

A **FIREWISE** INITIATIVE

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

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Your life is the first priority during bush fires. Prepare well, act decisively – and survive.



There are 4 key considerations when dealing with bush fire:

- The safety of you and your family
- The defendability of your property
- The protection of irreplaceable valuables and important documents
- The maintenance of adequate levels of insurance

PREPARE. It is your responsibility to prepare yourself, your family and your home for the threat of bush fire.

Prepare a Bush Fire Survival Plan

One of the most important decisions you need to make to protect you and your family is will you “Leave Early or Stay and Defend a well prepared property”. Regardless of your decision preparation is the key to survival.

What will you do to be safe?

- If you are going to leave – prepare for where you are going to go, how you are going to get there and what you are going to take.
- If you are going to stay, you must have a plan for how you are going to survive and where you will shelter. Know what equipment you need.
- Have a contingency plan in case things don't go according to plan.

Prepare yourself

Bush fires can impact the health, safety and welfare of you and your family. Being involved in a fire will be one of the most traumatic experiences of your life.

- You need to be both mentally and physically prepared to carry out your survival plan.
- Include the whole family in creating your Bush Fire Survival Plan.
- Prepare your Bush Fire Survival Kit.

Prepare your property

There are a number of measures you can take to prepare you home and property for bush fire. Start by identifying the potential fire risks around your home.

- Use the diagram overleaf as a guide to preparing your home.
- On days of CATASTROPHIC fire danger rating the safest option is for you and your family to leave early, hours or the day before a fire occurs. Even well prepared and constructed homes will not be safe.
- On days of EXTREME fire danger leaving early will always be the safest option for you and your family. Staying and Defending should only be considered if your home is well prepared, specifically designed and constructed for bush fire and you are currently capable of actively defending it.

The **RFS Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool** will help you make an informed decision and is available at

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

ACT. You need to act decisively in accordance with your Bush Fire Survival Plan when bush fires threaten.

Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning so you must be prepared to act without receiving any emergency warning.

Keep informed

- Know what the fire danger rating is for your area.
- Watch for signs of fire, especially smoke and flames.
- If you receive a Bush Fire Alert, take it seriously and act promptly.
- **Look and listen for information on TV, radio, the internet, mobile phones and through speaking with neighbours.**

Follow your Bush Fire Survival Plan

- Don't “wait and see”. Leaving late is the most dangerous option.
- Only consider staying and defending if you and your property are currently well prepared.

SURVIVE. Your survival depends on your preparations, and the decisions you make.

People are more important than houses

- Your life and your family's lives are always your first priority during bush fires.

Have a contingency plan

The safest option is always to be away from the fire, but that may not always be possible so regardless of your plan to leave early or stay and defend a well prepared property, you must have a contingency plan.

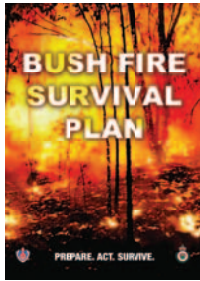
- Identify your nearest Neighbourhood Safer Place or other locations that may provide you with greater protection.

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Are you prepared to keep your family safe

Check the condition of external walls and cladding and seal any gaps

Prepare your Bush Fire Survival Plan



Make sure the pressure relief valves on LPG cylinders face outwards (so flame is not directed toward the house)

Have a non-combustible doormat

Keep garden mulch away from the house and keep grass short

INSURANCE

Maintain adequate levels of home & contents insurance.

Cut back any overhanging trees or shrubs and dispose of cuttings appropriately

Plant trees and shrubs that are less likely to ignite due to their low oil content

Check the condition of your roof and replace any damaged or missing tiles

Clean leaves from the roof, gutters and downpipes and fit quality metal leaf guards

Install metal flywire or solid screens to the outside windows and doors

If you have a water tank, dam or swimming pool, consider installing a Static Water Supply sign (SWS)

Ensure you have a hose which is long enough to reach every part of the home

Remove and store any flammable items away from the house

Enclose underfloor areas

Store wood piles well away from the house and keep covered

Steel fences are the most effective at withstanding the intense heat generated by a bush fire

