

Stronger Together: Co-Creating Inclusive Community Engagement Strategies

**Wildland Fire Canada
Conference
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Land Acknowledgement

With respect, I acknowledge that I live, work and play on the traditional lands and treaty territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, which includes the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation.

I commit to living in harmony with the traditional peoples of these lands, learning from them, respecting their knowledge, and working towards a just and sustainable future.



Agenda

- Decision-making basics
- Identifying your target audience
- Co-creating solutions
- Power of stories



Emergency Management Strategy for Canada: Toward a Resilient 2030 (Public Safety Canada, 2019)



The Challenge

- Recognizes increasing frequency and severity of disasters across Canada
- Disproportionate impacts of disasters on vulnerable peoples including women, newcomers, those with disabilities, low-income Canadians and Indigenous Peoples

The Solution

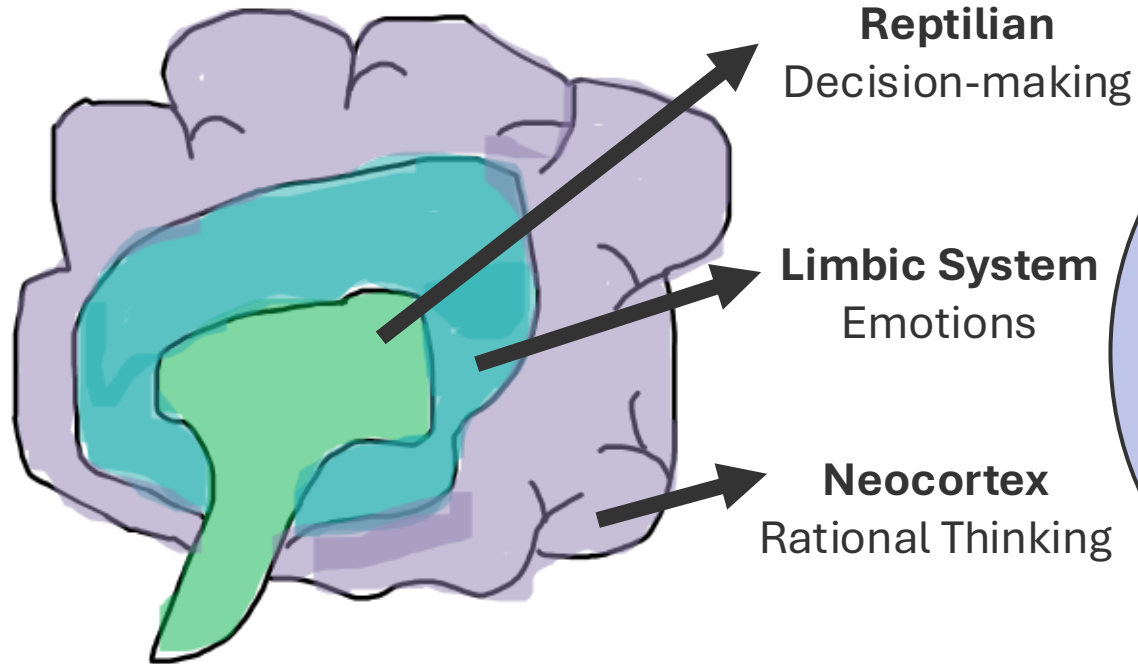
- Need for all segments of society to work together to expand investments in prevention, mitigation and preparedness
- Importance of supporting leadership and research opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- Importance of recognizing the right to data sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous Peoples

