

FireWise Consulting and Learning Academy
2022 Benefit Corporation Report



FireWise
CONSULTING
LEARNING ACADEMY

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relationships
are key to
building
trust



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A firefighter in full protective gear, including a helmet and a large air tank on their back, stands in a room filled with smoke. The room contains several tables and chairs, suggesting a dining or common area. The lighting is dim, with light coming from windows in the background, creating a hazy atmosphere.

knowledge
that
saves
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Introduction

FireWise Consulting is a leading provider of consulting services and emergency response training for the emergency services sector. Providing access to the knowledge that can save lives is the cornerstone on which FireWise delivers its services. As a value-driven company, FireWise is committed to providing quality information over profits and ensuring that those in the fire service and their governing authorities receive the knowledge and support needed to help them provide a high level of fire protection in their communities or business.

FireWise demonstrates a commitment to environmental and social causes by taking steps to become a certified Benefit Corporation in June 2021. We have been certified by a Benefit Corporation for Good (BCfG) to affirm that we qualify. In the following pages of this report, we will detail what FireWise has achieved for the fiscal year 2021 (March 1-February 28) and our plans to continue improving our performance in 2022.



Figure 1: Planning for safe and resilient communities is at the heart of what FireWise delivers. Safe communities depend on a balanced commitment to people, property, and the environment.

Land Acknowledgement

FireWise respectfully acknowledges that our head office is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people. FireWise also recognizes that we live, work and play on the traditional and ancestral lands of the many First Nation, Inuit and Metis peoples who have been on this land since time immemorial.

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Who We Are

FireWise connects our customers to fire protection, prevention and emergency management knowledge. Our highly skilled team of professionals brings a diverse background of experience and education to focus on the complex challenge of planning, organizing and delivering training and consulting services contributing to safe and sustainable communities. FireWise understands industry practices, legislative requirements and social accountability, supporting our delivery of leading practice, individualized and implementable solutions reflecting our client's needs.

At FireWise, our mission, vision, and values are so much more than words on paper. We understand that lives are on the line, which is why we have dedicated our organization to providing access to *knowledge that saves lives*.

Mission

We are committed to increasing our clients' fire, emergency management, and life-safety capacity through training, consulting, advisory and direct service delivery programs.

Vision

We contribute to safer communities through innovation, knowledge, and education that saves lives.

Values

These values guide all aspects of FireWise activities:

Integrity- We are trusted advisors, applying our experience and knowledge with the highest levels of transparency and honesty.

Innovation- Our solutions are leading practice and science-based, adapted to meet our customers' unique needs.

Sustainability- Our solutions and business practices are socially, economically and environmentally responsible.

Empowering- We build individual, community, and regional capacity that supports informed decision-making processes.

Respectful: We respect all the people with whom we interact or work. We build trust through open, honest, and proactive communications.

Benefit: We encourage and support programs that facilitate sharing experiences and exploration of opportunities, focusing on benefitting our customers and stakeholders.

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Who We Work for

FireWise works for the following stakeholders:

1. Fire service professionals, both career and volunteer/Paid on Call, who are tasked with developing, leadership, and operations of fire and emergency response services in their respective jurisdictions.
2. Federal, provincial, municipal, First Nation, and Inuit elected and appointed officials interested in fire and public safety governance operations.
3. Public safety leaders having a role in developing and delivering fire prevention, public education, and awareness programs in their communities.
4. We work with certification bodies, including ProBoard, ensuring that training programs and materials comply with international standards.
5. Training institutions are strategic partners in delivering certified professional fire service training programs.
6. FireWise is closely related to government entities with accreditation or certification roles in fire protection, prevention, and mitigation programs.
7. Building owners and operators as identified in the National Building and Fire Code and the provincial Codes as adopted by the respective provinces, territories and other governments.
8. Our Internal stakeholders include Directors, Associates, contract personnel, and partner organizations critical to our success.
9. Our suppliers and service providers delivering technical, information technology, and business services are essential to our success.



