**Wildfire Comms Toolkit** **| Template Community Letter/Email | Ontario**

*Prepared: June 2025*

*Note: please replace the brackets and highlighted content [content] with information specific to your community.*

Dear [NAME] community members,

We are actively monitoring forest fire activity in the [region name] area, approximately [distance] km from our community, with the [provincial/territorial] Forest Fire Service.

We are in close contact with [community name] leadership team and the [regional district name] Regional District, who are responsible for issuing evacuation alerts or orders. ***At this time, no alert or order has been issued for [community name].*** Check out [Ontario Forest Fire Updates](https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires#section-3) and our Facebook page [link] for information.

Everyone has a role to play to help reduce the risk of forest fire in our community, and to be prepared in case the situation changes.

**Be safe**

Due to the proximity of this forest fire, stay indoors if you can, keep doors and windows closed to prevent smoke inhalation, and use air purifiers if you have one.

**Protect your home**

Getting ready for forest fires ahead of time can help keep your family safe. Here are some simple tips to lower the risk of forest fires damage to your home:

* Move firewood, wood piles, and anything that can catch fire at least 10-30 m away from your house.
* Trim trees so there is a 2 m gap between the ground and the lowest branches.
* Clear out any flammable materials from under your stairs.
* Create a 1.5 m zone around your house and deck that doesn't have anything that can catch fire.
* Regularly clean your gutters and roof. Make sure decks and balconies are free of leaves and debris.
* Keep your grass and weeds cut to less than 10 cm.
* Store flammable fuels (like propane, oil, or gas) on a non-combustible surface.

**Be prepared**

If an ***evacuation alert*** is issued, get prepared to leave your home on short notice. Get your [emergency preparedness kit](https://www.ontario.ca/page/be-prepared-emergency#section-2) ready in advance. These bags should include several days of clothing, toiletries, medications, pet food and supplies, your emergency plan, copies of important documents and important mementos. If you have large animals, such as horses or cows, consider removing animals from the area during evacuation stages.

Listen to local emergency officials for further information on the situation. If an **evacuation order** is issued, leave the area immediately.

* Turn off air conditioning
* Turn off your home water and electricity
* Close all doors, garage doors and windows

Follow directions of local emergency officials and evacuate using the route(s) they’ve identified. Do not return home until you’ve been advised that the Evacuation Order has been rescinded. For those needing additional support and information about resources available, visit [Ontario Emergency Management](https://www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-management) for more information.

The Government of Canada’s [Pets and Service Animals](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/plns/ptsndsrvcnmls-en.aspx) webpage also has information on protecting pets and service animals during an emergency.

We will continue to update you through the [community] website and Facebook page [LINK]. We encourage you to stay informed through local news and radio.

Information on forest fire preparedness can be found on the Government of Ontario [Forest fires – safety information page](https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires-safety-information). We encourage you to visit the Government of Canada’s [Get Prepared](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/wldfrs-en.aspx) website on how to protect your home and property from forest fires.

Sincerely,

[Chief or other leader name]

**Resources listed above:**

* **Forest Fires:** https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires#section-3
* **Emergency Preparedness Kit:** <https://www.ontario.ca/page/be-prepared-emergency#section-2>
* **Ontario Emergency Management:** https://www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-management
* **Pets and Service Animals:** [www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/plns/ptsndsrvcnmls-en.aspx](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/plns/ptsndsrvcnmls-en.aspx)
* **Forest Fires – Safety Information:** <https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires-safety-information>
* **Get Prepared:** [www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/wldfrs-en.aspx](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/wldfrs-en.aspx)