

TO: UBCM Members

FROM: Mayor Frank Leonard, UBCM President

DATE: July 30, 2004

**RE: COMMUNITY SPRINKLER PROTECTION UNITS**

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The UBCM is pleased to announce that the Community Sprinkler Protection Units, being developed with funding from the Province of British Columbia are now complete, and we are in the process of receiving the units as they arrive in British Columbia.

The official event to unveil the units was originally scheduled for this week, but due to fire activity in the Cariboo Chilcotin the event has been cancelled and two units have since been deployed to the community of Charlotte Lake. We have just been notified that the first unit has already saved a house in the area. The third unit is due to be delivered early next week and will immediately be prepared for potential deployment.

The Community Sprinkler Protection Unit project was announced in April as an integral part of fulfilling the Filmon report recommendations on "Firestorm 2003". Subsequently, the Province allocated funding to UBCM for the development of the units, based on the equipment used in Ontario and Alberta, but customized to maximize protection in situations unique to British Columbia. A Steering Committee comprised of representatives from UBCM, the Ministry of Forests, the Office of the Fire Commissioner, BC Fire Chiefs and Canadian Forestry Service was formed, and three "unique to BC" Community Sprinkler Protection Units were built.

The units are designed to be deployed during an interface fire, to dampen roofs and areas around structures and to prevent sparks or embers from igniting structural fires. The contents of one Sprinkler Protection unit can protect between 30 - 35 homes. Training for the use and deployment of the units is now being carried out, and is available to firefighters from both public and private sectors. A pre-requisite fire training background is required. As these are trailer units they are easily moved anywhere in the province within 12 hours of dispatch.

It should be emphasized that this is considered a pilot program and dispatch will be triggered by Unified Command at the time of an evacuation alert on a highest priority basis. It is hoped that, as others see the successes of such equipment in use, they will be encouraged to purchase similar equipment for their region or community.