

# Issue: 37

March 2018

## Safety Message

Use minimally flammable materials to create a 3-meter buffer around a structure to improve the chances of it surviving a wildfire. This defensible space reduces the likelihood of direct flame contact and decreases the intensity of radiant heat on the structure.

Compliments of PreparedBC



**First Nations' Emergency Services Society**

O F B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A

## First Nations Emergency Services Society of BC

### FNESS Quarterly Responder

#### Community Profile:

The Shuswap Indian Band is a member government of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council and also of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council, and is located in the East Kootenay region of British Columbia. The Shuswap are known as the Kenpesq't people and are one of 17 Bands of the Secwepemc Nation. Its main reserve, the Shuswap Indian Reserve, is located one mile north of Invermere in the Columbia Valley region of the Rocky Mountain Trench on the upper Columbia River, on the other side of the Selkirk Mountains from other Secwepemc bands. The reserve was created when the government of the then-Colony of British Columbia established an Indian Reserve system in the 1860s. Although a member of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council and intermarried with the Ktunaxa bands in the same region, the members of the band are ethnically Secwepemc (Shuswap).

Kinbasket Lake, now the name of the reservoir formed by Mica Dam, was named in 1866 by Walter Moberly in honour of Kinbasket, a chief of the Columbia River Shuswap whom he had employed.

The Shuswap Reserve is separated into two sections making up 1,100 hectares and has approximately 250 band members living in housing developments primarily in the Southern unit of the Reserve.

Shuswap Band has been actively engaged in wildfire mitigation initiatives since 2009. These initiatives involve all components of the Provincial Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) and federally-funded On-Reserve fuel mitigation programs. Most recently, Shuswap has completed a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) update for the reserve and surrounding wildland urban interface that will guide future fuel mitigation projects both on and off the Reserve.

Photo: Shuswap INAC On-Reserve Fuel Treatment 2018



## Fire Services

We have completed one more fiscal year and are ready to start the new one. Our Fire Services Department is proud to have shared many successes with our First Nations communities this past year.

The highlights of 2017-2018 for Fire Services include:

- FNESS Safety Expo 2017 at Vernon, BC: 11 First Nations teams competed at the regional firefighter competition; over 70 firefighters registered for the FNESS Firefighter 2-Day Training.
- Four Youth Boot Camps: 1 at Penticton Indian Band, 1 at Westbank First Nation, 1 at Lil'wat First Nation, and 1 at Xax'lip First Nation, workshop sessions at Gathering Our Voices 2018 (more information below).
- Twenty-two First Nations engaged in the FSA Follow up program.
- Thirty-nine First Nations requested Smoke and CO Alarms through FNESS in 2017-2018, bringing the total of First Nations engaged in this program since 2013 to 166. Since the beginning of the program, 135 First Nations have completed their installations.
- Thirty-five First Nations requested Fire Extinguishers through FNESS in 2017-2018, bringing the total of First Nations engaged in this program since 2016. Since the beginning of the program, 43 First Nations have completed their installations.

Fire Services and Forest Fuel Management participated at Gathering Our Voices Indigenous Youth Leadership Training (GOV) 2018 in Richmond, BC. We provided valuable fire safety information and distributed a description of our programs at the GOV career fair from our booth. Moreover, in partnership with Richmond Fire Rescue (RFR), Fire Services delivered two sessions of the famous Fire Prevention - Be A Firefighter workshop. A total of 36 youth participated in the workshop.



RFR, FNESS Fire Services Participants of Fire Prevention-Be A Firefighter workshop Day 1- Richmond, BC

## Forest Fuel Management

Here are some interesting hyperlinks relating to recent wildfires as well as some interesting news articles on fire prevention initiatives.

### *Current Wildfires*

[B.C. wildfire crews tackle grass fire measuring over 100 hectares east of Kamloops](#)

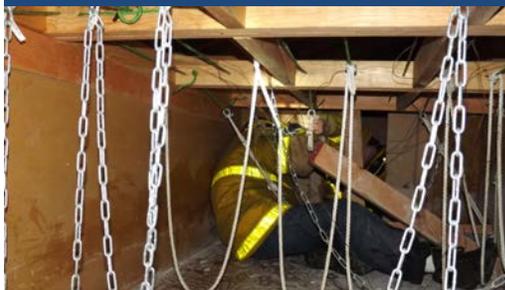
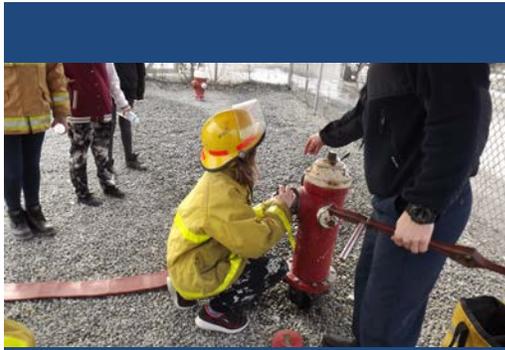
[B.C. wildfire crews called to help extinguish Merritt grass fire](#)

### *Wildfire Prevention & Response*

[Getting ready for fire season](#)

[FireSmart demonstration proves a point](#)

[How will Canada's national public alert system work?](#)



## Contact Us

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## Emergency Management

FNESS continues to build collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities. The current project focuses on communities impacted by wildfires and floods during the summer of 2017. The scope of the project includes, requesting information via questionnaires, and meeting directly with communities to discover their challenges with both emergency response and recovery planning.

### Team Accomplishments

FNESS has targeted 57 communities, with the main focus on 29 high priority communities, that we will support in their process of Emergency Response and Recovery planning. The FNESS emergency management team (EM) has reached out to 57 different First Nations communities by email and/or phone calls. Some of these communities have also had the opportunity to meet face to face with an EM team member.



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