



Bush Fire Safety Plan



lee
william campbell
foundation

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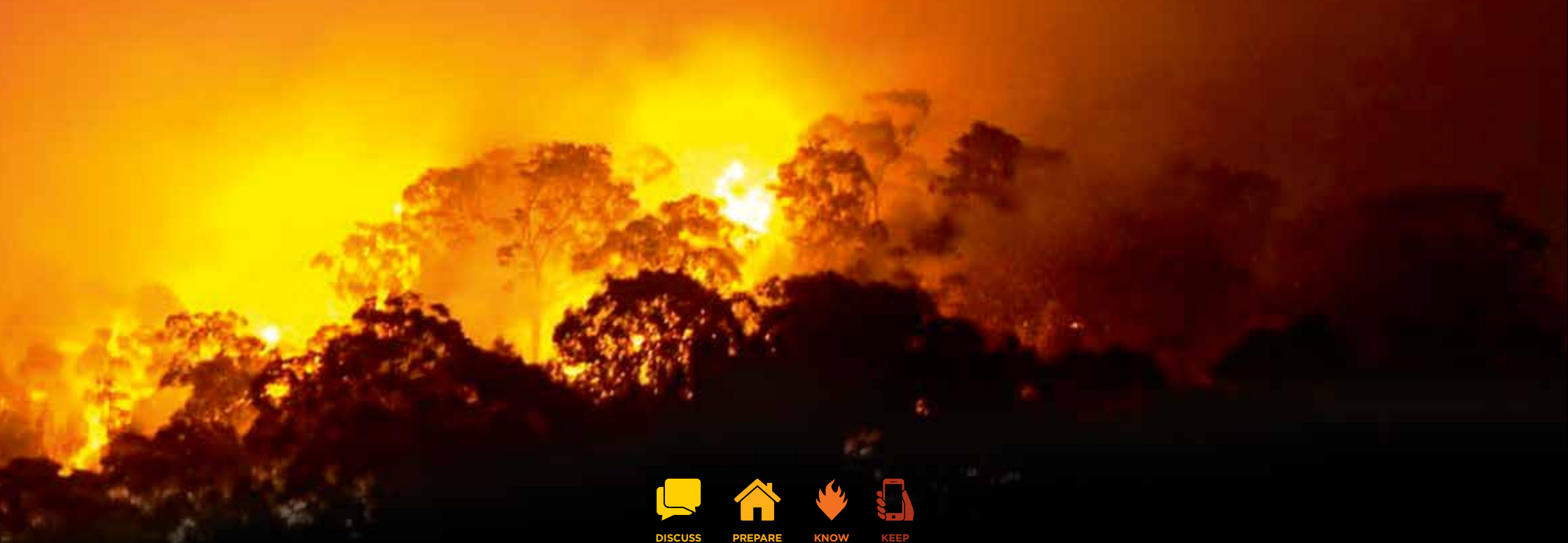
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DISCUSS



PREPARE



KNOW



KEEP

GET READY FOR A BUSH FIRE

FOUR SIMPLE STEPS TO MAKING YOUR BUSH FIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

Getting ready for a bush fire is easier than you think. By taking 20 minutes with your family to discuss what you'll do during a fire, you could save their lives, as well as your home.

PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



STEP 1: DISCUSS **WHAT WILL YOU DO IN A BUSH FIRE?** **PLAN NOW.**

Get the whole household together and discuss your plan.
This fold out takes you step-by-step through the process.



LEAVING EARLY OR PREPARING TO STAY?

One of the most important things to do before a bush fire is to decide what you'll do if one should start. This guide can help you make that decision, and assist you with the steps in preparing yourself, your home and your family. Once you've had the discussion and made a decision, get your family to sign this document.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

LEAVE EARLY, YOUR SAFEST CHOICE.

When will we leave?

What will be your sign to leave? It could be smoke in your area, or as soon as you find out there's a fire near you.



Where will we go?

Where's a meeting place that's safe and away from a fire area? It might be a friend or relative's place, or even a shopping centre.



How will we get there?

What road will you take? What's your backup plan in case the road is blocked?



What will we take?

Make a list of what you'll take in the event of a fire. Remember to include pets, identification and irreplaceable items like photos or documents.



Who will we call to tell that we're leaving and that we have arrived safely?

Who will we call to let them know we're leaving and that we've got there safely?



What is our backup plan?

What if things don't go to plan? Identify a safer location nearby such as a neighbour's home that is well prepared, or a place of last resort. Is there a Neighbourhood Safer Place nearby?

Neighbourhood Safe Places are a place of last resort, such as a sports ground or local building that has been specially identified for use during a fire.

Not all areas will have a Neighbourhood Safer Place so check www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/nsp for locations.

DECIDE TO STAY. ONLY IF YOU'RE WELL PREPARED.

Before you start, ask your household:

- Is your home well prepared to make it as safe as possible during a fire?
Check the Step 2 property protection checklists.
- Are we putting anyone in our family at risk by staying?
For example children, the elderly, or people with asthma.
- Will we cope in an emergency situation? In a fire, it will be hot, smoky and physically draining. Even trained firefighters can find it challenging.

If you're not sure or aren't prepared, you should leave early.

Do we have all the equipment we need?

Go through all the items on the Decide to Stay checklist and see what's missing. Make a commitment to get all equipment by a specific date.

When there is a fire, what is our sign to start defending our home?

It could be as soon as you find out there's a fire near you. Do not wait for an official warning.

Do we know what to do BEFORE, DURING and AFTER a fire?

Study the Decide to Stay action checklist.

Do all members of our household KNOW WHAT TO DO in all situations?

Give specific roles to each person.

What is our backup plan?

Consider unexpected events such as if one of us is home alone, if we aren't home, if the fire moves faster than expected or if the phone lines and electricity are down.

It's not safe to stay with your property under some circumstances, like:

- If the fire danger rating is Catastrophic.
- There is an Extreme fire danger rating and your home is not specially designed or constructed for bush fires.
- Your property is not well maintained.
- You or the people in your home aren't mentally and physically fit and ready.

Under these circumstances, you should leave early.

Remember that bush and grass fires can move quickly and catch you off guard.

If you are caught in a fire, protect yourself from the heat.

The safest option is to leave early before the fire reaches you.

We have discussed and agreed with the entire household we will:

☐ Leave early

☐ Decide to stay

Signed: _____



DECIDE TO STAY, BUT BE PREPARED EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Defending your home from a bush fire can be challenging and you will need the right equipment.

Check off all the equipment you will need in a bush fire emergency.

Remember, while firefighters and emergency services will do everything they can to help you, there's no guarantee that there will be a fire truck available when you need it. If you decide to stay with your property, it's your responsibility to be prepared.

☒ **FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT WE WILL NEED:**

- ☐ A hose, or hoses, that can reach all around the house
- ☐ Water supply of at least 10,000L e.g. water tank, dam, pool
- ☐ Petrol/diesel water pump and fuel in a safe, accessible place
- ☐ Ladders to access inside the roof
- ☐ Buckets and mops
- ☐ Shovels and metal rakes

☒ **PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

- ☐ Wide-brimmed hat
- ☐ Eye protection goggles
- ☐ Moistened facemask or cloth
- ☐ Loose, long sleeved cotton shirt
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Long cotton pants/jeans
- ☐ Sturdy leather shoes or boots

We will make sure that we have all the equipment we need by:

/ /



If you have not ticked off all of the items above you are not prepared to tackle a major fire.





DECIDE TO STAY, BUT BE PREPARED ACTION CHECKLIST

Defending your home can be physically and mentally demanding. It's important that everyone knows exactly what to do if a fire happens.

BEFORE (well before the fire has arrived)

☒ OUTSIDE:

- ☐ Turn off gas mains and/or bottle
- ☐ Move flammable items away from the house
- ☐ Block drain pipes with socks full of sand and fill gutters with water. Don't get on the roof to hose it down
- ☐ Move animals to a well-grazed or ploughed area away from the house and wind
- ☐ Patrol the house well before the fire arrives to put out embers and spot fires
- ☐ As the fire approaches, wet the side of the house and garden that faces the fire
- ☐ Move your firefighting equipment to a place where it won't burn inside

☒ INSIDE:

- ☐ Close doors, windows and vents
- ☐ Fill baths, sinks, buckets and bins with water
- ☐ Confine pets to one room
- ☐ Place ladder next to roof access hole so you can check for spot fires
- ☐ Soak towels and rugs and lay them across external doorways
- ☐ Move furniture away from windows

DURING (as the fire is upon you)

- ☐ If flames are on top of you or the heat become unbearable move inside until the fire front has passed (usually 5-10 minutes)
- ☐ Patrol the inside of the house, including roof space, looking for sparks and embers
- ☐ Shelter in a room on the opposite side of the house from the approaching fire and ensure you have clear access to an exit

AFTER (immediately after the fire has passed)

- ☐ Check the house both inside and out for fires, including roof cavity, under the house, deck, stairs, windowsills etc
- ☐ If possible, and safe to do so, check all your neighbours are OK
- ☐ Contact relatives or friends to tell them you are safe
- ☐ Patrol your home for several hours, looking for small fires and burning embers



Drink lots of water throughout so that you don't dehydrate.



STEP 2: PREPARE YOUR HOME AND GET READY

THE TOP 5 ACTIONS TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER



STEP 2: PREPARE YOUR HOME AND GET READY

THE TOP 5 ACTIONS TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

There are some simple things you can do around your home to prepare it for a bush fire. You need to prepare well beforehand as leaving it to the last minute is too late.

Here are five simple things you can do before and during the bush fire season.



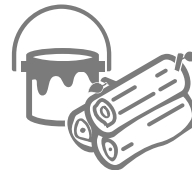
1. TRIM

Trim overhanging trees and shrubs. This can stop the fire spreading to your home.



