

City of Mitcham Bushfire Preparedness Program

Council's Annual Bushfire Management and Preparedness Program has been in full swing preparing for the fire danger season:

- Roadside and Reserves Slashing - Fuel Management Program
- Property Inspections and providing advice to Residents - responding to community concerns, questions and complaints
- Community Engagement
- Expend \$1.1 million dollars on fire and risk mitigation strategies



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City of Mitcham Bushfire Preparedness Program

Our Aim

To reduce bushfire risk and improve the resilience of our communities against natural hazards and the impacts of bushfire

How Do we do this?

- Assess and manage fuel loads on public and private land with the aim of fuel load reduction within the City of Mitcham via a strategic fuel management strategy;
- Assisting our communities to become more resilient and prepared for future emergencies, including bushfires through community engagement and education;
- Increasing the communities ability to mitigate, avoid and withstand the increasing effects of a natural hazard such as bushfire through activities targeting and delivering resilience in a number of areas.



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Community Engagement is a key part of the program

- 4 Page Spread in Community News
 - October
 - January
- Provide one on one advice to residents to prepare their property for bushfire
- Partner with CFS Community Education Programs

KNOW YOUR DAILY FIRE DANGER RATING
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

CATASTROPHIC	EXTREME
TOTAL FIRE BAN If a fire starts and takes hold, lives are likely to be lost 🔥 These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire 🔥 Homes are not constructed to withstand fires in these conditions 🔥 The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas	TOTAL FIRE BAN Fires will spread quickly and be extremely dangerous 🔥 These are dangerous fire conditions 🔥 You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions
HIGH	MODERATE
Fires can be dangerous 🔥 There's a heightened risk 🔥 If a fire starts, your life and property may be at risk	Most fires can be controlled 🔥 Controlled burning may occur in these conditions if it is safe - check to see if permits apply

Find out what to do at cfs.sa.gov.au

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City of Mitcham Bushfire Preparedness Program

6 OCTOBER 2022 MITCHAM COMMUNITY NEWS

ACCESSIBLE, HEALTHY & CONNECTED COMMUNITY

BUSHFIRE SAFETY GUIDE

FIRES CAN START AND SPREAD VERY QUICKLY
High winds, falling trees and smoke can make driving dangerous. If you are not planning to stay and defend your property, leave early to avoid being trapped in a car or on foot. This is how people die.

ARE YOU READY?

LEAVING EARLY IS ALWAYS THE SAFEST OPTION

If you're in a high risk area, such as property near bushland or grassland, that means leaving before there are any signs of a fire.

DON'T WAIT

- For a warning
- Until you see or smell smoke
- For a knock on the door

YES, YOU MAY LEAVE SEVERAL TIMES DURING A BUSHFIRE SEASON, JUST TO BE SAFE.

Are you ready?

Fires can start and spread very quickly. High winds, falling trees and smoke can make driving dangerous. If you are not planning to stay and defend your property, leave early to avoid being trapped in a car or on foot.

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- Until you see or smell smoke
- For a knock on the door

BELIEF BUSTERS

BELIEF: "I'll just leave when I see smoke."

BUSTED: If you see smoke, your exit might be blocked.

Prepare to live and survive in a bushfire prone area

As a resident of the City of Mitcham if you live in the shaded area, then you live in a bushfire prone area. Residents are encouraged to clean up properties before the start of the fire danger season (generally November to April) and to maintain this throughout the season.

- Slash overgrown pasture or bush blocks.
- Create firebreaks along paddock boundaries.
- Prune lower branches of shrubs to separate from ground level fuels underneath.
- Get rid of dry grass, leaves, twigs and loose bark.
- Cut back overhanging branches - no branches within 10m of buildings.
- Have a good reserve of available water.
- Plant orchards and vegetable gardens on the fire-prone side of the home.
- Mature trees can help shield against radiant heat and embers. They must be strategically located and well managed.
- Remove flammable items from decks and verandahs, such as boxes, furniture and doormats.
- Store firewood away from house.
- Keep grass short.
- Have garden hoses at the ready.
- Clear gutters of leaf litter.
- Enclose areas under elevated decks and reduce the risk from ember attack.
- Store flammable liquid away from the house.
- Use pebbles instead of bark mulch close to the home.
- Do not have large shrubs next to or under windows.

Preparing your property

Whether you plan to leave early or stay and defend, your property has a much higher chance of surviving a bushfire if it is properly prepared.

