



REGIONAL DISTRICT NORTH OKANAGAN

MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES:

CITY OF ARMSTRONG

CITY OF ENDERBY

DISTRICT OF COLDSTREAM

VILLAGE OF LUMBY

CITY OF VERNON

TOWNSHIP OF SPALLUMCHEEN

ELECTORAL AREAS:

"B" – SWAN LAKE

"C" – BX DISTRICT

"D" – LUMBY (RURAL)

"E" – CHERRYVILLE

"F" – ENDERBY (RURAL)

Exterior Wildfire Sprinkler Fact Sheet

What do Exterior Wildfire Sprinklers do?

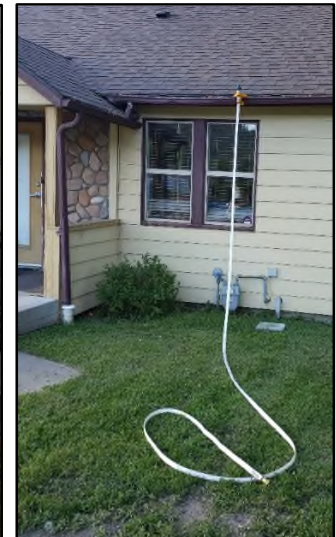
The purpose of Exterior Wildfire Sprinklers (i.e. rooftop sprinklers) is to raise the relative humidity of an area by creating a "humidity bubble" around structures and to dampen the roof and surfaces to extinguish airborne embers created by wildfire. Wildfire sprinklers **MUST NOT** be connected to an RDNO municipal water system and should not be considered an alternative to FireSmart actions to protect your property. Information on FireSmart is available at: <https://firesmartbc.ca/>.

Why can't Exterior Wildfire Sprinklers be connected to the municipal water supply?

Municipal water systems are not designed to support the flows required to operate private community sprinklers during a wildfire event. With too many sprinklers flowing, reservoirs and pipes empty quickly putting **the entire community and firefighters at risk**. It can take up to 24 hours to restore the water in reservoirs that supply hydrants used to fight structure fires. It also wastes water operator time who need to turn off curbstops to properties with active sprinklers so that the reservoirs can be recharged. Therefore, exterior wildfire sprinklers **MUST NOT** be connected to the municipal water supply and irrigation sprinklers **MUST NOT** be left running during an evacuation.

Can I still install an Exterior Wildfire Sprinkler?

Homeowners can still install an Exterior Wildfire Sprinkler(s) which may be used by Structural Protection Crews during a wildfire event, where firefighters will connect the sprinkler hose to a temporary roadside bladder and portable pump system. The flow of all sprinklers installed should be limited to 5 gal/min (0.3l/sec) and connected to one (1) fire rated hose with a ¾" threaded connection that travels down the side of the structure to ground level (see photos). The hose must be easily accessible and identifiable for firefighters to connect to their portable water sources.



Homeowners and Installers should work within the guidelines of the local Fire Department to ensure systems are compatible. These systems use untreated water outside of the municipal system, provide a higher pressure for sprinklers and will continue to run in the event of a power loss as they have backup power. Sprinklers **MUST NOT** be connected to the municipal water supply.

What can I do to prepare for wildfire?

Homeowners are actively encouraged to protect their properties by following www.firesmartbc.ca tools that include [guides](#), [tips](#) and [other resources](#). FireSmart practices are the most effective action residents can take to protect their homes. Wildfire sprinklers should not be considered an alternative to FireSmart actions.

Are there rules pertaining to Wildfire Sprinkler use?

Any wildfire sprinklers found to be connected to the municipal water supply will be subject to bylaw fines to the property owner. The curbside will be turned off at all properties where external wildfire sprinklers or irrigation sprinklers are operating from a municipal source and the property owner fined.

When will Exterior Wildfire Sprinklers be used?

Typically, sprinklers are used AFTER residents have been evacuated and just prior to when a fire arrives to the local area to protect structures from embers catching fire. First responders CANNOT focus on wildfire objectives until the public has been evacuated or secured in a safe zone.

Are there any risks to consider when installing an Exterior Wildfire Sprinkler system?

“High Flow” Exterior Wildfire Sprinklers that saturate areas waste limited water resources and are not more effective. These systems damage homes and structures that may not be covered by a property owners’ insurance. Homeowners are encouraged to speak to their insurance company about coverage as some companies may not cover water damage from rooftop sprinklers. Sprinkler failure can occur from prolonged UV exposure or unmaintained systems.

What can I do prior to evacuation?

It is important to evacuate immediately when notified and follow the instructions of the first responders. Occupants can help first responders by referring to the FireSmart [checklist](#) and:

- Removing all combustibles within 1.5m of structures (furniture, bbq, door mat, flower pots, etc);
- Removing leaves, pine needles and other debris from your roof and gutters;
- Ensuring all doors, windows, storage areas and any openings are closed or covered;
- Placing any roof ladders 1.5m away from structures on lawn and visible from the driveway for potential use by firefighters;
- Outstretching a garden hose on the side of the driveway or center of lawn;
- Leaving a light on to illuminate the property address and access;
- Being aware that firefighters may use pools, ponds and other sources of water you might have on your property;
- Allowing access around the buildings.

