

PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY'S ASSETS

Develop a "Structural Protection System"

WHAT IS A STRUCTURAL PROTECTION SYSTEM?

- A configuration of sprinklers, hoses, and other related equipment designed to efficiently protect structures threatened by wildfire in rural and urban interface situations.
- By wetting the structure and area surrounding it, sprinklers serve as an effective barrier to fire spread.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BUY?

- A combination of pumps, hoses and sprinklers. The configuration may vary depending on the size of your community, the resources already available, and budget considerations.
- All component parts are readily available at your local hardware or fire protection store or through the suppliers to your fire department.

WHEN AND WHERE WOULD SPRINKLERS BE DEPLOYED?

- If a wildfire is threatening your community, your fire department or emergency operations centre may decide to use your sprinkler protection as one of the tools to protect the community.
- Key installations for the provision of power, water, or communications may be the first priority for protection.
- Assessments of where the highest property-loss risk may occur will also determine where the equipment will be used.

WHO WILL DEPLOY OUR STRUCTURAL PROTECTION SYSTEM?

- It is recommended that your community fire department be trained to install the sprinkler system.
- Your fire department should also be trained to complete the risk assessment of structures and values in your community when there is a threat from wildfire.
- The contractors currently used to deploy the UBCM-owned units are all fully qualified to provide the training required.

HOW DOES SPRINKLER PROTECTION WORK?

- The system is set up in such a way that it can apply water in sufficient quantities and from sufficient locations to inhibit ignition from an advancing or passing wildfire.
- Depending on the location of the incident, community water systems may be used.
- Communities with limited water supply should include water bladders and pumps in their system.

HOW MANY SPRINKLERS ARE NEEDED TO PROTECT A STRUCTURE?

- It depends on the size of the building, the construction of the building, and the proximity of adjacent forest fuels.
- As a guide, 4 to 8 sprinklers per building and 2 to 4 sprinkler heads per roof are averages that apply to most single family dwellings.

WHICH COMMUNITIES CURRENTLY HAVE THEIR OWN SYSTEMS?

- Port Moody, Penticton and Errington are three communities with differing profiles who have invested at various levels in structural protection using sprinkler units.
- Information on these units can be obtained through the fire departments in those communities.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD WE BE THINKING ABOUT?

- Mutual Aid: Be prepared to share your sprinkler system and have other communities share their sprinkler systems with you.
- Compatibility: Purchase component parts which are compatible with the units that are already in existence.
- Plan for Growth: Start small and grow your system over the years.

HAVE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS BEEN DEPLOYED DURING THE 2006 WILDFIRE SEASON?

- Yes, the UBCM Provincial Structural Protection units were deployed to Tumbler Ridge, Galliano Island and Johnston Lake.
- Unlike community owned units, provincial units will only be deployed on evacuation alert and at the request of the incident commander.

To obtain additional information about sprinkler systems, please contact the Office of the Fire Commissioner by phone at 1-888-988- 9488 or by e-mail at OFC@gov.bc.ca