Burning embers can blow ahead of the fire front. Many homes catch fire when embers blow into spaces and cracks, gutters and eaves or flammable materials close to the house. These are some things you can do to protect your property:

Simple steps

- Keep grass short around the property
- Prune shrubs so they are not too dense
- Clean gutters
- Move wood, mulch or any flammable material away from the house

Move all flammable items that are located outdoors (doormats, furniture, plant baskets etc) either inside or away from the house when a bushfire threatens.

More lasting protection

- Use non-flammable materials such as pebbles or gravel (not woodchips or bark) close to the home
- Relocate gas bottles away from the fire-prone side of the building and turn gas release valves to face away from the building
- Seal small gaps in timber decks, screen larger under-deck areas with non-flammable screens
- Install metal fly wire mesh on windows and vents and protective screens on air conditioner units
- Block gaps under floor, in roof spaces, under eaves, external walls, skylights, around windows, chimneys and wall cladding

Free green waste days

Take advantage of Council's free green waste days at Lynton Green Waste Depot at Beagle Terrace, Lynton.

Free days will be held on:

- October 10, 15, 24 and 29
- November 5, 14, 19, and 28

For more information visit www.mitichamcouncil.sa.gov.au/lynton-green-organics

Additional rural property protection

- Locate dams, orchards, and effluent disposal systems on fire-prone side of home
- Make sure fire trucks can access property
- Create firebreaks along paddock boundaries
- Store petrol and gas safely in a shed
- Install diesel-powered underground water pumps that lead from dams to the house
- Create a bare earth firebreak along the property boundary
- If fire threatens, move livestock to a well-grazed or ploughed paddock



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BUSHFIRE SAFETY GUIDE

FIND INFORMATION ABOUT ALL CURRENT WARNINGS AT [CFS.SA.GOV.AU](https://cfs.sa.gov.au) AND COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES, OR LISTEN TO YOUR LOCAL ABC RADIO STATION.

PLAN TO SURVIVE

Now is the time to create a Bushfire Survival Plan. Go online to cfs.sa.gov.au and create a plan to suit your family, animals and property. You can print copies of your Bushfire Plan, download it to store on your devices or the cloud, and share it with others. You'll get a reminder to update it each year.

Your plan will remind you:

- What you can prepare right now
- What to do in a bushfire and how early you'll leave
- Who to tell, where to go and options for how to get there
- What to pack, ready to take with you
- How to prepare your animals
- How to get your property ready, whether you choose to leave or stay to defend
- Back-up options for emergencies.

PREPARE TO SURVIVE

- Prepare protective clothing and an emergency kit. Have other items ready to pack in the car, including things your pets will need.
- Ensure your property is well prepared and flammable items removed and put away.
- Monitor, listen and stay connected. Keep updated with current weather conditions and warnings via cfs.sa.gov.au and the Bureau of Meteorology bom.gov.au, listen to ABC radio, follow the CFS on Twitter or Facebook, or call the CFS Information Hotline on 1800 862 363.
- Put your pets somewhere they cannot escape from.
- Ensure your vehicle is ready and accessible.
- Move livestock to well prepared, safer areas.
- Alert family, friends and neighbours when you leave. Tell them where you plan to go and update them when you are safe.



THE FIRE DANGER SEASON FOR THE MOUNT LOFTY FIRE BAN DISTRICT STARTED IN DECEMBER AND IS SET TO CONTINUE UNTIL APRIL 2023.

ARE YOU READY?

YOUR EMERGENCY KIT

Having an emergency kit ready will save you time, not only during bushfires, but also during other emergencies.

Consider keeping these essentials in the car during bushfire season:

- Drinking water
- Portable battery-operated radio and spare batteries
- Waterproof torch with spare batteries
- First aid kit
- Candles and waterproof matches
- Woolen or fire blankets

Other items to prepare include:

- Emergency contact numbers, saved to your phone and printed out
- Important documents and photos saved onto a USB or in the cloud
- Bushfire protective clothing for each member of the family
- Pets, microchipped or wearing tags
- Pet crates or containers, spare leashes and pet food
- Plan for when and how you will move horses

Consider preparing a tent, sleeping bag and air mattress, blankets, folding chairs and sun shelter so you are safe and comfortable in evacuation places.



WHAT TO WEAR

Bushfire protective clothing includes loose-fitting clothing made of natural fibres (wool, cotton or denim), long-sleeved cotton shirts and full-length trousers or overalls, wide-brimmed hat or safety helmet, cotton or leather gloves, goggles or safety glasses, dust mask or damp non-synthetic cloth, sturdy boots or shoes.