2. MOW

Mow grass and remove the cuttings. Have a cleared area around your home.



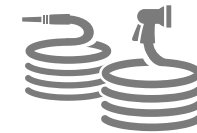
3. REMOVE

Remove material that can burn around your home (e.g. Door mats, wood piles, mulch, leaves, paint, outdoor furniture).



4. CLEAR

Clear and remove all the debris and leaves from the gutters surrounding your home. Burning embers can set your home on fire.



5. PREPARE

Prepare a sturdy hose or hoses that will reach all around your home. Make sure you've got a reliable source of water.



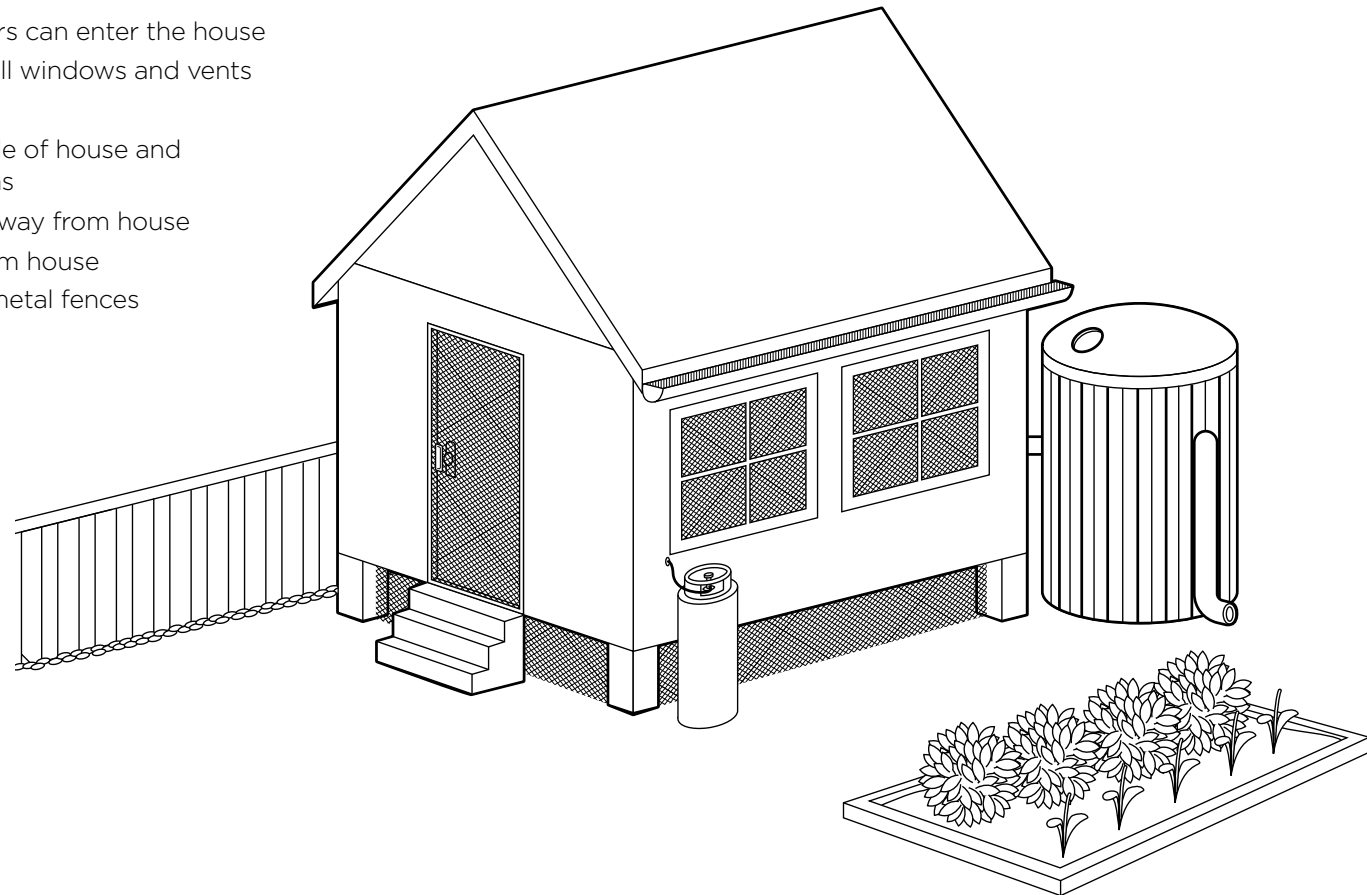
Join others in your neighbourhood in completing these Top 5 Actions to protect your home.



MORE PERMANENT PROTECTION FOR YOUR HOME

☒ **Tick as you complete**

- ☐ Block up areas where embers can enter the house
- ☐ Install metal fly screens on all windows and vents
- ☐ Install metal gutter guards
- ☐ Position gas cylinders on side of house and away from trees and gardens
- ☐ Direct any pressure valves away from house
- ☐ Move garden beds away from house
- ☐ Replace wood fences with metal fences
- ☐ Use stones instead of mulch



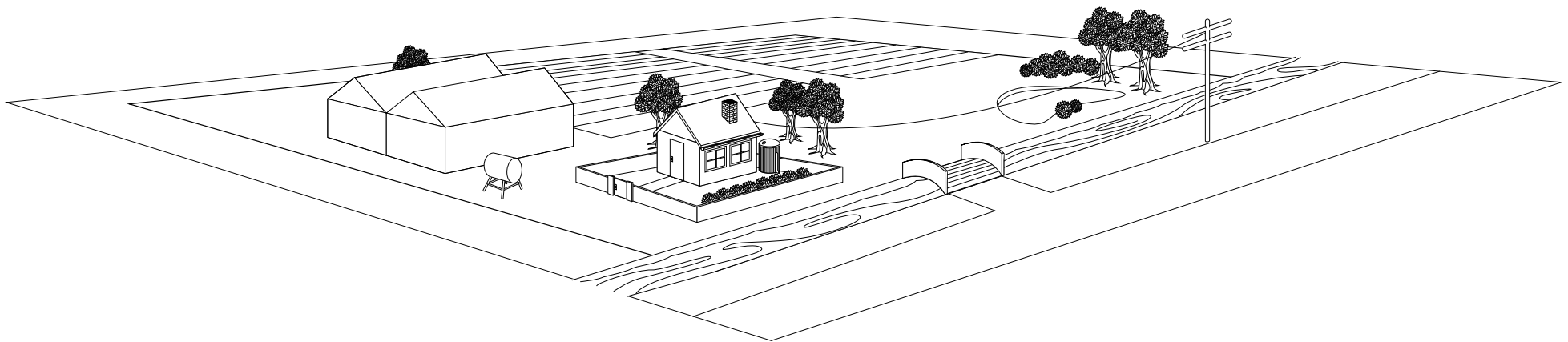
If you **live on a rural property** there are additional tasks to prepare your home on the next page.
If you don't live on a rural property turn to Step 3 so you can learn the bush fire alert levels.



PREPARE YOUR RURAL PROPERTY

☒ Tick as you complete

- ☐ Remove overhanging branches from power lines
- ☐ Ensure that a fire tanker can access your property
- ☐ Clear fire breaks along paddock boundaries
- ☐ Store petrol, diesel and gas away from home
- ☐ Keep a well-maintained area around the home and sheds
- ☐ Place water pipes from dams underground and install pump to the house
- ☐ Make sure hoses have spray nozzles
- ☐ Keep water tanks full and connect them to pumps



A cleared area around your home can slow a fire spreading and give firefighters a safe area to work.



STEP 3: KNOW THE BUSH FIRE ALERT LEVELS

If there is a fire in your area you will find its alert level on the NSW RFS website, on the radio and in the 'Fires Near Me' app.

You need to keep track of the alert level so you know what you should do.



ADVICE

A fire has started.
There is no immediate danger.
Stay up to date in case
the situation changes.



WATCH AND ACT

There is a heightened level of threat.
Conditions are changing and you
need to start taking action to protect
you and your family.



EMERGENCY WARNING

An Emergency Warning is the highest level
of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger
and need to take action immediately.
Any delay now puts your life at risk.

STEP 3: KNOW THE BUSH FIRE ALERT LEVELS

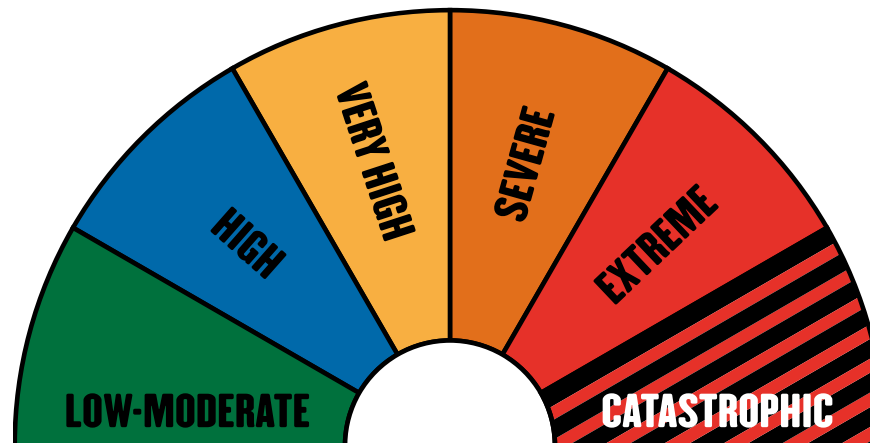
FIRE DANGER RATINGS

Before a fire even starts, monitor the Fire Danger Ratings daily at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fdr. The higher the fire danger rating, the more dangerous a fire is likely to be. Under catastrophic conditions leaving early is the only safe option.

When it's **SEVERE** you should only stay if your home is well prepared and you're ready to defend it.