The Brain and the Golden Circle

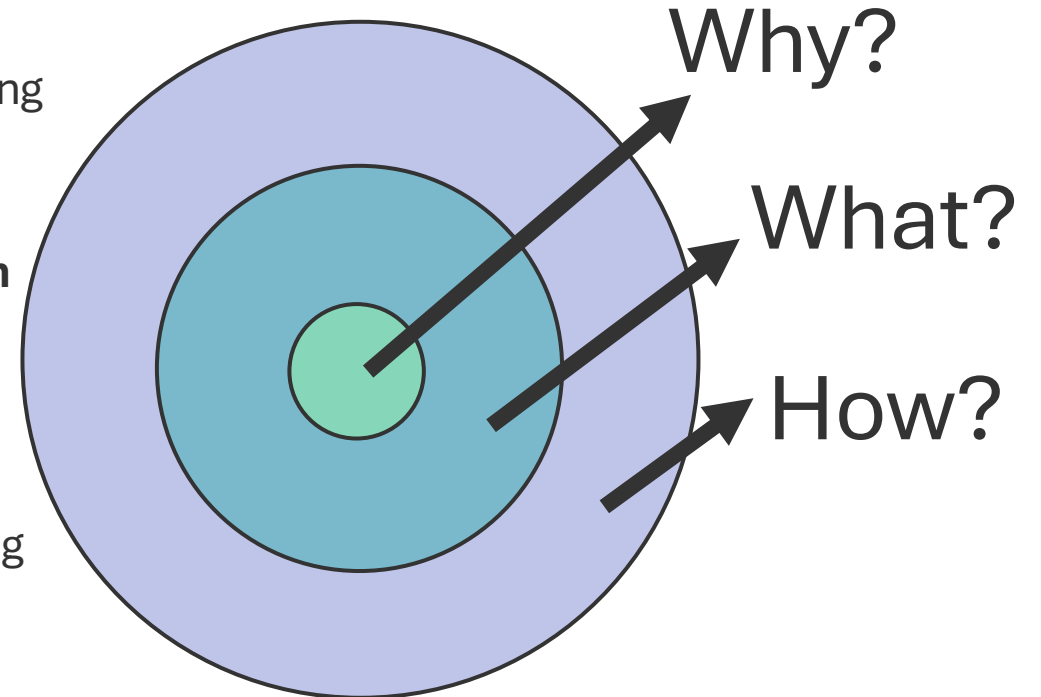
Simon Sinek



The Brain



Golden Circle

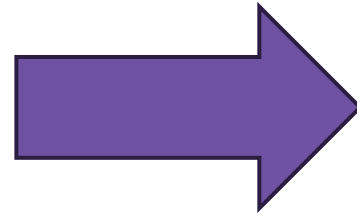


WHY, WHAT, HOW - Stories Inspire Action



Empathy

Easier to empathize with one person than multiple people

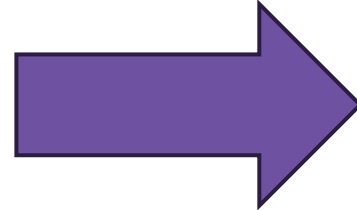


Tell a Personal Story

Have an impacted person share their success story including why, what, how

Imagery

Slow changes are more difficult for people to imagine than sudden changes



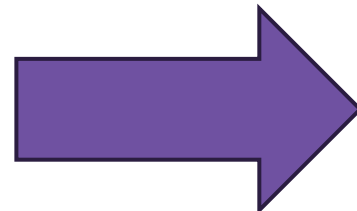
Before and After Pictures

Share before and after images

Numbers

Small numbers easier to understand than large numbers

(Slovic, 1999)



Be Specific

Focus on actions not statistics

WHY – Who Does Your Target Audience Trust?



No Trust = No Action



Adapt Materials for Groups Trusted by Socially Vulnerable Audiences

- Residents (Youth, Adults, Seniors)
- Schools, Day Cares
- Social Agencies
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Faith Leaders
- Cultural Organizations (Pearce & Edwards, 2022)

Tell Us About Your Community!



1. Identify a vulnerable group in your community that you have worked with or would like to work with to address wildfire risk
 - Live in homes high exposure to wildfire damage
 - AND
 - Are socially vulnerable
2. WHY - Who do they trust to provide them with information?

WHAT - The Climate Resilient Home Journey



The Big Picture

- Each resident goes through a series of steps in the climate resilient home journey.
- Each resident is at a different step.
- Residents must be motivated to start their journey and to keep going!
- Residents must overcome barriers at each step to move onto the next step.