BUSHFIRE RISK DAYS: WHAT TO EXPECT

You might lose phone, internet, mains power and water during a bushfire. If the power fails, you won't be able to use cordless phones, remote control garage doors or electric gates, computers and internet, air conditioners, electric pumps and phone chargers.

You might experience hot wind, smoke, heat, noise and darkness, embers blowing ahead of the fire front, starting spot fires, lack of visibility making driving dangerous, fire approaching from any direction, or several directions at once, roads blocked by fallen trees, powerlines or emergency vehicles, embers falling on you, animals and livestock on roads.

EMBERS SPREAD BUSHFIRES

Embers are twigs, leaves or debris blown ahead of fire by the wind. If they land on your property they can start fires in gutters, under your eaves or in small gaps around window and door frames, cladding and roofing. They can also burn rubbish, woodpiles or objects stacked against the house.

- Pay attention to anywhere embers might enter.
- Seal up small gaps in timber decks and screen larger under-deck areas with non-flammable screens.
- Use non-flammable material such as pebbles or gravel close to the home.

BUSHFIRE SAFER PLACES

If you live, work or travel in a bushfire prone area you need to be aware of where you can relocate to if you are threatened by bushfire.

A **Bushfire Safer Place** is an area assessed as a place of relative safety due to low levels of bushfire fuel and distance from bushland or forest and access to emergency, health and community services.

A **Bushfire Last Resort Refuge** is a space or building which you could go to and remain in during a bushfire when you cannot safely relocate to a Bushfire Safer Place. It is intended to provide a place of relative safety but does not guarantee the survival of those who assemble there.

For a list of **Bushfire Safer Places** and **Bushfire Last Resort Refuges** in the City of Mitcham, visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-a-fire-be-prepared/bushfire-safer-places/locations-by-council/

For information and advice on protecting your property from bushfire, visit mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/are-you-bushfire-ready



Tip: Move a ladder and torch inside so you can check whether embers have started a fire in your roof space.

SURVIVAL OPTIONS

If caught in a car

- Park behind a barrier such as a wall or rocky outcrop, park away from long grass and face car towards the oncoming fire front.
- Move off the road and turn on your hazard lights.
- Stay in car and tightly close doors and windows. Run the air conditioner while you can.
- Stay down below window level and cover yourself with woolen blankets to protect yourself from heat.
- When the front is close by, turn off engine and close air vents, stay below window level, covered with wool blankets.

If caught in a house or building

- Leave as soon as possible when safe to do so. Shelter in a room that has two exits, one of which lets you get outside, such as laundry, with a window so you can see what bushfire is doing.

- Get low to the floor so you are less likely to breathe toxic smoke.

If caught in the open

- Take shelter in a stationary car, ploughed paddock or cleared reserve.

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Council Land Management Program

- Woody Weed Management (Olives)



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- Creating Asset Protection Zones and Bushfire Buffer Zones
- Approx 600,000m² of asset protection zones, bushfire buffer zones slashed/mowed over 53 reserves



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- Roadside Slashing/Brush Cutting/Spraying
 - Over 560 Kms of Roadside Slashed/Mowed