At **EXTREME**, only stay if your home is prepared to the very highest level and is specially built to survive a bush fire.

CATASTROPHIC is as bad as it gets – no homes are built to withstand a fire in these conditions. Leaving early is your only safe option.





STEP 4: KEEP KEY INFORMATION

In a bush fire, it's important that you stay up to date on conditions in your area. The NSW Rural Fire Service strongly advises saving these numbers, links and apps now.



In an emergency call
Triple Zero (000)
For information on bush fire,
call the Bush Fire Information Line
1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)



NSW Rural Fire
Service Website:
rfs.nsw.gov.au
Fire Danger Ratings:
rfs.nsw.gov.au/fdr



'Fires Near Me'
Free smartphone app.



Local radio,
local ABC/emergency
broadcaster frequency,
TV, newspapers



facebook.com/nswrfs
twitter.com/nswrfs



During a bush fire, you could lose power and telecommunications.
Do not rely on just one source of information.





It's a fact. If you and your home are well prepared, you stand a better chance of surviving a bush fire. Join with everyone else in ensuring that your home and family are protected by following the Four Simple Steps to getting ready for a bush fire.

#MyFirePlan

NSW Rural Fire Service

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



Bush Fire Survival Plan

WHAT WILL YOU DO TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE?

**The more prepared you are
for a bush fire, the better your
chances of survival**

- ☐ The middle of a bush fire is no time to start thinking about what you should do. Having a Bush Fire Survival Plan will help you avoid making last minute decisions that could be deadly.
- ☐ Your Bush Fire Survival Plan outlines what you need to do to prepare yourself, your family, your pets and what actions each member of your family will need to do to be safe.
- ☐ Everyone's Bush Fire Survival Plan will be different - the important thing is that it works for you and your family.
- ☐ A good plan will consider the different situations you may be faced with and what you will do if things go wrong. In a bush fire, the situation can change quickly and your plan should cover this.
- ☐ Make sure everyone in your family knows and understands your Bush Fire Survival Plan. Practice it regularly and keep it where you can find it.
- ☐ Download your Bush Fire Survival Plan today at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au and for more information please call 1800 NSW RFS.

There are many benefits to completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan. Completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan will help you to...

- ☐ Make an informed decision on whether you will leave early or stay and defend your property.
- ☐ Understand your level of risk. Knowing your level of risk means you will be able to make the safest decision for you and your family.
- ☐ Prepare your property. A well prepared property is more likely to survive a bush fire even if you leave early.
- ☐ Prepare a back up plan. Sometimes, no matter how well prepared you are, things don't go to plan. That's why, whether you plan to leave early or stay and defend, you need a back up plan.
- ☐ Check that you have adequate insurance to cover your property from damage from a bush fire.
- ☐ Act quickly. Some fires start and spread so quickly that there is no time for any waiting at all.
- ☐ Have a trigger to put your Bush Fire Survival Plan into action with little warning. Hesitating or adopting a 'wait and see' approach could have deadly consequences for you and your family.
- ☐ Ensure that you have thought about care options for your animals.
- ☐ PREPARE.ACT.SURVIVE.

**YOUR BUSH FIRE
SURVIVAL PLAN**
*will help provide protection
for you, your family and
your pets.*



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737





Bush Fire and Your Home

PREPARE YOUR HOME AND PROPERTY FOR BUSH FIRES

These maintenance tips may help prevent burning embers destroying your house:

- ☐ Install metal gutter guards
- ☐ Repair damaged or missing tiles on the roof
- ☐ Install fine metal mesh screens on windows and doors
- ☐ Fit seals around doors and windows to eliminate gaps
- ☐ Enclose the areas under the house
- ☐ Repair or cover gaps in external walls
- ☐ Attach a fire sprinkler system to gutters

Things to do around your house and garden:

- ☐ keep lawns short and gardens well maintained
- ☐ cut back trees and shrubs overhanging buildings
- ☐ clean up fallen leaves, twigs and debris around the property
- ☐ have hoses long enough to reach around your house
- ☐ if you have a pool, tank or dam, put a Static Water Supply (SWS) sign on your property entrance
- ☐ check that your insurance is adequate and up to date
- ☐ complete your Bush Fire Survival Plan available at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

DID YOU KNOW
Not all homes can be defended - your safety is always the first priority.



In a bush fire many houses are destroyed through ember attack, when burning twigs and leaves carried by the wind land on or around the house. Even houses away from the direct path of the fire can be affected.

Look for the places embers could start fires - on the roof, under the floor and around windows and doors – and take action to prevent them.

PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



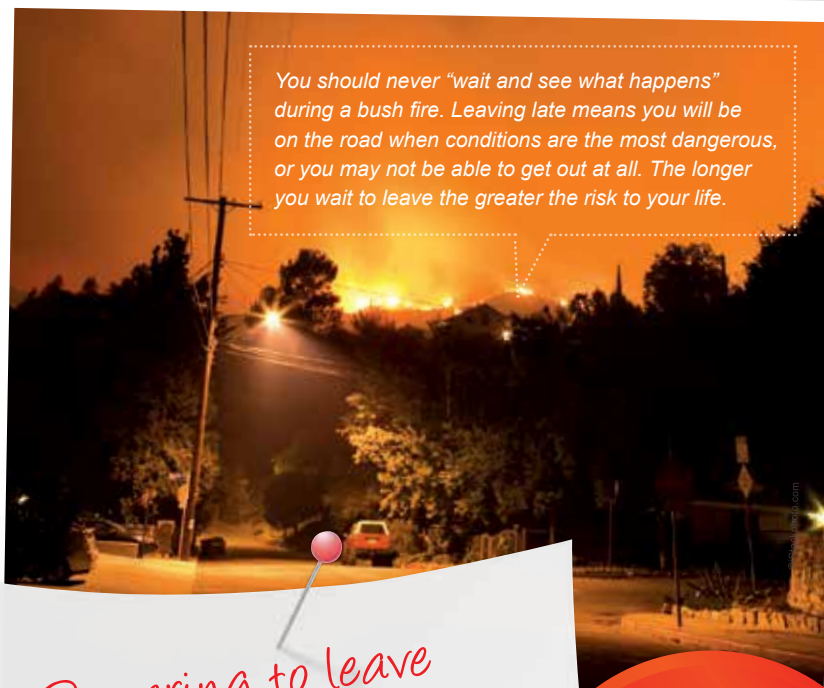


Leaving Early

LEAVE EARLY AND SURVIVE A BUSH FIRE

The safest option in a bush fire is always to leave early, well before the fire threatens. You should leave if:

- ☐ **The Fire Danger Rating is Catastrophic.** On these days fires will be so intense it is not safe to defend any home - no matter how well prepared. Extreme and Severe days are also very dangerous and leaving early will always be the safest option.
- ☐ **You have not** prepared yourself or your property to give you and your home the best level of protection from a fire.
- ☐ **There are children, elderly, or disabled people in your home.** People who are vulnerable due to age, health or any other reason should always leave early.
- ☐ **Your house is not defensible.** Some houses, because of their location, construction, or surrounding vegetation are not safe to defend. The NSW RFS Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool (www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) can help you assess your home's level of risk and make an informed decision. On some days no properties will be defensible.



You should never "wait and see what happens" during a bush fire. Leaving late means you will be on the road when conditions are the most dangerous, or you may not be able to get out at all. The longer you wait to leave the greater the risk to your life.

Preparing to leave early means:

- ☐ Completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan, available at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- ☐ Planning where you will go, how to get there, and what you will take
- ☐ Knowing the daily Fire Danger Rating in your area and what it means
- ☐ Having transport organised for all members of the family, including pets
- ☐ Actively seeking information on the fire situation and weather conditions from TV, local radio and the internet so you know when to leave
- ☐ Having a back-up plan in case you aren't able to leave early enough. What other safer places are there you could get to?
- ☐ Talking to family, friends, and neighbours about your plan to leave early

DID YOU KNOW
Being well away from a bush fire is the ONLY way to ensure your safety.





Staying and Defending

IF YOU ARE NOT PREPARED, STAYING AND DEFENDING CAN BE DANGEROUS

THERE ARE SOME SITUATIONS WHEN THE NSW RFS RECOMMENDS YOU SHOULD NOT STAY AND DEFEND:

- ☐ If it is a Catastrophic fire danger rating day
- ☐ If it is an Extreme fire danger day and your home has not been specially designed, constructed or modified to withstand a fire
- ☐ If your property is not well prepared and defensible
- ☐ If you are not feeling emotionally prepared and physically fit.

By choosing to Stay and Defend you and your family may be at risk of serious injury or death.



Not all homes are defensible, and not all people are able to cope with the ordeal of staying to defend their home. It is important that you consider your individual and family circumstances when making decisions about what you and your family should do.

**LEAVING
EARLY**
Is your safest option

Stay and Defend checklist:

- ☐ Do you have a Bush Fire Survival Plan?
- ☐ Do you know what your triggers are to put your plan into action?
- ☐ Is your property well prepared and maintained?
- ☐ Are you physically and emotionally prepared to defend your property?
- ☐ Do you know what to do before, during and after a bush fire?
- ☐ Do you have well maintained fire fighting equipment and does everyone planning to stay and defend know how to use it?
- ☐ Do you know what you will do if your power goes out?
- ☐ Do you have access to water for fire fighting like a dam, tank or pool? *(remember town water supplies can fail during emergencies)*
- ☐ Do you have appropriate personal protective clothing?
- ☐ Do you have an Emergency Survival Kit?
- ☐ Do you have a back-up plan?
- ☐ What will you do if there isn't a fire truck?