HOW – Community Engagement to Support Each Step in the Resilient Home Journey



Trusted Advisors

Personal

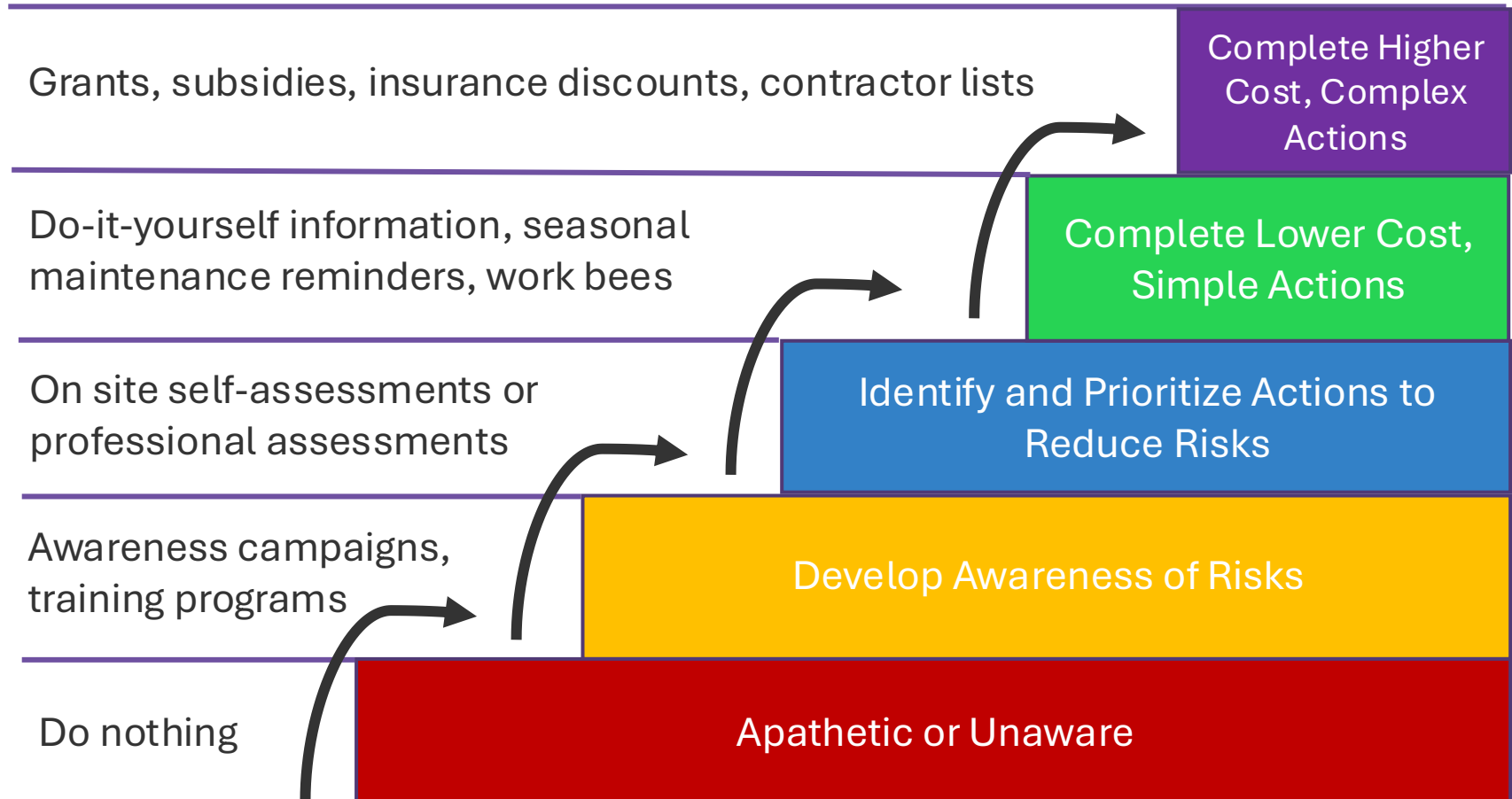
- Family
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Community groups

Professional

- Contractors
- Retailers
- Insurers
- Government
- Media

“Boosts” Required To Move to Next Level

Boosts to Support Progress One Step at a Time



Steps Involved in Progressing from Apathy to Sustained Action

WHY?



Working Together to Protect Our Homes & Families

Understanding your risks WHAT?



The most common times for homes to flood are during spring melts, river breakup, and during heavy summer rainstorms.



Wildfire season in Alberta is March to October. Every community in the Regional Municipality lives with the risk of wildfire damage.

We all have a role to play

We all have a role to play in protecting our homes and families from floods and wildfires.

Whether you rent or own your home a variety of resources are available to help you take practical, cost-effective steps to reduce your risks.

This pamphlet provides you with examples of simple, low-cost actions to help you get started today!

