



MEMBER RELEASE

Forest Practices Board Releases Urban Interface Report

To: **Mayors and Councils, Chairs and Boards**

From: **UBCM President Harry Nyce**

Date: **February 3, 2010**

Earlier today the Forest Practices Board released “*Managing Forest Fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface*” (attached and available on our website at ubcm.ca). The report commends the work of local governments in developing wildfire protection plans and undertaking fuel management projects. The overall message is that while there is still work to be done, community safety is improving.

The report acknowledges a number of common concerns that have been expressed by local governments, including:

- Jurisdictional responsibility for treating Crown land surrounding affected communities.
- Many communities lack funding and capacity to carry out the work.
- The issue of liability if a community identifies fire risk but doesn't treat it, or if they treat it and a fire happens anyway.
- Reluctance to act because public interest wanes shortly after a bad fire season ends, and because fuel treatment can raise many public issues and concerns.
- Lack of expertise for planning and carrying out this type of work.

The Board also makes a number of recommendations, including the need for local governments to consider fuel mitigation activities when approving development proposals that would increase the interface area of a community.

We encourage you to read the report and share your feedback with UBCM's Executive. You can provide your comments to Marie Crawford in our Secretariat, (mcrawford@ubcm.ca).