Figure 2: For FireWise, our people are the heart of the organization.

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Benefit Corporation for Good

FireWise is a Benefit Corporation that puts people, the planet and profit at the forefront of all it does. We have been certified by a third party, Benefit Corporation for Good, to affirm we meet the requirements of a benefit company. In addition to sound business practices, the benefit corporation registration includes a commitment to a positive impact on society, workers and the environment that FireWise has included as part of our articles of incorporation.

We believe in and adhere to socially, economically, and environmentally sound business practices, which results in solutions that are responsive to people and the planet.

We believe in people and approach all issues in a transparent, non-partisan manner that fosters open and respectful dialogue. We do our best to treat all stakeholders fairly while recognizing the socio-demographics found within communities, i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, education levels, income, etc. We build individual, community and regional capacity that supports informed decision-making processes.

We create safer communities by sourcing environmentally safe materials and processes (*The use of technology to reduce travel and harmful environmental practices*).

We believe and practice the sharing of knowledge that delivers fire prevention and awareness which saves lives, protects people and property and protects the environment.

We support community organizations that help people like Muscular Dystrophy, International Red Cross, Honour House, Honour Ranch and more.

We believe in self-care by striving for a proper work-life balance.

We believe in mental wellness and facilitate opportunities to bring fire and emergency response personnel together to share information and experiences on mental health, occupational stress injuries and emerging management strategies.



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A Year in Review

How did We Do?

We did very well. While our first certification review revealed opportunities for growth, it also described a high-performing team delivering on our commitments to people, the planet and profit. Words used to describe our company included customer-driven, servant leaders and value-driven. We are proud of our first recertification and inspired to build on this initial success!



Educating Our Communities

Through our consulting service solutions, FireWise provides a comprehensive suite of fire safety and consulting services to governments, first nations, fire departments, the legal community and private industry. This year, FireWise has provided expert consulting services to more than 15 jurisdictions across Canada, including municipalities and First Nations. Our services ranged from fire protection reviews in Sturgeon and Lac Ste Anne Counties to inspection services in Zeballos and emergency management planning in the Nuchatlaht First Nation. All of these projects are focussed on developing community capacity through knowledge sharing.

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Educating Our People

Preparing our students with courses is what we do. FireWise looks to increase the skills of those in the fire service industry, and in doing so, we keep our communities and our people safe. This year, we have serviced over 329 students to further their education.



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Reducing Our Environmental Impact

In our pursuit to become a more environmentally sustainable organization, FireWise is determined to lead the industry to new and innovative training solutions. While most of our training is delivered in an online format, we currently offer in-person practicums, including live-fire burns. FireWise strives to be at the forefront of our industry and is currently working towards moving these live-fire burns to be delivered in an online format through the use of Virtual Reality (VR) technologies.



Figure 3: We understand the essential requirement to protect our environment from damage and destruction. FireWise is working hard to reduce the impacts of our business through innovation!

Fostering an Industry of Collaboration

Our guiding principles include working collaboratively with other organizations that share our values. We look to be a place of education and provide many free resources to individuals and organizations to foster industry-wide growth. We continue to deliver FireWatch, our free monthly e-Newsletter, to share global stories and broaden our perspective as an industry.



Figure 4: Community safety is a team sport. We all need to work together!

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Key Metrics

Providing data points meeting third-party standards regarding people, planet and profit

Giving Back- Charitable Donations

Having a positive global impact and investing in change for the greater good has always been at the forefront of FireWise's operations. This year, we have dedicated our resources to the following causes:

December 3, 2021 - FireWise donated \$500 to the British Columbia Floods & Extreme Weather Appeal. At the time, the federal and provincial governments matched all eligible donations.

March 8, 2022 - FireWise donated \$500 to the Red Cross Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal. At the time, the Canadian government was matching all eligible donations.



