

Castlegar FireSmart – Wildfire Mitigation Program

Info Sheet

Overview: The City of Castlegar FireSmart: Wildfire Mitigation Program allows homeowners to receive FireSmart assessments free of charge and provides residents with the opportunity to receive rebates covering materials and labour to carry out identified FireSmart actions. This helps reduce wildfire risk to your property and helps protect the community.

Program Purpose: Wildfire is a risk that all British Columbians need to be prepared for. FireSmart is an initiative aimed at reducing the risk of wildfire damage to homes, communities, and forests. It is based on foundational scientific evidence that suggests changes to the built environment are the best and most cost-effective way to increase a home's survivability from wildfire.

Program Funding Source: The FireSmart Community Funding and Supports Program, delivered through the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) Program, is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and funded by the Province of British Columbia.

Timeline: May 1 – October 31, 2026

Recipients: Registered property owners within the City of Castlegar's municipal boundary.

Rebate Value: Min \$500 – Max \$2,500 per property.

Rebate Structure: Cost sharing is 50% of the total cost expended *Example: Spend \$5000 = \$2500.*
The rebate is subject to availability depending on uptake.

Rebate Scope: Materials and labour costs of homeowner and/or contractors.

Eligible Activities: FireSmart actions identified in your fire assessment and pre-approved by a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist.

Process

- Step 1:** Get a Free FireSmart Assessment at FireSmart BC's Online Platform [FireSmart BC](#)
- Step 2:** Build your Action Plan of estimated hours/costs of proposed FireSmart actions
- Step 3:** Execute your Action Plan by completing your FireSmart actions
- Step 4:** Apply for a Rebate by submitting your completed Action Plan with costs and photos

The full program guide outlines each step's requirements and processes. For questions and additional information, please reach out to firesmart@castlegar.ca.

Step 1: Get a Free FireSmart Assessment

Requests are managed on the FireSmart BC online platform: Visit the website at firesmartbcplatform.ca/request-home-inspection or scan the QR Code:



Online request:

- Enter basic information such as your address, phone number, type of residence (single-family, multi-family, etc.) and jurisdiction. Please note that this program is for properties located within the City of Castlegar's municipal boundary only. Select Castlegar as your jurisdiction only if your property is located within City limits. If you are unsure, check your property tax notice before applying.
- Select the type of property, as assessments and rebates are not eligible for vacant land or partially constructed homes.
- This process will automatically notify Castlegar FireSmart, placing your request in priority sequence to receive an assessment between May 1 and October 31.

Scheduling:

- A Wildfire Mitigation Specialist will contact you by email or phone to schedule your FireSmart Assessment.
- You are generally required to be present at the residence to provide access.
- The assessment will be scheduled at a time that works for you.
- The assessment typically takes one hour, depending on the complexity.
- It includes a review of preliminary findings and recommended actions.

FireSmart Assessment:

- Following the assessment, you will receive a custom report from a certified expert with recommendations specific to your property, including actions to help reduce wildfire risk.
- Your Assessment provides recommendations used to develop your Action Plan.
- Information collected through the FireSmart assessment will be used only for the purpose of completing the assessment and supporting related recommendations, and will not be shared or used for any other purpose without consent.

If you have any questions, please reach out to firesmart@castlegar.ca

Step 2: Build your Action Plan

Use the **Step 2: Action Plan/Step 4: Rebate Application** form to outline the FireSmart actions you plan to complete. This plan tells Castlegar FireSmart what work you intend to undertake and includes estimated and quoted costs.

Once submitted, a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist will review your Action Plan to confirm that the proposed actions align with your FireSmart Assessment and that the actions and associated costs are eligible for a potential rebate.

Information to build your Action Plan:

- Review your FireSmart Assessment completed by Wildfire Mitigation Specialist.
- Prioritize actions starting from the home and moving outwards towards the extended zone.
- In the Eligible/Proposed FireSmart Actions column, list the actions recommended in your FireSmart Assessment you plan to complete. Only planned work is eligible. Work already completed (retroactive work) is not eligible.
- Enter the Reference Letter and Number from your FireSmart Assessment for each recommended action.
Example: B)4 refers to "B) Siding Vents and Opening" and "4. Vents Properly Mitigated".
- For each eligible or proposed FireSmart Action, describe exactly what you plan to complete, based on the recommendations of your FireSmart Assessment.
Example: B)4: I am going to buy an ASTM-rated dryer vent and 3 mm screening, hire a local contractor to install the vent, and install screening on all recommended openings myself.
- Descriptions of eligible activities which also can be example wording is included in each section and is identified by italicized sentences.
Example: "Installation of closed eaves and vents with 3 mm (1/8") screening".
- Enter the estimated total materials cost (maximum expected cost).
- Enter the estimated contractor cost (maximum expected or quoted amount).
- If homeowner labour will be used (you, a family member, or a friend), enter the estimated hours and cost. Homeowner labour for landscaping and construction is calculated at **\$32.00 per hour**.
Example: 6 hours = \$192.00
- Leave the **red "Approval Granted"** column blank. This will be completed by a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist after review.
- Leave the **blue "Actual"** columns blank. These will be completed later when you apply for a rebate. This same form is used for the Step 4 to reduce administrative requirements.

