community Wildfire Resilience Plan for all Homalco Lands.
FireSmart Program - FNESS/ISC Funding - Application to be completed.
FireSmart board meetings (2).
Communication initiatives including website update.
Housing department implementation including non-combustible zone creations.
Orford FireSmart implementation.
Annual FireSmart event.
EMAP/NSMP Program (23/24) - Application to be completed.
The Emergency Management Committee will meet twice.
Internal communication and engagement. Implement video shorts for communication.
Update of the all-hazards and territorial plans and the Community FireSmart plan. Prepare an annual report and renewed annual plan.
Training plan, training, and exercising.
Fire prevention and preparedness capacity building.
Low-value <\$5,000 low maintenance equipment (Small generators, portable pumps and hoses)
Single Side Band radio communication with Orford, generators for both.
EMAP/NSMP Program (24/25) - Application to be completed.
New EPC to make application. Must include funding for the EPC's time as funding for the position past 12 months is not secure at this time.



## **FIRESMART RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EMERGENCY PROGRAM**

The Homalco FireSmart program plays an important part of the Homalco emergency management program, in the area of risk mitigation. FireSmart planning and implementation is undertaken within the framework of the *Homalco All-hazards Emergency Management Plan*.

June 2023 was a significant milestone for our FireSmart projects. We are finished our ongoing projects and now are able to turn our attention to next steps.

The following are recommended programs going forward. They are sorted by area of activity.

### **Communication and Engagement**

- Quarterly update of the emergency program pages on the Homalco website
- Annual update of the FireSmart Community Plan
- Annual representation at the Homalco AGM or Open House
- Host annual or bi-annual FireSmart events
- Continuation of the FireSmart newsletter series
- Constant use of social media channels
- Integration of video shorts into the communication program
- Active engagement of residents during any implementation activities

### **Planning and Assessments**

- Engage with the FireSmart Board semi-annually
- Maintain an active FireSmart Community Champions program
- Undertake administration office, health centre, and radio station FireSmart assessments
- Community Wildfire Resilience Plan (CWRP) for all Homalco lands

### **Implementation**

- Orford Bay FireSmart implementation as per Appendix II of the *Territorial Emergency Response Plan*.
- Work collaboratively with the Housing Department to advance landscape and structural FireSmart principles
- Other implementation following completion of the CWRP



## **FIRESMART RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOUSING**

### **FireSmart Status of Homes**

The homes and buildings of Homalco village exhibit the following general characteristics with regard to elevated wildfire risk:

- Roofs and gutters are not clear of flammable debris;
- Homes do not have non-combustible, fire-rated vents with 3mm screening;
- Homes do not have non-combustible or ignition resistant siding;
- Some homes have broken siding or soffits which can allow entry of embers;
- Homes have combustible material decks, decks with open undersides, and combustibles under the decks;
- Homes have significant amounts of combustible materials within the 10m FireSmart zone including long grass, flammable shrubs and trees, household materials, and/or firewood storage;
- Homes do not have 15cm non-combustible vertical ground-to-siding clearance; and
- Homes do not have treated 1.5m non-combustible zones surrounding the building(s).

### **Recommended Programs and Priorities**

#### ***Priority 1 - Regular and Annual Inspection and Maintenance***

By building FireSmart principles into the annual housing inspection process, Homalco will be able to normalize good practices and reduce the general level of wildfire risk in the community. We suggest for every home an annual fire consultation addressing alarms, extinguishers, chimneys, drier and other vents, gutters, fire safety information, promotion of FireSmart landscaping principles, and the completion of a simplified FireSmart assessment. Building energy efficiency and water conservation into this process would not hurt either.

#### ***Priority 2 - Community Grounds Maintenance***

Regular community grounds maintenance should protect our investment in FireSmart. Areas cleared of blackberries, independent of ownership, should be kept cut down to the ground throughout the growing season to eventually eliminate the berries. Areas seeded should be watered to facilitate the transition to grass. Of particular interest is the north boundary from 1205 Bute to 1275 Bute.

Homalco might consider offering to cut long grass for residents with barriers to doing so themselves.

Community level projects such as gutter cleaning, chimney sweeping, and yard cleanup should be considered to relieve residents of the financial burden.

#### ***Priority 3 - Creation of Non-Combustible Zone***

The lack of non-combustible siding or ground clearance makes it vital to establish the 1.5m non-combustible zone around all homes. This would be a community wide project that if necessary for fiscal reasons could be spread over a few years. Priority would go to 1) homes from around which we have removed blackberries; 2) homes otherwise FireSmart compliant; and 3) homes on the outside circle of the neighbourhood.

Priorities for this work are:

- 1310, 1330 and 1334 Bute Cres.; and
- 1426 Aupe Cres., including skirting the building with non-combustible materials.



***Priority 4 - Building Materials Upgrade***

Use non-combustible decking, siding, soffits, fascia, etc. and fire-resistant vents in all new construction. Upgrade existing homes as they require renovation. Homes that currently have broken siding, soffits, or vents should be upgraded immediately to address the possible entry of embers to the structure.

***Priority 5 - Firewood Shelters***

For homes with wood stoves, consider a program to build firewood shelters located at least 10m from the home.

***Priority 6 - Land Code FireSmart Legislation and Policy***

Develop legislation and policy with regard to FireSmart building and landscaping requirements and care and attention to property including keeping grounds free of combustible materials.