**If there is any doubt in your mind,
you should Leave Early**

PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737





Defending your Property

BEFORE FIRE IMPACTS YOU NEED TO BE ACTIVELY DEFENDING YOUR PROPERTY

1

Before the fire arrives at your home... you need to be actively defending your property

- ☐ Put on your protective clothing
- ☐ Turn on the radio to keep yourself informed
- ☐ Bring pets inside and keep them in one room
- ☐ Close all windows and doors
- ☐ Block spaces beneath doors and windows with wet towels
- ☐ Fill buckets, sinks and bath tubs with water ready to put out spot fires
- ☐ Have your firefighting equipment like pumps and hoses connected to your water supply
- ☐ Block downpipes and fill gutters with water
- ☐ Remove items which can burn from around your home like outdoor furniture
- ☐ Bring ladders inside to check roof space for embers
- ☐ Patrol the outside of your home putting out any embers or spot fires
- ☐ Just before the fire arrives, wet down timber decks and gardens close to the house
- ☐ Move any firefighting equipment to a place it will not get burnt

2

When the fire arrives... it's going to be hot, loud and dark

- ☐ Go inside but stay alert
- ☐ Shelter in a room on the opposite side of the house from the approaching fire and one that has a clear exit out of the house
- ☐ Patrol inside the house, including the roof space looking for sparks and embers
- ☐ Protect yourself from the heat of the fire
- ☐ If your life is at risk, call triple zero (000)

Stay up to date by listening to local radio, checking the NSW RFS website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or by calling the Bush Fire Information Line.

3

Once the fire has passed... you will need to patrol your property for hours

- ☐ Check your roof spaces
- ☐ Go outside and put out any part of your house which is alight
- ☐ Check under the house and any decks
- ☐ Check on your pets and animals
- ☐ Embers or sparks can start spot fires for many hours after the fire has passed
- ☐ If you can, contact your family and friends and check on your neighbours



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737





Places of Last Resort

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES (NSP)

- are a *Place of Last Resort* for people during a bush fire.

They are a last resort if all other options in your Bush Fire Survival Plan cannot be implemented.

Download a Bush Fire Survival Plan at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



Well before there is any fire in your area:

- ☐ Be aware of NSP locations for your local area. See www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.
- ☐ Note any NSP's that are close to your property in your Bush Fire Survival Plan.
- ☐ Always remember these areas have been identified as a **PLACE OF LAST RESORT**.
- ☐ If there is no NSP available you should identify other safer locations in your Bush Fire Survival Plan.
- ☐ Other safer locations include a nearby well prepared home, a shopping centre, an oval etc. that is away from the bush.
- ☐ Be aware of the safest and any alternate access routes to your NSP.

The Place of Last Resort

- ☐ If it is unsafe to leave the area or stay and defend your property, and the path is clear, you should move to your pre-identified NSP, or other safer location, prior to the impact of a bush fire.
- ☐ Be aware that when you are travelling to your NSP there may be heavy smoke and poor visibility. It is important that you are familiar with the area.
- ☐ Gather at the NSP location and remain there until the bush fire threat has passed.
- ☐ The conditions at the NSP may be uncomfortable and you may be affected by smoke and embers.
- ☐ Water, toilets and food may not be available at the NSP and emergency service personnel may not be present.
- ☐ People with special needs, such as the elderly and disabled, should always leave before the threat of fire.
- ☐ NSPs are not intended for pets and livestock.
- ☐ Your safest option will always be to leave early.



Neighbourhood Safer Places do not guarantee your safety.

Leaving areas where a bush fire can start is always the safest option.





Bush Fire Alerts

KEEP INFORMED, STAY SAFE

Where there is a risk from bush fire, the NSW Rural Fire Service uses Bush Fire Alerts to provide information to affected communities using **radio**, **television**, and the **internet**. There are three Bush Fire Alert levels to help you make the right choices for your safety.

ADVICE

A fire has started.
There is no immediate danger.
Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

WATCH AND ACT

There is a heightened level of threat.
Conditions are changing and you need to start taking
action now to protect you and your family.

EMERGENCY WARNING

An Emergency Warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert.
You may be in danger and need to take action immediately.
Any delay now puts your life at risk.

Where can you get information during a bush fire?

- ☐ Bush Fire Information Line
1800 NSW RFS
(1800 679 737)
- ☐ NSW Rural Fire Service
website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- ☐ www.facebook.com/nswrfs
www.twitter.com/nswrfs
- ☐ Local Radio, TV, Newspapers

*Remember a fire can
threaten suddenly. Don't
rely on a single source for
emergency information, and
be ready to act.*

An **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert.

The alert will give information about the severity of the fire, its location and what you should do. Bush Fire Alerts are not always given in the above order. A fire may be at 'Watch and Act' or 'Emergency Warning' first. Some fires start and spread so quickly that there is no time for any warning at all. You should be prepared to put your Bush Fire Survival Plan into action with little or no warning.

Include Bush Fire Alerts in your Bush Fire Survival Plan as triggers to Leave Early or prepare to Stay and Defend where appropriate.

PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



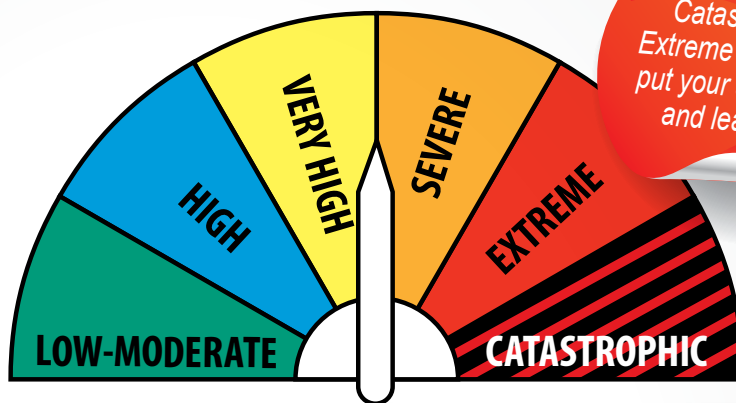


Fire Danger Ratings

WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR YOU?

Knowing what they mean could save your life

- ☐ If you live or travel through an area where a bush fire can start you need to know what the Fire Danger Rating is and what it means so you can make the safest decision.
- ☐ The Fire Danger Rating is the indication of the consequences of a bush fire if a bush fire was to start.
- ☐ The higher the Fire Danger Rating the more dangerous the conditions and the more likely that people will be injured or die if a bush fire occurs.
- ☐ When the Fire Danger Rating is Extreme or Catastrophic for your area, any fires that start will be extremely hard for fire authorities to control. Even a well prepared, well constructed and actively defended home may not survive.
- ☐ If Catastrophic conditions are expected the best option is to leave early the day or hours before a fire threatens.
- ☐ Keep informed - check the Fire Danger Rating for your area at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- ☐ PREPARE your Bush Fire Survival Plan today. Know your trigger points and download a plan from www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



On days of
Catastrophic or
Extreme Fire Danger
put your survival first
and leave early.

FIRE DANGER RATING	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
CATASTROPHIC	<p>For your survival, leaving early is the only option.</p> <p>Leave bush fire prone areas the night before or early in the day – do not just wait and see what happens.</p> <p>Make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there and when you will return.</p> <p>Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions so you should leave early.</p>
EXTREME	<p>Leaving early is the safest option for your survival.</p> <p>If you are not prepared to the highest level, leave early in the day.</p> <p>Only consider staying if you are prepared to the highest level – such as your home is specially designed, constructed or modified, and situated to withstand a fire, you are well prepared and can actively defend it if a fire starts.</p>
SEVERE	<p>Leaving early is the safest option for your survival.</p> <p>Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety – but only stay if you are physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.</p> <p>If you're not prepared, leave early in the day.</p>
VERY HIGH	<p>Review your Bush Fire Survival Plan with your family.</p> <p>Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions.</p> <p>Be ready to act if necessary.</p>
HIGH	
LOW MODERATE	





Total Fire Bans

IF YOU IGNORE A TOTAL FIRE BAN, PEOPLE MAY DIE

IN A TOTAL FIRE BAN:

- No fire may be lit in the open
- All fire permits are suspended
This includes incinerators and barbecues (BBQ) which burn solid fuel, e.g. wood, charcoal or heat beads
- No general purpose welding, grinding, soldering or gas cutting can be done in the open.



When is a Total Fire Ban announced?

During the Bush Fire Danger Period, the decision to issue a Total Fire Ban is usually made in the afternoon for the following day.

A Total Fire Ban may be issued on the actual day if weather conditions get worse.

A Total Fire Ban usually starts at midnight and lasts for 24 hours.

To find out where Total Fire Bans have been declared:

- ☐ Visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- ☐ Check the weather forecast at www.bom.gov.au
- ☐ Call the Bush Fire Information Line on 1800 679 737
- ☐ Monitor weather reports on the radio, television and in newspapers.

*Lighting a fire on a
Total Fire Ban day can
result in fines of up to
\$100,000 and/or 14 years
imprisonment.*

Can you still have a BBQ?

You may use a gas or electric BBQ, but only if:

- It is on a residential property within 20 metres of the house
- It is in a designated picnic area and the BBQ is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forests
- It is always attended by a responsible adult
- The ground within two metres of the BBQ is cleared of all materials which could burn
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water available.



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



Bush Fire Myths

KNOWING THE FACTS MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE



MYTH It won't happen to me

FACT No one can guarantee that it won't happen to you.

If you prepare and nothing ever happens then you have lost nothing. If you do not prepare your family and home in order to best protect them from a bush fire you may not live to regret it!



My house won't burn if it is made from brick...
STILL THINK THAT?



MYTH Filling the bath tub when a fire is approaching is to sit in?

FACT The NSW RFS recommends that you fill your bath and sinks with water in case the water supply to your home is cut off. This water can then be used to put out small spot fires that may start in and around the home.



MYTH A house can explode if it catches on fire?