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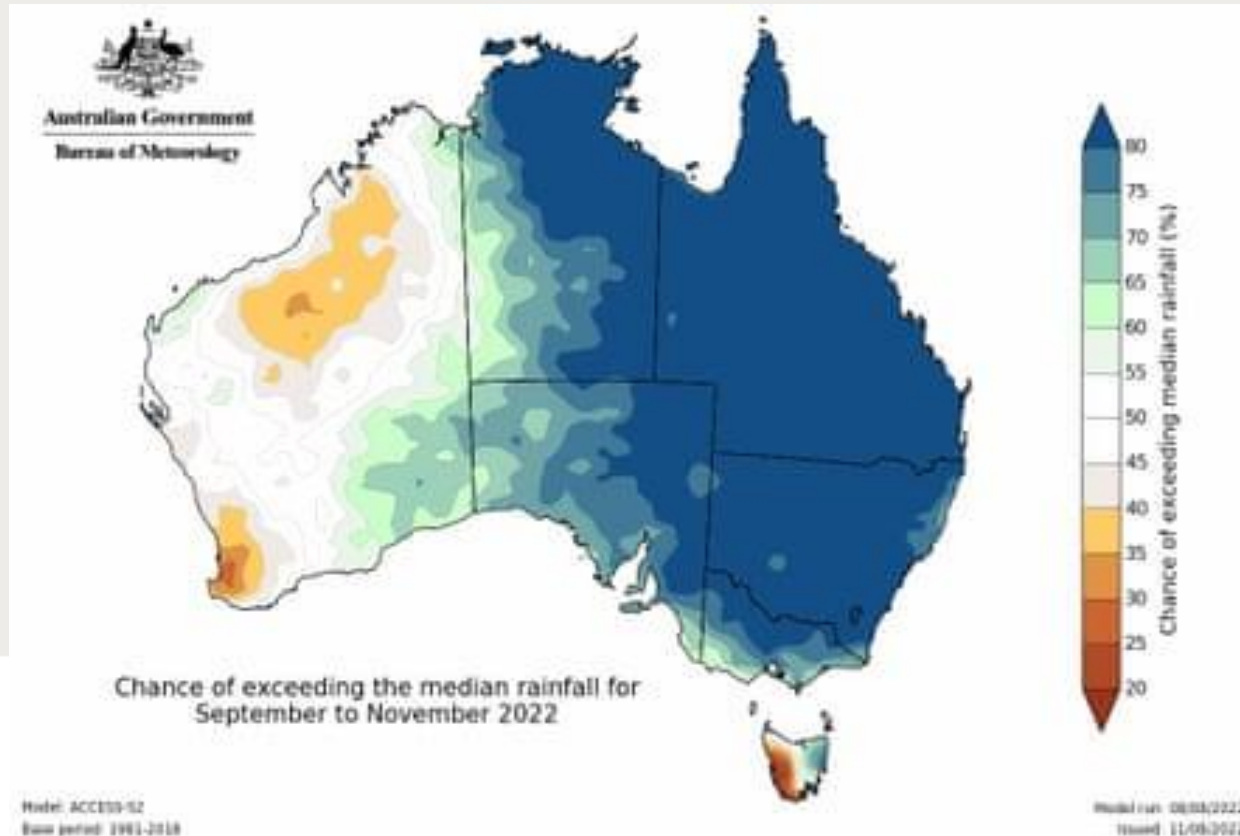
City of Mitcham Bushfire Preparedness Program



Prescribed Burn to Create
Asset Protection Zones and
Bushfire Buffer Zones

BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

- **Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season**
 - La Nina Weather Patterns - Unseasonal Conditions



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

- **Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season**
 - Lateness of the Season and Delay Curing of Vegetation and Grasses



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

- **Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season**
 - Impact of November Storms



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

■ Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season

- Impact of November Storms
 - Extra Fuel Load Generated from fallen trees and limbs
 - Over 500 tonnes of fallen timber creating extra fuel management strategies required
 - Impact Both on Council Land and Private Property
 - Required Inspections of Reserves and Open Space for Bushfire Management
 - Diverting Resources and Staff to storm clean up



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

■ Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season

- Impact of November Storms
 - Fuel Management Plans Developed for Reserves for the fuel load created from fallen trees and debris
 - Concentrated on removal of Finer Fuels (smaller branches/limbs, branches of leaves etc close to assets and buffer zones)
 - Fallen Timber impacted on other fuel management programs (slashing/mowing)
 - Some areas – needed to clear the storm debris prior to be able to mow/slash

BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS



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- **Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season – November Storms**



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- **Impact on our Program for the 2022/2023 Season**
 - Impact of November Storms



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

- **Property Inspection and Enforcement Program**
 - Issuing Section 105 hazard/fuel reduction notices
 - Over 2000 properties inspected each year
 - Vacant Block and High Risk Properties Identified and notices provided to them to clean up
 - Property Inspections continue and Notices issued to those properties that are not prepared



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Before



After



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Before



After



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Before



After



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Key Messages

- Know the new Fire Danger Rating System
 - Know what to do on these days

KNOW YOUR DAILY FIRE DANGER RATING
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

CATASTROPHIC	EXTREME
TOTAL FIRE BAN If a fire starts and takes hold, lives are likely to be lost 🔥 These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire 🔥 Homes are not constructed to withstand fires in these conditions 🔥 The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas	TOTAL FIRE BAN Fires will spread quickly and be extremely dangerous 🔥 These are dangerous fire conditions 🔥 You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions
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Fires can be dangerous 🔥 There's a heightened risk 🔥 If a fire starts, your life and property may be at risk	Most fires can be controlled 🔥 Controlled burning may occur in these conditions if it is safe - check to see if permits apply

Find out what to do at cfs.sa.gov.au

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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Key Messages

- Understand the Australia Warning System

The three levels of warnings are:



Advice



Watch and act



Emergency warning



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Key Messages

Prepare your Property

- Keep grass short around the property.
- Prune shrubs so they are not too dense.
- Clean gutters.
- Move wood, mulch or any flammable material well away from the house.



