

# Public Awareness and Understanding of Wildfires and the FireSmart™ BC Program

In 2023 the BC FireSmart Committee undertook their third annual tracking survey of 1,111 British Columbians to understand awareness levels of wildfires and programs offered by FireSmart BC.

## Issues facing British Columbians today

**92%**

British Columbians believe the issue of wildfires is either an important issue or the most important issue facing BC.

+4% from 2022

## Impact of wildfires



In 2023, four-in-five (83%) British Columbians believe that the frequency, scale, and severity of wildfires in British Columbia have increased, up 17% from 66% who said the same in 2022.

## Perceptions of wildfires and climate change

If we all work together in BC, we can reduce the impact of wildfires on people and property.

**82%**  
Agree

+2% from 2022

**47%**  
Agree

Wildfires are inevitable and are just something we have to come to learn to accept.

-6% from 2022

**68%**  
Agree

Climate change is the primary cause of the increase in wildfire outbreaks.

+5% from 2022

**73%**  
Agree

In terms of frequency and impact, wildfires are going to get worse before they get better.

+10% from 2022

## Who is responsible for mitigating the risks of wildfires?

More British Columbians believe the provincial government has a major responsibility to develop strategies and marshal the resources to mitigate the risks of wildfires in BC than any other group tested.

**83%** (+6%)  
Provincial Government

**73%** (+4%)  
The Forest Industry

**67%** (+12%)  
Federal Government

**51%** (+2%)  
Local Communities

**42%** (no change)  
Regional Groups

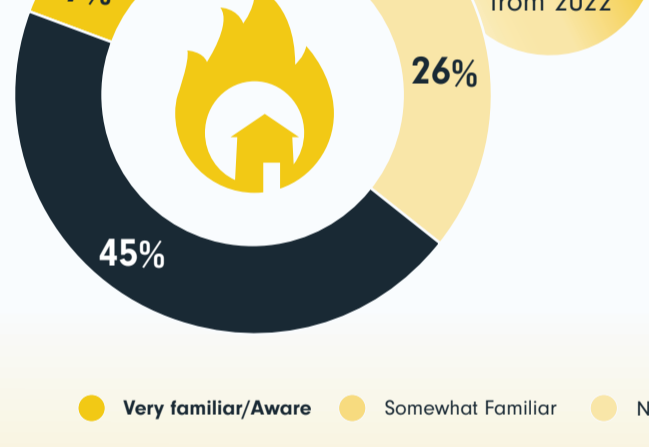
**40%** (+3%)  
Home/Property Owners

**32%** (-1%)  
Indigenous Groups

## Awareness and perceptions of FireSmart BC

Once given a definition of FireSmart BC, the vast majority of British Columbians (88%) believe that it offers value to the province and its citizens.

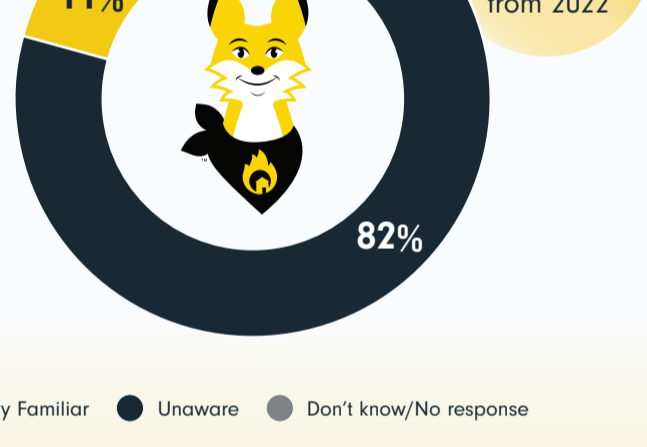
### Awareness of FireSmart BC



+6% overall familiarity from 2022

● Very familiar/Aware ● Somewhat Familiar ● Not Very Familiar ● Unaware ● Don't know/No response

### Aware of Ember



-2% overall familiarity from 2022

## Community preparedness & home protection

**7%**

of British Columbians say they are very confident that their community has the necessary resources to prevent and fight wildfires.

-3% from 2022

A little over half (55%) say they are at least somewhat confident that their community has the necessary resources to prevent and fight wildfires (up 1% from 2022).

**93%**

Nine-in-ten (93%) of those who are very familiar with FireSmart BC say that there is at least a few things that they can do to protect their homes or property from wildfires.

+7% from 2022

This compared with only 41% of those who are not aware of FireSmart BC who say the same.

Just over half (54%) of those who are very familiar with FireSmart BC have already sought out information on how to protect their home or property from wildfires.

**54%**

-6% from 2022

Compared with only 3% of those who are not aware of FireSmart BC.

## The most convincing reasons for people to get involved with FireSmart BC:

The percentages below represent respondents who say each is a very convincing reason to get involved.

**52%**  
Save Lives

**48%**  
Protect Property

**41%**  
Protect Wilderness

**39%**  
Protect Community

**36%**  
Scientific Proof

**37%**  
Insurance Savings

## Significant regional differences



### Familiar with FireSmart BC

**Southeast** ▲ 65%

**Cariboo** ▼ 52%

**Kamloops** ▲ 49%

**Prince George** ▲ 44%

**Northwest** ▼ 40%

**Coastal** ▲ 23%

▲ Increase from 2022 ▼ Decrease from 2022

### FireSmart BC is valuable

▼ 88%

▼ 89%

### At least a few things I can do to protect from wildfire

▼ 70%

▼ 61%

### Recall ad by FireSmart BC

▲ 52%

▲ 47%

▼ 88%

▲ 94%

▼ 67%

▼ 65%

▼ 39%

▼ 35%

▼ 94%

▲ 87%

▼ 62%

▼ 48%

▲ 47%

▲ 21%

All percentage changes noted in this research are based on data collected and tracked from the past survey in 2022.