Figure 5: FireWise has a well developed social media capability that we use to amplify voices that need to be heard. In this case drawing attention to the opportunity to support Ukraine and the Government of Canada's matching funds.

Firewise is committed to supporting industry associations like the Canadian, British Columbia and Alberta Fire Chiefs Associations. Our support includes membership fees, supporting educational conferences and providing no-cost presentations. Industry associations are essential to our core business stakeholders in terms of networking, professional development and lobbying for a safer industry, and we are proud to contribute to their efforts.

FireWise is establishing a dedicated target for donations for the 2022-23 operating year to ensure we meet our community and social program commitments. Our priorities are driven by collaboration with our staff and reflect the interests of our stakeholder groups. Indigenous language support will be one of the key focuses of our donations,

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recognizing the importance of language and culture for strong communities and meaningful reconciliation.

Promise to the Planet- Virtual Business Model

FireWise has capitalized on the challenges of running a business through Covid to invest heavily in our digital presence, from social media and websites to developing our expertise in remote communications systems. Our website and social media feeds provide access to information and link to stakeholders. FireWise invested in an integrated software system that links project management, communications, and resource sharing to digitally link staff, customers and other stakeholders. Technology improves our business processes, expands opportunities for face-to-face meetings, reduces costs and time and reduces the carbon footprint of our business operations.

An additional benefit of a decentralized workspace is the opportunity for staff and associates to balance their FireWise participation with family and life effectively. We are proud of our commitment to the team to make FireWise an enjoyable workplace!

Our online delivery of training programs is an extension of the commitment we have made internally. Most jurisdictions cannot afford to send staff across the country to attend bricks-and-mortar training. Online, augmented, and virtual reality programming allows students worldwide to access our leading practice fire inspection and investigation courses from the comfort and safety of their homes or offices. Members don't have to leave home, take holidays or find childcare to update their skills. Learning partners like the **College of the Rockies** are critical to this effort, making online practicums and certification evaluations a reality for our NFPA 1031 program!

Promise to the Planet- Virtual Reality Training

FireWise has been working on building products that will reduce the need for live-fire training burns for entry-level fire investigators. Our approach capitalizes on using virtual reality to simulate those burns in a realistic learning environment. FireWise is working with the College of the Rockies and employers to evaluate practicum opportunities to ensure prospective fire investigators get the necessary practical experience they need to do their jobs.

Through our dedication to improving our practices and lessening our impact on the environment, FireWise has worked tirelessly to be at the forefront of our industry in building a product using Virtual Reality (VR) equipment. In using this new technology in our training, our students will be able to receive the necessary training needed while alleviating the need for live fires. This training approach has global appeal and will contribute to reduced carbon emissions and enhance capacity building beyond Canadian borders.

While the course is not yet complete for students to participate in, FireWise has an estimated launch date in late 2022.

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Knowledge That Saves Lives- Consulting Solutions

One of our core purposes is to help local authorities build capacity through consulting and advisory services. We have worked in over 22 jurisdictions across British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario this year. Our projects reflect the breadth of fire and emergency management administration and operations, from fire service reviews and master planning to fire station assessments, training, inspections and community engagement.

While all of our projects are important, the following represent the scope of our services:

- Villages of Silverton, Slocan and New Denver fire inspections and compliance support
- District of North Cowichan had us develop a plan to create an innovative approach to fire inspections and compliance programs
- Sturgeon and Lac Ste Anne Counties in Alberta had us review their fire protection systems to help inform Council and plan for the future
- District of Tumbler Ridge had us develop a fire protection master plan that sets up plans to meet the challenges of a remote community delivering fire and emergency response services.
- The District of Chetwynd and the City of Fernie engaged FireWise to do an operational and functional assessment of their fire stations and work on the development of new facilities
- The Cowichan Valley Regional District hired FireWise to perform wildfire risk assessments on their critical infrastructure facilities.
- Before retiring at the end of 2021, our founding member Glen Sanders hosted a regular forum for executive Chief Fire Officers to meet to discuss and compare issues their departments are experiencing.