FACT Houses do not just explode, it's what you have stored under your home that may explode. You should consider what flammable and explosive items you have around/under your home and where you should store them in order to reduce the risk to your home.



MYTH I'll be fine; the bush is a few streets away

FACT Most houses are burnt in bush fires because of ember attacks. Embers can cause fires many kilometres in front of the main fire and can start falling up to an hour before the fire arrives at your home. You need to make sure that your home is properly prepared to withstand ember attack.



MYTH Standing on my roof hosing it down with water will help?

FACT During a bush fire more injuries occur from people falling off roofs than from burns! Filling your gutters with water and hosing down your roof will help stop spot fires due to ember attack, but any hosing should be done from the ground.



MYTH If I know the back streets in my suburb or town really well, it will be ok for me to leave at the very last minute

FACT Smoke from a fire can limit visibility. You may become confused or disorientated. Power lines and fallen trees on roads may be hard to see making driving dangerous. It is always better to leave early before the fire arrives.



MYTH There will always be a fire truck available to fight a bush fire threatening my home

FACT There will never be as many fire trucks as there are houses. Do not depend on a fire truck being available at your home.



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

WAIT UNTIL THE FIRE IS ON TOP OF YOU AND YOU MAY DIE

PROTECT
YOUR FAMILY.
PROTECT
YOUR LIFE.

PREPARE.

You must make important decisions before the fire season starts

You are at risk from bush fires if you live or work near bushland, grassland, scrub, or farmland.

A fire can be terrifying, with strong winds, intense heat and flames, and thick smoke. Don't make rushed and dangerous decisions. Prepare your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**. Relocate aged, young and sick family members early from areas likely to be impacted by fires. Leaving early is the safest option.

Your **well-prepared home** will increase the safety of fire fighters and is more likely to survive a bush fire even if you leave early.

SURVIVE.

Know what you will do to survive

Know your **Bush Fire Alerts**.

Advice means a fire is nearby and you should stay up to date.

At **Watch and Act**, a bush fire is approaching and you need to put your Bush Fire Survival Plan into action.

An **Emergency Warning** means you may be in danger. Don't wait for direction from emergency services, as failure to act can result in death or injury.

If you plan to leave early, you should leave long before the bush fire is in your area. **Do not stay and defend without careful planning and preparation.**

Know an alternative route to a **safer location**. Find out if there is a Neighbourhood Safer Place in your area, but remember they should only be used as a place of last resort. Have a **back-up plan** in case you can't get to a safer location.

ACT.

The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the more dangerous the conditions

Know the fire danger in your area and what it means. **The Fire Danger Rating** should be your first trigger for action and could save your life. When the rating is **Catastrophic**, leaving early is the only option for your survival.

Know your triggers. Be prepared to **activate your Bush Fire Survival Plan** with little or no warning.



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

Your Bush Fire Survival Plan, Fire Danger Ratings, Bush Fire Alerts and Neighbourhood Safer Places can be found at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



AIDER Program

Assistance for Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents

A one-off free service to reduce bush fire hazards

AIDER SERVICES MAY INCLUDE

- ✓ Thinning vegetation.
- ✓ Removing leaves, sticks and fallen branches.
- ✓ Trimming branches from around and overhanging the home.
- ✓ Mowing or slashing long grass.
- ✓ Cleaning gutters.

An assessment of your property will be completed by NSW Rural Fire Service staff. Advice will be given about completing your Bush Fire Survival Plan. All works are completed by Rural Fire Service teams.

Call
(02) 8741 4955
to request an
assessment of
your property



What is AIDER?

AIDER is a once off **FREE** service, supporting residents to live safely and confidently in areas where bush fires may start. The property must be bush fire prone, meaning an area of land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire attack.

Who is eligible?

Aged residents and residents with disabling conditions who have limited domestic support from family, relatives, friends or other services.



Are you prepared for a bush fire?

Aged and disabled people in the community may be at higher risk during a bush fire. The NSW Rural Fire Service recommends that you have a Bush Fire Survival Plan.

EMAIL: aider@rfs.nsw.gov.au

WEB: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

| BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



Is Your Home Fire Safe?

FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR INSIDE YOUR HOME

Have you given your family the best chance of surviving a house fire?

- ☐ Have at least one installed and operating smoke alarm on each level of your house
- ☐ Know two safe ways out of every room in your house
- ☐ Have a written escape plan in case of fire, and practice it regularly with all household occupants
- ☐ Ensure that keys to all locked windows and doors are accessible in case you need to escape

Simple home fire safety tips you should follow are:

- ☐ Test smoke alarms regularly and change the battery at least once every 12 months.
- ☐ Have a licensed electrician check your wiring and install a safety switch.
- ☐ Don't overload power points and switch off household appliances when not in use.
- ☐ Never smoke in bed.
- ☐ Never leave open fires unattended and always screen with a proper fireguard.
- ☐ Heaters should be kept at least one metre from curtains, furniture and other flammable items.
- ☐ Never place clothing over heaters.
- ☐ Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

DID YOU KNOW
It only takes three minutes for a fire to take hold!



House fires can cause serious injury or death, and can destroy your most cherished possessions and home.

The area of the house where most fires occur is the kitchen, followed by the lounge and bedrooms.

PREPARE.

ACT.

SURVIVE.

BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737



INTRODUCTION TO



Farm FireWise



FIREWISETM

What is Farm FireWise?

The key to surviving a bush fire is being prepared. Farm FireWise helps you plan ahead to protect yourself, your family and your property from the potential impact of bush and grass fires.

Farm FireWise for your property

Fire protection on your land is your responsibility. With the support of your local Rural Fire Service and the Farm FireWise Checklist, you can identify the best fire protection strategies for your property and your circumstances. How and when you choose to implement those strategies is up to you.

STEP 1 – Complete the checklist

The Checklist is available from the NSW Rural Fire Service and it will help you identify the fire risks on your property. The Checklist is divided into sections covering:

- *your family and employees;*
- *your home and surrounds;*
- *other farm buildings;*
- *stock and crops;*
- *machinery and equipment;*
- *water sources and vehicle access;*
- *fire history, prevailing winds, slope and aspect of your land.*

STEP 2 – Develop an Action Plan

Once you have identified the risks you will be able to create a fire protection Action Plan. The plan will help you make decisions about how and when to address those risks. Your Action Plan will include:

- *potential threats to life and property;*
- *your fire protection priorities;*
- *work which you may need to do;*
- *dates to help you implement the plan in a timeframe which suits you.*

FOR INFORMATION

The time to prepare for a bush fire is now! Remember, the NSW Rural Fire Service can help you plan for bush fires on your property. Talk to your local NSW RFS brigade or Community Safety Officer in your area or visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



HINTS AND TIPS

Reduce fire hazards on your property:

A bush fire hazard is any combustible material, or fuel. It includes dry grass, dead leaves and branches, and some vegetation. Reducing the amount of fuel can limit the size and intensity of a fire and protect assets such as buildings and equipment. Clearing and burning are the main methods of hazard reduction. You may need to obtain a Fire Permit or environmental approval before carrying out hazard reduction works – contact the NSW Rural Fire Service for advice.

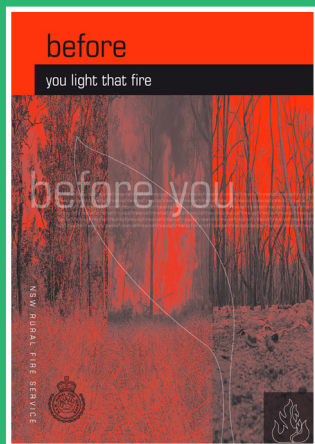
Prevent bush fires from starting:

- Don't mow and slash on hot windy days.
- Don't use machinery such as angle grinders and welders on hot windy days.
- Keep farm machinery clean and fit spark arresters to exhausts.
- Don't smoke near hay stacks and around fuel sheds.
- Check that all fires are thoroughly extinguished.
- Store fuel and chemicals in cleared areas away from other buildings.
- Keep powerlines and electric fences clear of vegetation.

Wear the right clothing during a bush fire:

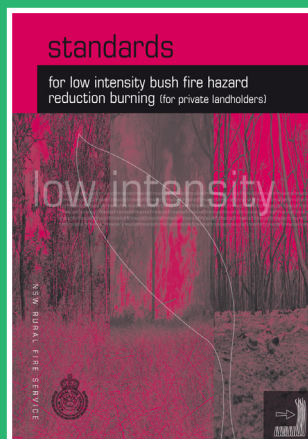
- clothing made from natural materials like cotton and wool.
- long pants and a long sleeved shirt or jumper.
- sturdy leather footwear.
- wide-brimmed hat.
- goggles for eye protection.
- material over nose and mouth to protect airways.
- wet towels to drape over neck.





Before You Light That Fire

Explains the approvals you may need before using fire for reducing bush fire hazards, removing rubbish or conducting agricultural activities.



Standards for low intensity bush fire hazard reduction burning (for private landholders)

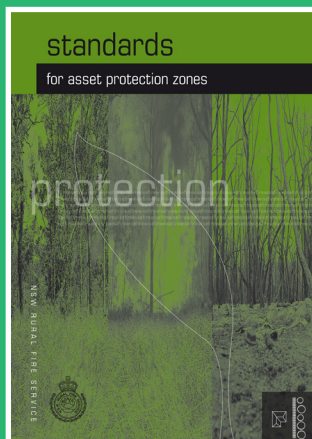
This document explains the best way to carry out low intensity bush fire hazard reduction burning.

*Your property
Your fuel
Your responsibility*



Standards for Pile Burning

Explains how to safely conduct a pile burn, including notifications and approvals required. A pile burn is the burning of cut and stacked vegetation.



Standards for Asset Protection Zones

Provides advice on establishing and maintaining an Asset Protection Zone. An APZ is an area surrounding an asset where bush fire fuel has been reduced to a level that protects the asset from the impact of fire.



