

Municipal Climate Change Sustainability: Wildfire

Adaptations for municipalities focus on reducing the number of wildfires started by human activity, reduce the potential damages on private and public property, and ensure an emergency plan is in place in case of a wildfire.

Education and Communication

- Municipalities should monitor the fire index and have a way to communicate with residences. This could include signs within popular camping sites, which display an up to date fire index and what that means for the area
- During high risk periods (droughts) municipalities should implement fire bans and have an effective way to communicate with residences (radio, app, social media)
- Hold public outreach days on fire suppression awareness

Emergency Plan

- Create a detailed emergency/evacuation plan including members from:
 - School bus/ transportation companies
 - Schools
 - Hospitals
 - Personal care homes
 - Community non-profits (clothing donations, supplies etc.)
 - Media
 - Fire department
 - Police department
 - Neighbouring communities
- Create an emergency preparedness plan which organizes volunteers to help neighbors in the event of an evacuation or encroaching wildfires. In many places this would happen anyways, but vulnerable members of the community may feel more secure knowing there is a plan for someone to help them
- Complete table top disaster exercises with representatives from different organizations in the community and exercises which are open to the public
- Have a communication plan in place

Ways to Reduce Wildfire Damage

- Become a FireSmart community
<https://www.firesmartcanada.ca/>
- Identify the interface priority zones within the community. These are the homes that will be most vulnerable to wildfires. These areas would need to be evacuated first in the event of a fire
- Use FireSmart guidelines to educate public on the best construction materials to use in their homes and plans to reduce the chance of a wildfire damaging and spreading between homes
- Municipalities could require homes to be built with certain fire safety standards in the interface zones
- Provide incentives for new homes built to be fire safe (based on FireSmart technologies)
- Create bylaws based around fuel management within the interface priority zones
- Ensure fire departments have enough equipment to protect houses from an encroaching fire
- Portable pumps and extra long hoses
- Plenty of water sources near interface zones
- Sprinkler system
- Create a fire equipment sharing program between nearby towns to save on costs for extra equipment that may not be used daily (only in the case of a large wildfire)