



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Residents urged to prepare for fire risk on *Get Ready Weekend*

13 September 2023

The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) is calling on communities across the state to start preparing for bush fire season, as warm and dry conditions create a heightened fire risk.

The middle weekend of September is *Get Ready Weekend*, the annual opportunity for the NSW RFS to raise fire awareness and encourage preparedness through events held at RFS stations across the state.

Prolific vegetation growth is an added concern ahead of 1 October when the entire state will be in the Bush Fire Danger Period. The danger period has already started for 38 local government areas with 11 LGAs commencing a month earlier than usual.

In almost 600 events held by RFS brigades across the state, residents will be encouraged to talk about what they can do to get ready for bush and grass fires.

The events will include firefighting displays and opportunities to climb aboard a fire truck and check out specialist firefighting equipment.

Members of the community will also have an opportunity to get to know, and show support for, their local firefighters.

The RFS is preparing for the upcoming fire season with hazard reduction burns, equipment maintenance, and training of personnel.

Community members are urged to take five simple steps to reduce their bushfire risk:

1. **Trim** overhanging trees and shrubs.
2. **Mow** grass and remove the cuttings. Have a cleared area around your home.
3. **Remove** material that can burn around your home, such as door mats, wood piles and mulch.
4. **Clear** and remove all the debris and leaves from the gutters surrounding your home.
5. **Prepare** a sturdy hose or hoses that will reach all around your home.

A list of the *Get Ready Weekend* events being held this year can be found on the RFS website at [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/getready](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/getready)

#### Minister for Emergency Services Jihad Dib said:

“After three years of widespread rain and flooding, we’re now asking the people of NSW to turn their attention back to the risk of bush and grass fires.”



**For more information contact the State Duty Media Officer on 9898 1855**  
**For current incidents or major fire updates visit [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)**

“Recent research shows that 70 per cent of people living in bush fire prone areas have some sort of plan for what to do during a fire, but worryingly less than half had done any preparation work on their property.”

“The first step in getting ready is knowing your risk, and local brigades can help you this Get Ready Weekend.”

“Volunteer firefighters will be available this Get Ready Weekend to talk about the simple things you can do to reduce your bush fire risk, like cleaning out your gutters, trimming overhanging branches and completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan. “

“The time to prepare is now, not when a fire is at your front door.”

**Commissioner of the RFS Rob Rogers said:**

“As weather heats up and the landscape dries out, the threat of serious fires is quickly returning.”

“Thanks to an extended period of wet weather and prolific growth, NSW is now facing its worst grass fire risk in two decades.”

“RFS volunteers are already working hard to contain fires across the state, with crews responding to more than 2,000 bush and grass fires since the start of July.”

“While our firefighters are doing everything they can, including undertaking hazard reduction burns and undergoing training, preparation is a shared responsibility and property owners need to do their part too.”

“I thank all our volunteers for the work they do in protecting communities across the state and thank residents and landowners for the efforts they will put in to preparing themselves, their families and property.”