Application for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate

Step-by-step guide to applying for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate to carry out planned hazard reduction works.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

NSW RFS WEBSITE: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
or call 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)



GUIDE TO



Farm FireWise

Checklist and Action Plan



FIREWISETM

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Disclaimer:

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Prepared by NSW Rural Fire Service – July 2007

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What is Farm FireWise?

Farm FireWise helps NSW rural landholders prepare for and prevent bush fires. It provides support and advice on building bush fire preparedness into your business plans, and gives you the knowledge and skills to protect your family, home and business when bush fire threatens your property.

Farm FireWise aims to reinvigorate and foster relationships between rural communities, volunteer brigades and the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS) as partners in bush fire protection. It assists landholders to view and assess bush fire risk on a more holistic level across the landscape. *“Bush fire” is any fire involving grass, scrub or forest.*

Using the Farm FireWise Checklist, you will be able to:

- *assess the risks of fire to life and property;*
- *determine what you need to do to reduce the risks; and*
- *develop a bush fire management plan for your property.*

Planning to protect your home

This booklet will take you step by step through the process of developing a fire protection plan which covers all the assets on your property. One of the most important assets on any property is often the family home. If you are intending to build on your rural property there are some general principles for protecting your home from bush fire at the planning stage which you should consider.



The home site

Whatever the size of your land, some parts will be safer as a home site than others. Fire travels faster and burns more intensely uphill than downhill, and the steeper the slope the faster the fire. Flat ground is safer than sloping ground, and the bottom of a long slope is safer than the top. Slopes that face east or south are safer than north- or west-facing slopes, because these are the directions from which fires normally approach.

Fuel - reduced zones

Fuel is any combustible material. Fires cannot burn where there is no fuel. It is important to make sure there is an area of reduced fuel between the house and any unmanaged grass or bushland – this is often referred to as an Asset Protection Zone or APZ. Where possible, take advantage of existing fuel-reduced zones such as roadways, rivers or bare ground to provide a fuel break.

Ember attack

In a bush fire, airborne embers blown ahead of the main fire are responsible for a high proportion of damage to buildings. They can ignite new fires (a process called “spotting”) on, or around, the home. Try to place your home so that any forested areas are to the south and east of the site. A wind-break of high-moisture-content trees on the hazard side of the site will also help shield your home from flying sparks and embers.

Visit the NSW Rural Fire Service web site at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or contact your local Fire Control Centre or call 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737) for more information about building in bush fire-prone areas.

Getting started

This booklet will guide you through the process of identifying the potential bush fire risks on your property and planning what you need to do to protect yourself, your family and your business. Each worksheet covers a specific risk area and contains questions for you to consider along with space to record information. Your responses to the questions will help you identify what actions are needed, which then forms the basis of your bush fire management plan. Remember to ask for help from your local NSW RFS brigade or Community Safety Officer if you need it.

Directions



Tick the boxes or make notes on the following worksheets.



*REFER TO NSW RFS WEB SITE:
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
or call 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)*



Follow the guidelines as you go for updating your property map.



Where you identify areas requiring action, transfer these to your Action Plan at the back of the booklet.

Example of base property map on aerial photo (see page 20 for example of finished map).

Maps

During this exercise you will be asked to put certain features of your property onto a map. This map could be a photocopy of the relevant topographic map of your area, a laminated aerial photo, or even a map you have drawn yourself.

You can use transparent overlays and permanent markers to update your maps so that changes can easily be made using methylated spirits and a cloth. Different overlays can be used for different types of information.

Before starting to work through the Checklist, record the following directly onto your base property map:

1. property name
2. scale
3. boundary
4. north arrow.

*If you would like to use an aerial photo and do not have one yourself you can purchase one from the NSW Department of Lands.
(www.lands.nsw.gov.au)*



FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

The Checklist is designed to help you make decisions about fire protection relevant to your circumstances and your property.

This plan is prepared by you and retained by you. It is a simple tool that will allow you to identify what strategies you have in place, and areas that should be addressed for adequate fire protection.

The NSW Rural Fire Service has community educators, Brigade Captains, Fire Mitigation Officers and other staff who can advise you on specific parts of the Checklist, or guide you through the whole process if you wish.

If the plan identifies a need to reduce hazards on your property, this can be implemented over a time frame that suits your priorities. This is your plan – not to be kept by any other person unless you authorise it.

Your local NSW RFS brigade may be able to assist you more effectively during a fire incident if you choose to supply a copy to them. This choice is up to you and all material supplied will be treated with confidentiality.

While a variety of factors come together to increase the risk of bush fire in your area, ultimately the protection of your property comes down to you!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your local NSW Rural Fire Service Fire Control Centre or the NSW Rural Fire Service

Website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Your NSWRFs contact person

Phone number

Fax number

Email

Date this plan was prepared:

— / — / —



FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

STEP 1



Property details

Make a copy of these details and place next to your phone so that anyone calling for help from your home can give your location to emergency services.

Name of property

Property address

Family name of residents

Contact phone:

Contact mobile phone:

Contact satellite phone:

GPS location of residence:

NSW Rural Fire Service Brigade Area

Approx. size of property

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST



People

- *Does everyone working or living on your property know what to do during a fire?*
- *Are there residents on your property who are elderly, infirm, or physically disabled?*
- *Are there children who live on, or regularly visit, your property, and would they need to be relocated during a fire?*

Number of residents

_____ Adults (over 18 years old) _____ Youths (13–18 years old) _____ Children (0 –12 years old)

People residing on your property who may require assistance or relocation before a fire:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

Person's Name:

Assistance Required:

Relocation Point:

1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Preparedness

Protective clothing

Full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – long sleeve shirt and long pants (cotton or wool), fully enclosed leather shoes or boots, leather gloves, goggles, and smoke masks. The storage area for PPE should be known and easily accessible to all the family and employees.

Protective clothing

(Identify on the map of your property the storage locations of your PPE) 

Date Last Checked: — / — / —

Storage Area Locations:

☐ Yes ☐ No PPE For Yourself

☐ Yes ☐ No House

☐ Yes ☐ No PPE For Family

☐ Yes ☐ No Workshop/Shed

☐ Yes ☐ No PPE for Employees

☐ Yes ☐ No Vehicles

No. of Residents or Family members trained in fire fighting

Adults : _____ Youth : _____

Emergency planning

(Identify on the map of your property the relocation areas and locations)

Know the school or bus company bush fire plan, and discuss emergency family communications if needed. All responsible members of the family and employees need to be able to use the radio, plus change channels. Batteries for mobile phones need to be fully charged and have an alternate charging system e.g. vehicle charging.

What is the CB Radio/Local channel ?

Emergency Service Channel ?

Do you have mobile phone coverage ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does your car have in-car chargers for your mobile phone ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you own a radio frequency scanner ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have an emergency contact plan ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a relocation plan for family members & employees ?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Emergency preparations noted in your Action Plan

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Survival kit

(Identify on the map of your property the storage locations of your emergency kits)

Includes first aid supplies, and also vital medications for family members e.g. asthma, heart, eye drops etc. Other things to include: torch, matches, pocket knife, water, food snacks etc. Pets must also be considered – do they need leads, transport baskets, water bowl, name tag with your name and contact number?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | First Aid Kits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Household Survival Kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Supplies for house pets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Survival kit for employees |

Survival kit

You should have a bush fire survival kit stored in an area of the house that is safe to access.

THE KIT SHOULD CONTAIN:

- Protective clothing for the whole family (e.g. boots or sturdy footwear, jeans, long sleeve shirt made from natural fibres or cotton drill overalls)
- Drinking water
- Woollen blankets
- Fire extinguishers
- First aid kit
- Hoses
- Knapsack spray
- Shovel
- Ladder
- Towels
- Buckets
- Mop
- Goggles
- Gloves
- Battery operated radio
- Torch
- Spare batteries
- Smoke mask (Respirator mask)



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC

refer to NSW Rural Fire Service web site: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
or call 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)

1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST


Structures

Non-residential structures, such as sheds, often contain valuable assets. Where appropriate, they should be closed on all sides and have solid doors to minimise the risk of ember attack.

PROPERTY STRUCTURES

Houses located on your property

Number of farm houses where full - time residents sleep.

_____ (Identify the location of the houses on your property map) 

Number of farm houses where part-time residents sleep.

_____ (Identify the location of the houses on your property map) 

Time of year when farm houses are occupied by part-time residents.

From _____ to _____

From _____ to _____

From _____ to _____

Other structures located on your property:

(Identify the locations of all other structures on your property map) 

Sheds _____

Closed on all sides _____

Open on all sides _____

Stables/Animal Housings _____

Stock Yards _____

Shearing Sheds _____

Water Pump Sheds _____

Other: _____



All structures identified on your property map, and structural work required noted in your Action Plan.

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Access to your property

Access roads to structures

- Are the roads leading to your structures restricted by any fencing, locked gates, or other obstacles, and are they clearly marked?
- Access restrictions on these roads need to be considered carefully as they may delay the arrival of emergency services during a fire.

Vehicle access throughout your property

Vehicles must be able to enter and turn safely in dark or smokey conditions. Knowing where access restrictions exist on your property will help firefighters. Check your property for:

- height restrictions
- overhanging trees
- low power lines
- narrow roads
- property bridges with weight restrictions
- gates and cattle grids
- rural residence internal fencing
- potentially boggy areas.

Vehicle access

(Identify access roads, entry points, locked gates and obstructions on your property map) 

Around your house

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Constructed road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Drivable but not constructed road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Obstructions to vehicle access (e.g. fences, pools, locked gates etc) |

Around your sheds

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Constructed road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Drivable but not constructed road |

Along property boundaries

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Constructed road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Drivable but not constructed road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Main entry road, suitable for a fire appliance, including turning area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Internal bridges or cattle grids |

Internal access

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Identify on the attached map of your property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is property divided into permanent paddocks (boundary and internal fencing)? |



All vehicle access points identified on your property map, and access work required noted in your Action Plan.



FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Water and pumps

- Do your water storage areas have good vehicle access and are they easily identifiable?
- What size and type of outlets are on your water tanks?
- Do you have other static water sources (SWS) on your property such as a swimming pool?
- Do your water tanks have pump and hose available to be used in the event of fire?
- Does everyone on your property know how to operate pumps and hose systems?

Water sources

(Identify all water sources on your property map) 

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Dams	Number on site: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Bore Water Supply	Number on site: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Natural Water Supply	Number on site: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Town Water Supply Hydrant Points	Number on site: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Water Tanks/Swimming Pool	Number on site: _____

W/Source Type

Quantity

Location

_____	Approx. Capacity: _____ ltrs	_____
_____	Approx. Capacity: _____ ltrs	_____
_____	Approx. Capacity: _____ ltrs	_____
_____	Approx. Capacity: _____ ltrs	_____

Vehicle Access

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Around your dams and water supplies

Constructed road
 Drivable but not constructed road
 Obstructions to vehicle access (e.g. fences, etc)

Tank outlets

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
------------------------------	-----------------------------

Tanks fitted with 65mm Storz outlets and metal valves/pipes

Water Pumps

(Identify water pumps on your property map) 

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Location: _____	Number on site: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Fixed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Portable	



All water sources identified on your property map, and work required noted in your Action Plan.

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Livestock & agricultural activities

Animal health issues

- Quarantined stock areas should be identified and NSW RFS brigades should be advised not to mix stock if possible.
- Identify refuge paddocks where stock can be moved during fires.

Refuge locations on property:

(Mark refuge locations on your property map)



- ☐ Cattle
☐ Sheep
☐ Horses
☐ Intensive (pigs/poultry etc.)
☐ Exotic (Lamas/ostriches etc.)
☐ Other _____

Fodder storage:

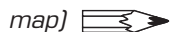
(Identify storage areas on your property map)



- ☐ Open sheds
☐ Baled and stacked
☐ Paddocks
☐ Baled and left in paddocks
☐ Silos
☐ Covered stacks/Silage
☐ Other:

Activity conducted on property:

(Mark locations of different activities on your property map)



- ☐ Grazing
☐ Cropping
☐ Orchard
☐ Hobby farm
☐ Plantations
☐ Other _____



All structures identified on your property map, and structural work required noted in your Action Plan.



1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Fire-related information

Previous fire history

As land owners you are able to learn a lot from previous fire events on and around your property. Fires often travel along similar paths. Find out as much as you can about the fire history of your land: when the fires happened, how and where they started (planned or unplanned fires), what area was burnt, and what losses occurred. This information could come from different sources such as: personal recollection, observation (effects of fire such as scorch marks and burnt fence posts), records, neighbours, or local fire brigades.

(Identify on your property map the area/s of previous bush fire/grass fire activity on your property) 

Date of fire: _____

Land area burnt: _____

Date of fire: _____

Land area burnt: _____

Date of fire: _____

Land area burnt: _____

Have structures been lost or damaged due to bush fire/grass fire ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you lost livestock due to bush fire/grass fire ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you lost crops due to bush fire/grass fire ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Other assets lost (grazing, fences etc) due to bush fire/grass fire ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Details of assets lost:

Prevailing winds *(Identify on your property map the direction of the prevailing winds)*

Wind determines the direction in which fire travels. Think about which direction the wind usually travels during the different seasons on your land. Include regular patterns of wind change e.g. evening southerly change.

Spring prevailing winds are from the: _____

Summer prevailing winds are from the: _____

Winter prevailing winds are from the: _____

Autumn prevailing winds are from the: _____

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Slope and aspect

Fires travel faster up slope than down or along level ground. Different aspects are more likely to be known fire paths than others.

Aspect (direction facing) *(Identify on your property map the aspect of your property and buildings)* 

House: _____ Shed 1: _____

Shed 2: _____ Shed 3: _____

Slope (in degrees) *(Identify in degrees the degrees of slope on your property map)*

House: _____ Shed 1: _____

Shed 2: _____ Shed 3: _____

The topography, or slope and aspect of your property will affect how fire travels across it.



1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Hazards

(Identify on your property map the location of all potential hazards) 

What are the hazards on your property and where are they located? Are the hazards isolated or, in the case of fuel and chemicals, clearly identified? Do you already carry out fire mitigation strategies for these hazards e.g. fuel-free zone? Do you have an alternate power source that powers your infrastructure and also feeds the main power grid? In this section you will need to think carefully about what actions you could take to reduce hazards and transfer these to your Action Plan.

Vegetation, such as garden planter boxes, mulch, wind breaks, ornamental trees, overhanging branches, close to structures increases the opportunity for fire to reach and impact upon them.

Vegetation

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Wet forest
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Grassy forest
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Grassy woodland
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Shrubby forest
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Pasture/grassland
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Crops
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Plantations

Other: _____

Fuel storage

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Above ground storage
Total ltrs: _____
Location: _____
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Below ground storage
Total ltrs: _____
Location: _____
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Drums of fuel stored on property
Total ltrs: _____
Location: _____

Electrical

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Low power lines
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Underground power lines
- ☐ Yes ☐ No On-site generator
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Telephone lines
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Alternate power source

Gases

- ☐ Yes ☐ No House:
Gas type: _____
Location: _____
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Workshop
Gas type: _____
Gas type: _____
Gas type: _____

Hazardous chemicals

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Fertilizers
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Herbicides/weedicide
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Chlorine
Total ltrs: _____
Location: _____
Other: _____

Firearms

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Ammunition

☐ **All potential hazards identified on your property map, and hazard reduction work noted in your Action Plan.**

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Mitigation

Mitigation is taking steps to reduce the risk of bush fire damage to homes, structures, crops, livestock, equipment and the environment. You should undertake mitigation activities well in advance of the bush fire season and keep up the maintenance work all year round. Make sure they are included in your Action Plan.

Livestock

The risk of injury to, or destruction of, farm animals during bush fire can most easily be reduced by preparing and maintaining fuel-reduced areas onto which stock can be moved and held.

This means planning to use fallow paddocks, well grazed smaller paddocks or raceways, irrigated pasture or summer crop areas.

The ideal location is one which:

- contains a water supply
- has clear access
- has shade
- is well fenced
- is well grazed with minimum fuel to carry fire.

If you will be away during the day, consider moving stock into the safe paddock the night before a Total Fire Ban day.

Building preparedness

(Identify on the map of your property the mitigation activities you have undertaken) 

Houses, sheds and other structures on your property

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Are ground fuels (long, dry grass, dead leaves and branches, thick undergrowth) cleared around the house? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you keep the grass around the house short and green ?
(water restrictions may need to be taken into account). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Are the eaves and openings boxed in including under your house, sheds and other structures ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is the vegetation around the house not providing a path for fire ?
Plant or clear vegetation in clumps, rather than continuous rows. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is garden and general rubbish removed from around all structures ? |

1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Fuel-reduced breaks

(Identify on the map of your property the mitigation activities you have undertaken) 

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a ploughed firebreak around the home paddock ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a stock rotation plan to keep paddocks near buildings well-grazed ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Have you constructed firebreaks around inside of you property fence lines ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you prune low tree branches 2m from the ground and separate tree crowns ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a maintenance plan to prepare firebreaks each year ?

Paddocks

(Identify on the map of your property the mitigation activities you have undertaken) 

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a ploughed firebreak around each of the paddock boundries to reduce the spread of fire ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a stock rotation plan to keep paddocks well-grazed ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Have you constructed firebreaks around the inside of your property fence lines to protect crops from fire entering your property ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a relocation plan for stock in the event of fire ?

Boundary fire breaks

(Identify on the map of your property the mitigation activities you have undertaken) 

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have ploughed firebreaks ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have sealed roads around your property ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Have you slashed areas to reduce the risk of fire ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have a maintenance plan to prepare firebreaks each year ?

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

1

Operating private Equipment at fires

It is your legal responsibility to, where practical, ensure that fire does not escape your property. Therefore it is important for you to have the capacity to fight fires on your property. It has also been the custom and practice for members of the community to attend fires with their own equipment to protect other properties in the community.

It is therefore important that your equipment is safe, you know how to use it and you understand your responsibilities when fighting fires on or near your land and how to do it safely -whether the NSW RFS is there or not. Everyone at the fire has responsibility for safety and you must accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.

Firefighting Equipment (Identify on the map of your property the location of equipment) 

☐ Yes ☐ No Dozer

☐ Yes ☐ No Grader

☐ Yes ☐ No Backhoe

☐ Yes ☐ No Vehicle with pump & water storage

☐ Yes ☐ No Bulk water carrier

☐ Yes ☐ No Firefighting Trailer

Other equipment



1

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

Understanding your responsibility

Your decision to engage in firefighting should be carefully considered and made well before any actual fire outbreak. If you are planning on attending fires on or around your property it is essential that you and your equipment are adequately prepared.