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Key Messages

Plan To Survive - Plan Ahead and Create a Bushfire Survival Plan - Your plan will remind you:

- ✓ What you can prepare right now
- ✓ During bushfire risk conditions – what to do and how early you'll leave
- ✓ Who to tell, where to go and several options for how to get there
- ✓ What to pack, ready to take with you
- ✓ How to prepare your animals
- ✓ How to get your property ready, whether you're choosing to leave early or staying to defend it
- ✓ About your back-up options for emergencies.



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS



Radiant heat is the biggest killer in a fire. To protect yourself from radiant heat:

- Keep as far away from the fire as possible.
- Cover exposed skin with natural fibres.
- Take shelter behind a building.
- Stay away from windows, as glass lets the heat in.

How you might feel during a bushfire:



Scared



Confused



Unable to breathe properly



Thirsty and hungry



Tired

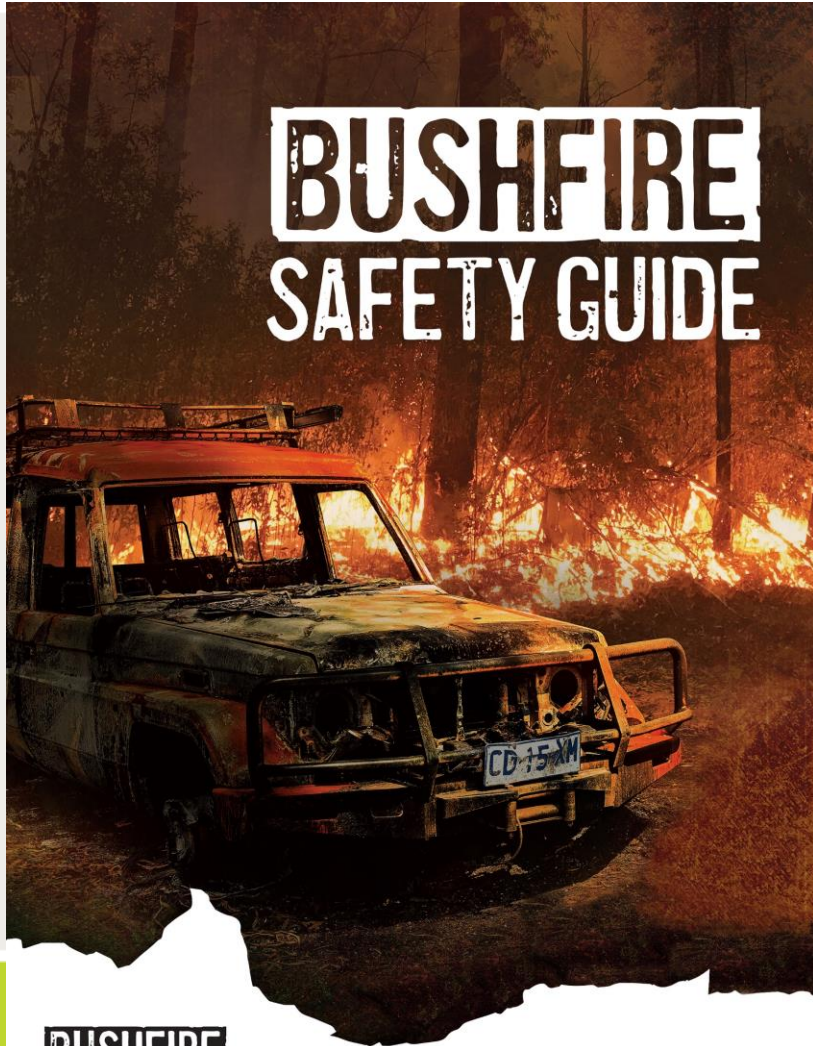
Where to Now?

- Bushfire Priority Project Funding
 - Scope being prepared
 - Will be brought back to the chamber for consideration



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BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS



BUSHFIRE
WHY RISK IT?

Where to Now?

- Cross-Council Bushfire Working Group
 - Shared resources and knowledge
 - Shared learnings and create jointly developed educational resources
 - Best Management approach to shared assets and boundaries
 - Best practice approach to bushfire mitigation risk management
 - Ability to attract external funding via a coalition of Councils (bushfire mapping and movement)
 - The opportunity to collaborate on strategic areas of work that will benefit all Councils involved

BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

QUESTIONS?



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BELIEF BUSTERS

BELIEF:

“I’m going to leave early so I don’t need a Bushfire Plan.”

BUSTED:

You need a flexible Bushfire Plan in case you can’t leave.



ROAD
CLOSED