Online Fire Safety Training

Informed by decades of fieldwork, our online fire safety training programs use our combined behind-the-scenes experience to share our knowledge in an easy-to-navigate platform. We believe the training we provide at FireWise prepares students for future roles in the fire safety industry. This year, we have provided over 329 students with the ability to further their education and gain confidence in their abilities to perform their future roles.

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FireWatch

Continuing to foster an industry built on sharing knowledge and growth is one of the essential purposes that FireWise stands for. FireWise sends out a monthly eNewsletter on the first Tuesday of each month, which includes essential industry news across the globe. FireWise has provided this service for over seven years and has about 1450 monthly subscribers. FireWatch is a powerful collaborative tool that FireWise provides to encourage knowledge sharing across all of our stakeholder groups. FireWatch served as the genesis of several problem solving working groups facilitated by FireWise like the Covid-19 Interprovincial collaboration group that brought Fire professionals from across Canada together to share best practices through the early and middle phases of the pandemic.



Figure 6: The path to the future starts with our past. FireWise recognizes the importance of respecting history and culture, but not to be constrained by it.

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Coming Year

Charitable donations

FireWise supports our communities locally and globally. We believe in giving back, which is why we continue to donate to communities, charities, and causes that need our support locally and internationally. FireWise has committed to dedicating a percentage of our profits to supporting charitable causes that are important to our stakeholders and us.

Diversity

FireWise is committed to diversity in all of its forms. We continue to develop our programs and deliverables to reflect the rich diversity of our communities through images and language that are both respectful and inclusive. We are committed to ongoing team diversity training that will help us build on our already strong personal and professional commitments to respectful relationships.

Sharing Our Knowledge

Our commitment to sharing our knowledge will continue to gain momentum in the upcoming year. We are committed to delivering leading practice training and consulting solutions. We continuously update our courses and practices to ensure that we offer our learning partners the highest quality training materials and up-to-date solutions for our consulting clients.

Promise to the Planet

Being a certified Benefit Corporation means continuing to evolve and adjust our policies and procedures. In the coming year, we will continue to take steps toward becoming a more environmentally sustainable organization. We look to have our VR Fire Investigator training live by the end of 2022.

FireWise will continue to dedicate its focus to providing our courses in an online format and meet virtually whenever possible to minimize our carbon footprint.

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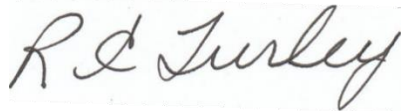
In Closing

This past year has been one of changes for FireWise, driven by a combination of internal and external factors. One of our founding members retired in late 2021, Covid-19 is still driving business delivery and priorities, and FireWise's international footprint continues to expand. Despite this, and perhaps because of this, FireWise has renewed its commitment and dedication to the triple bottom line. The fundamentals of focussing on people, the planet and profit demonstrate our commitment to growth as a company through our consulting solutions and improvements to our online training and our long-term success.

Our objectives always focus on leaving things better than when we started. That drives us, whether it is the improved capacity resulting from a fire services master plan, enhanced working conditions for FireWise staff, or a reduced carbon footprint related to our products. We are committed to improving and making meaningful steps to reduce our environmental impact and deliver products and services meant to build people up. Firewise has proven this through our commitment to using technology and partnerships to enhance the experience, making our products more relevant and accessible and keeping our eye on business practices of honesty, integrity and fairness.

We encourage others in our industry to follow suit as we continue to evolve. We look to continue to reflect on our growth through the tangible evidence of the benefits we provide as an organization to our industry and the planet and to continue to set the standards, push boundaries, and be leaders in our industry.

Respectfully,



Bob Turley



Ernie Polsom