Equipment safety

If you are planning to use your equipment to fight fires you should ensure that the equipment is suitable and capable of performing the task. A simple check list might assist you with determining the suitability and safety of your equipment.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | When loaded is the weight of your vehicle less than the rated Gross Vehicle Mass? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is the load including tank, pump and fittings properly secured? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your vehicle roadworthy? (to RTA standards.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your vehicle registered? (if operating on public roads.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Are the vehicle and pump mechanically sound? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Have the vehicle and pump been serviced regularly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your vehicle fitted with a UHF Radio transceiver? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is there a first-aid kit in the vehicle? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is there a woollen blanket for fire protection in the vehicle? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your vehicle fitted with an amber rotating beacon? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your vehicle fitted with heatshields? (if required, i.e. if personnel are to operate from the tray.) |

☐ ***All equipment identified on your property map, and work required noted in your Action Plan.***

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

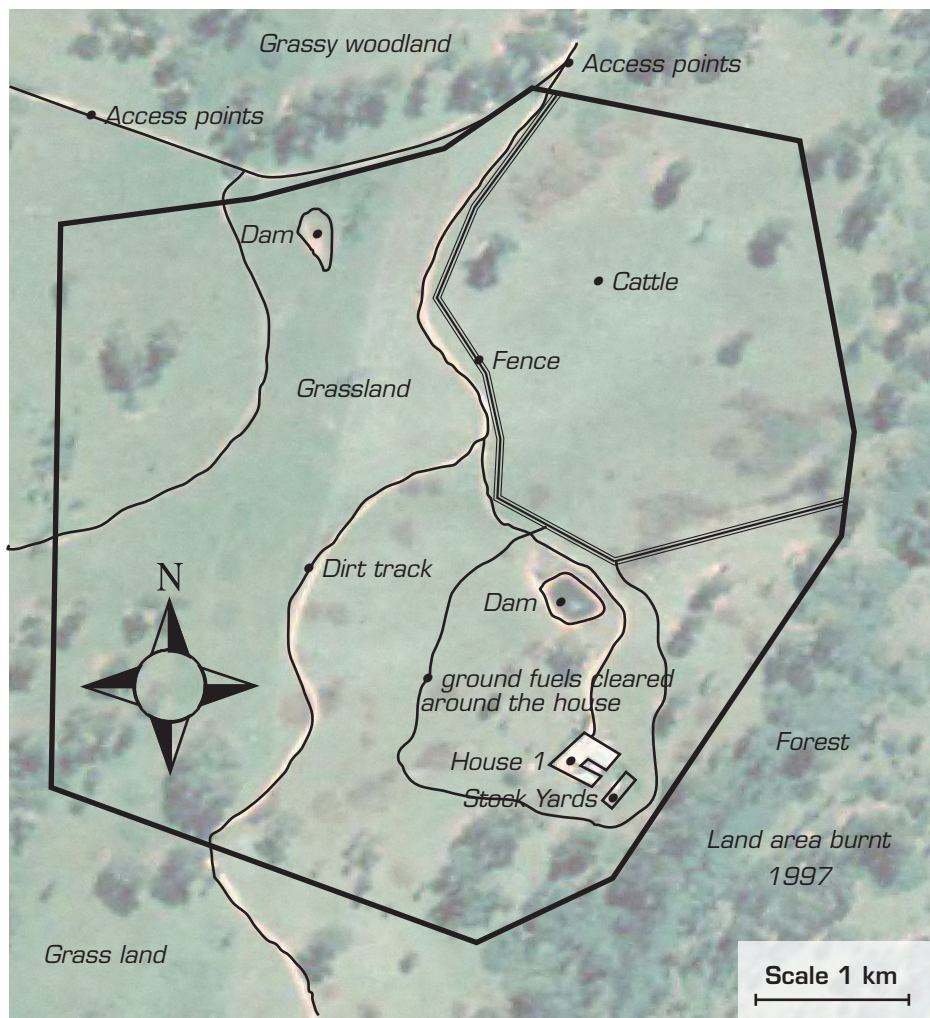
1

Additional information

(Identify on the map of your property adjoining properties) 

Many agricultural enterprises are isolated rural developments, which experience additional problems because they may be a long way from firefighting services and be located next to large areas of bush.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your property adjoining private land ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your property adjoining crown land ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your property adjoining a Subdivision, Public Recreational Area or Industrial area ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Is your property adjoining a Travelling Stock Reserve ? |



Example property map showing locations of assets, access points, water sources and other items from the Farm FireWise Checklist

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

STEP 2

Develop an Action Plan

Develop an Action Plan for what you need to do to reduce the potential bush fire threat on your property. You may like to consider consulting with your local NSW Rural Fire Service brigade or contact the local NSW RFS Community Safety Officer to assist you in this process.

The Farm FireWise Checklist process enableds you to identify threats and hazards and what you need to do about them. By transferring these to your Action Plan you can make decisions about how and when you will undertake these important activities.

Refer to the example FARM FIREWISE ACTION PLAN as a guide.

Sections to complete

• Property name and address details	The address details and contact details of your property.
• Date created	Your plan will need to be continuously updated to enable you to keep track of your results and works that still need to be completed
• Created by	Who collected the information
• Area	The area of the property where you identified that a threat is present
• Management aim	The intended outcome which guides your planned actions
• Potential threats to life and property	A description of the threat or hazard
• Action required	What works will be undertaken to reduce the threat to your assets
• Date of action commenced and the date of action completed	To enable you to include fire mitigation works into your farm management schedule

Property map updated to show the location of:

- Your assets
- Agricultural equipment
- Firefighting equipment
- Water sources
- Roads and trails
- Mitigation works being undertaken and completed
- Property boundaries.



Farm FireWise Action Plan

AREA	MANAGEMENT AIM	POTENTIAL THREAT TO LIFE & PROPERTY
Kickatinalong Road	Grazing in adjacent paddocks	Fire starting on the side of the road next to my property
Shearing shed	Shearing	Sheep droppings under Shearing Shed
Top Hill paddock	Weeding lantana to allow future grazing	Burning of lantana piles,
Home Site & Staff Amenities	Ensure all family & staff wear the appropriate clothing during a bush fire	Not Wearing the correct Clothing for Fire Fighting
All areas of the property	Prevent fire from starting on my property	Harvest Season

This example is provided to show you how a completed Farm FireWise Action Plan might look. Your Action Plan will be specific to your property and include actions you've identified while working through the Checklist. If you need help completing your Action Plan contact your local Rural Fire Service brigade or Community Safety Officer in your area, or visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Property Map updated: 9 / 4 / 06

ACTION REQUIRED	Date of Action Commenced	Date of Action Completed
Plough firebreak 3 metres wide from fence line on my property Example only	22/06/06	22/07/06
Clear out droppings after each shearing season	22/07/06	28/07/06
Speak with the local NSW RFS Fire control Centre prior to taking action or burning off. It must be planned carefully and carried out with extreme caution under correct weather conditions. Check what permits are required with NSW RFS	22/05/06	22/06/06
Put together a firefighting kit of correct clothing and have it with me at all times	22/04/06	22/05/06
Check machinery and weather conditions before harvesting. Where possible only stop machinery on bare ground	22/03/06	22/05/06

Farm FireWise Action Plan

Property Map updated: / /

FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

AREA	MANAGEMENT AIM	POTENTIAL THREAT TO LIFE & PROPERTY	ACTION REQUIRED	Date of Action Commenced	Date of Action Completed

Farm FireWise Action Plan

Property Map updated:

/

/

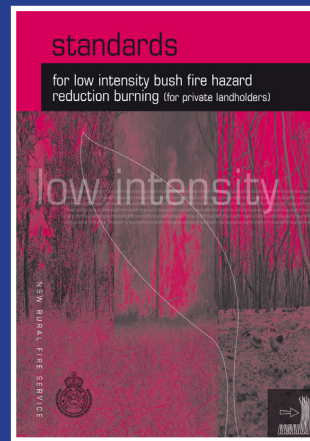
FARM FIREWISE CHECKLIST

AREA	MANAGEMENT AIM	POTENTIAL THREAT TO LIFE & PROPERTY	ACTION REQUIRED	Date of Action Commenced	Date of Action Completed



Before You Light That Fire

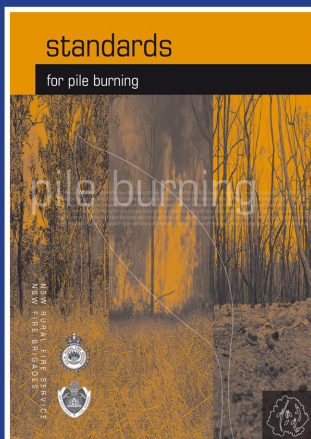
Explains the approvals you may need before using fire for reducing bush fire hazards, removing rubbish or conducting agricultural activities.



Standards for low intensity bush fire hazard reduction burning (for private landholders)

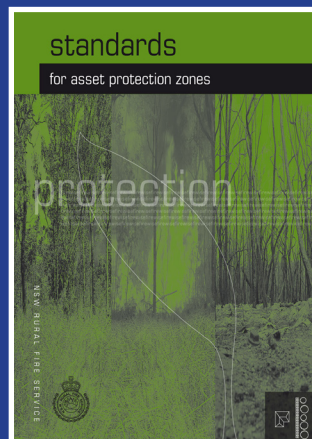
This document explains the best way to carry out low intensity bush fire hazard reduction burning.

*Your property
Your fuel
Your responsibility*



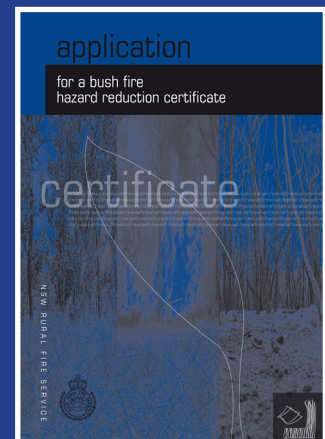
Standards for Pile Burning

Explains how to safely conduct a pile burn, including notifications and approvals required. A pile burn is the burning of cut and stacked vegetation.



Standards for Asset Protection Zones

Provides advice on establishing and maintaining an Asset Protection Zone. An APZ is an area surrounding an asset where bush fire fuel has been reduced to a level that protects the asset from the impact of fire.



Application for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate

Step-by-step guide to applying for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate to carry out planned hazard reduction works.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

NSW RFS WEBSITE: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
or call 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)