Tenants

As a tenant you can take practical actions to prevent damage to your personal belongings. You can also purchase tenant insurance to replace damaged belongings and cover the cost of emergency accommodations. These costs are not typically covered by landlords.

Property owners

As a property owner you can take practical actions to prevent damage to your lot, buildings, and personal belongings. You can also purchase home insurance, including optional flood coverages (where available), to help repair property damage, replace belongings and cover the cost of emergency accommodations.



Visit the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo website for more details.

(Canadian Red Cross, 2022)

FLOODING



Extend downspouts and sump pump discharge pipes at least 2 metres from the foundation or to the nearest drainage. *(Responsibility of property owner)*



Test the sump pump in the spring and fall. *(Responsibility of property owner)*



Select furniture with water resistant legs and raise electronics off the floor.

(Canadian Red Cross, 2022)

Learn more about home flood protection:

Three Steps to Cost-Effective Home Flood Protection:



Complete a free home flood risk self-assessment:



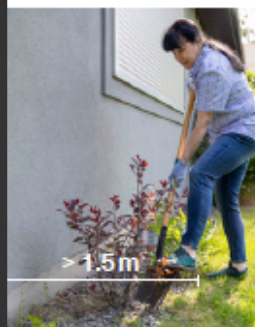
WILDFIRES



Remove items that can easily ignite on, around and under your deck

Learn more about home wildfire protection:

Three Steps to a Cost-Effective FireSmart™ home:



Remove vegetation and groundcover that can easily ignite from within 1.5 metres of your home, i.e. bark mulch, cedars, junipers. *(Responsibility of property owner)*

Download the "FireSmart™ Begins at Home App" to do a self-assessment of your home and property:



Regularly mow your lawn and maintain it at less than 10 cm.

FireSmart, Intelli-feu and other associated Marks are trademarks of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC).

HOW ?



BE READY

- Know the risks in your community
- Make an emergency plan
- Build an emergency kit

INTACT CENTRE
ON CLIMATE ADAPTATION



For more information, visit:
redcross.ca/ready

Tell Us About Your Community!



1. WHY - Would the group that you mentioned answer the door and speak to Canadian Red Cross?
2. If not, who would they prefer to receive information from?
3. HOW - Is the information on the pamphlet useful to them?
 - Language
 - Cost
 - Physical ability
 - Authority

Barriers to Taking Action

- Complex, interrelated and unique to communities
- Vary widely by demographic and individual
- Key barriers
 - Cost
 - Lack of knowledge
 - Lack of time
 - Low risk perception
 - Conflicting information
 - Conflicting values

(Cowan & Kennedy, 2023; Gakavian et al., 2024; Pearce & Edwards, 2022; Wright et al., 2022)



WHY - Adapt Framing to Boost Action



Why it Works

FireSmart Works

- Post wildfire case studies featuring people who benefitted from FireSmart preventative action
 - Home
 - Business
 - Neighbourhood
 - Community

Why it Aligns With Your Values

Home and Landscape Updates

- Primary Focus- Improved beauty, enjoyment, durability, resale value
- Secondary Focus- Wildfire resilience

Protecting Nature

- What did historical fire-adapted landscapes look like in your community?
- How can taking FireSmart action help you restore and protect local nature?

WHAT- Adapt For Your Target Audience



Adapt All Outreach Materials

- First language of target audience
- Plain language materials
- Minimize text
- Feature photos of people who look like the target group taking action
- Simple step-by-step instructions
- Practical checklists

Adapt for Building Type

- Update recommended actions for various housing types
 - Apartment buildings, condominiums

Adapt for Ownership Type

- Property owner, condo owner
- Tenant
- Property manager, condo board
(Wright et al., 2022)

HOW – Adapt For Your Target Audience



Adapt to Engage Seniors

- Make print materials available with easy-to-read font size
- Customize materials for those with mobility concerns
- Add information about how to access updates during power failures

Adapt to Engage Low Income Residents

- Create emergency preparedness checklists featuring highly portable, low-cost items
- Include evacuation information for residents without access to personal vehicles (Wright et al., 2022)

Key Takeaways

- Why, what, how
- Identify your target audience
- Trusted information sources (people and channels)
- Current actions and barriers
- Co-create materials and engagement strategies
- Share stories to support action



Let's Continue the Conversation

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