Previous Action Plans and Assessments:

- If you have an approved Action Plan (previously called a *Work Plan*) from a previous year with remaining actions, you may continue using it or transfer it to the new Action Plan format.
 - If you plan to continue using your previous Work Plan, please email it to firesmart@castlegar.ca for review and approval.
- If you had a FireSmart Assessment in a previous year, FireSmart Castlegar may not have a copy on file. If required, you will be asked to submit a copy for review.

Submit your completed Word document Action Plan to firesmart@castlegar.ca for review and approval.



Step 3: Execute your Action Plan

Once you have received written confirmation by email from FireSmart@castlegar.ca that your Action Plan was approved, you may begin completing the FireSmart actions identified on your Action Plan.

Information for Carrying out your Action Plan:

- When choosing which approved actions to begin with on your Action Plan, it is recommended that you start with work on or closest to your home and then move outward; however, this is not mandatory.
- It is the homeowner's responsibility to determine whether permits are required and to obtain any necessary permits before starting work.
- Ensure the work you plan to undertake is within your skill level and that you are able to complete safely.
- FireSmart actions may be completed by you, by a contractor, or any combination of both.
- Any products or plants you install or replace must be non-combustible and FireSmart-approved. If you are unsure, [Firesmartbc.ca](http://firesmartbc.ca) is the best source of information. The Resource Library includes guides and manuals on FireSmart landscaping and building materials, including:
[Landscaping Best Practices / FireSmart BC](#)
[Guides & Manuals / FireSmart BC](#)
- Castlegar FireSmart (firesmart@castlegar.ca) and the Wildfire Mitigation Specialists that completed your FireSmart Assessment are additional resources and may be able to provide guidance or physical copies of some of the online guides.

Tracking labour and materials:

- Labour is eligible under the Rebate Application and is often ongoing; it is recommended that you track your hours worked regularly.
- The Action Plan (or a copy of it) is a great tool for recording hours worked.
- Materials used to complete approved actions are eligible for rebates however they must be supported by invoices or receipts.
- Tools are **not** eligible for rebates, nor are any items or activities not identified in your approved Action Plan.
- Actions completed by contractors **MUST** have an invoice, bill of sale or receipt in order to apply for a rebate. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Changes and eligibility reminders:

- Any proposed changes to your approved Action Plan have to be resubmitted for re-approval.
- If costs or newer quotes will exceed the approved amounts in your Action Plan, they must be submitted for re-approval.
- Actions completed before your Action Plan was approved are not eligible (no retroactive work).
- You do not need to complete all actions listed in your Action Plan to apply for a rebate.

*** Only actions that were approved and are fully supported by documentation are eligible for rebates.**

For questions, guidance, modifications or approvals please reach out to firesmart@castlegar.ca



Step 4: Apply for a Rebate

Between May 1 and October 31, you may apply for a rebate if you have completed some or all the actions in your Action Plan.

Rebates for 2026 are a minimum \$500.00 and a maximum of \$2500.00 based on a 50% cost-sharing model. *Example: If you expended \$5000.00 in labour and materials, you may be eligible for \$2500.00.* Funding for the Castlegar FireSmart – Wildfire Mitigation Program is grant-funded and limited annually. Rebates are therefore issued on a first-come first-served basis.

Information for Applying for a Rebate:

- The rebate application must be applied for by the registered property owner.
- The property must be located within the municipal boundary of Castlegar.
- Applications may only be submitted while the program is open (May 1 – October 31).
- Rebate Applications are intended to be submitted in the same year the actions were completed. For example, complete actions in spring or early summer (before wildfire season) and apply for the rebate later that same year before the deadline.
- Only one Rebate Application per property per program season is permitted. Partial applications are not accepted. For example, you can not apply for \$1250.00 in spring and \$1250.00 in fall for work completed in the same year.
- Rebates are issued first come first served basis and funding may be depleted before Oct 31.
- If the rebate funds are depleted before you apply, you **may be eligible to reapply the following year**, if the Wildfire Mitigation Program is offered again which is subject to continued funding. *Example: complete actions in 2026, but funding is exhausted-you may be able to reapply in 2027.*
- If reapplying the following year, you may also continue completing **additional eligible actions** while the program is closed, provided you remain within the program's rebate limit. *Example: Applied for \$1700.00 before Oct 31, 2026, but funds were exhausted. You complete additional actions over the winter and apply for the full \$2500 on May 1, 2027.*
- Carry-over eligibility is limited to **one program year only**.
- If you had to reapply for work completed in a previous year, you remain eligible to complete **new actions** and apply for rebates for the current program year.

Applying for a Rebate:

- Resubmit your **Step 2: Action Plan/Step 4: Rebate Application** form with the blue "Actuals" columns fully completed and signed to verify the information is accurate.
- Actual labour hours, material costs, and contractor costs must not exceed the amounts approved in your Step 2 Action Plan and must not include unapproved actions.
- Submit clear copies of all receipts, invoices, and bill of sales to support your application.
- Submit photo evidence of actions that were completed.
- A Wildfire Mitigation Specialist may revisit or re-assess your property if you request an update, or you have completed all FireSmart actions and are seeking a FireSmart Certificate.

Submit your completed and signed **Step 2: Action Plan/Step 4: Rebate Application** along with all required receipts and photos, to: firesmart@castlegar.ca to apply for a rebate before Oct 31 2026.

