



## District Information Pack

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### The Hills

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The Hills Shire is located in Sydney's north-western suburbs, about 30 kilometres from the Sydney CBD and covers approximately 380 square kilometres of which, 90 square kilometres is urbanised land. The population is almost 184,000 people (ref: 2020 ABS ERP).

NSW RFS Brigades attend over 600 incident calls per year of which on average, 70 are bush, grass and scrub fires while the remaining include, MVA's, AFA's, Structure Fires, Pile Burns, etc. Brigades also attend to flood and storm events, assist the public and emergencies agencies and similar incident calls.

The NSW RFS District Office is located at 1a Angus Road, Kenthurst NSW 2156 and is identified as an Incident Management Facility and local Emergency Operations Centre. An alternate EOC is located at The Hills Shire Council, 3 Cumbia Court, Norwest, NSW 2153.

The most common sources of ignition are:

- Escaped private hazard reduction burns
- Lightning
- Arson

The northern section (Rural North) of The Hills Shire is a mixture of small residential communities, commercial properties, rural farming, nurseries, quarries and hobby farms.

The southern segment is predominately a mixture of low rise and multi-level residential and commercial properties extending across the North West Metro Zone (e.g. suburbs of Baulkham Hills, Castle Hill, West Pennant Hills, Norwest, Bella Vista, Kellyville, Rouse Hill). Residential properties in suburbs such as, Kenthurst, Dural and Annangrove vary in size but, it is not uncommon to find residential blocks in excess of 1 hectare in size, frequently interfacing with bushland. Where rural properties have been subdivided for residential development it is not uncommon to find small "gated communities" (housing estates).

An increase in residential property development is occurring in the south western area of The Hills Shire, predominantly in the former farming and grassland suburbs of Box Hill and Nelson. A consequence of the fast growth of this residential development, infrastructure has been slow to keep up whereby roads may be poorly maintained, consist of only two lanes and are quickly becoming congested.

## 1.1. Contact Information

District Office Address:	1A Angus Road Kenthurst NSW 2156
District Office Phone:	02 9658 9000
After Hours Contact:	Via State Operations on 02 8741 5400
A PSN Radio Channel:	114 HILLS A – Primary Dispatch Channel
B PSN Radio Channel:	214 HILLS B
PMR Channel:	NA
ESO Conversion Chart:	Please see file in folder for relevant conversion information
Fire Weather Forecast Area:	Greater Sydney
Local Government Area:	The Hills Shire

## 1.2. Topography

The area is predominantly residential, with large areas of native vegetation such as the Royal The Hills Shire topography varies from undulating and hilly topography as the Sydney Basin rises up to the north west joining the Hornsby Plateau to Cumberland Plains in the south.

To the west and north, Hawkesbury River forms part of its western and northern boundary whereby the ridge lines along Old Northern Road and Wisemans Ferry Road descend to the river intermingled with sandstone cliffs, rugged steep valleys and gullies while to the east of Old Northern Road, valleys and gullies adjoin the national parks and bushland of the Hornsby Shire Council.

Elevation within the Shire ranges from sea level at Wisemans Ferry to 239 metres at Maroota Trig Station. Much of the land within the Hornsby Plateau is underlain by Hawkesbury sandstone while land to the south is a mixture of shale over the sandstone and alluvial plain.

As the topography of the land descends from the northern region of The Hills Shire to the southern region, gentle sloping areas interlaced with less rugged gullies, grass land and some wetlands predominate the area.

## 1.3. Vegetation

Vegetation type varies. Dominated by diminishing open grasslands/plains and agricultural land due to urbanisation in the South Western part of the district. The Cumberland Plain Woodland turns to hilly forested areas consisting of Shale/Sandstone transition forest. Grassy woodland areas to forest dominated by Eucalyptus, Stringybark and ironbark, casuarina, turpentine, Persoonia and Acacia. Shrub layer is diverse, dominated by Kunzea, geebung and blackthorn species while ground layers are dominated by native grasses and sedges.

South East area is dominated by Sydney Blue Gum and Blackbutt. The understory consists of Lilly Pilly, Figs and fern species.

The central and northern area of The Hills Shire has tall eucalyptus forest dominated by Forest Red Gum & Grey Gum. A mixed understorey of sclerophyll forests, shrubs and grasses. Ground cover contains varied species of shrubs such as blackthorn and geebungs Gullies dominated by Sydney

peppermint, Sydney Red Gum and scattered Turpentine and Ironbarks; Ridgetop Woodland areas dominated by Angophora, Eucalypts, Acacia’s, Allocasurina, banksia, pea and rushes. Areas of Heath noted though trees maybe sparse but dominated by bloodwoods and Stringybark.

Other localised Forest and Woodland types are also scattered across the district.

### 1.4. Climate

The typical/average climate in The Hills area is warm summers and cool winters with the most rainfall received during summer and autumn (December to May) and a drier winter and spring (June to November).

The start of the normal bush fire season coincides with northwest winds, which often prevail during late spring (Sep/Oct). The majority of serious bushfires occur from this period until the onset of autumn.

### 1.5. Average Weather Data

**Summary of major climate statistics recorded at Sydney Harbour (Wedding Cake West) recorded by the BoM (last updated 4 July 2024)**

Element (Mean)	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Max Temp (°C)	21.1	22.1	23.5	24.7	24.8	24.0	22.4	20.0	17.7	17.3	18.0	19.8
Min Temp (°C)	15.4	17.1	18.8	20.5	20.5	19.4	16.7	13.5	11.5	10.6	11.2	13.4
3pm Wind (kph)	26.5	27.1	27.6	26.3	26.0	24.0	22.5	20.6	20.1	20.6	23.0	25.1
3pm Temp (°C)	No data available											
Rainfall (mm)												
3pm RH (%)												

### 1.6. Known Radio Comms Blackspots

- PSN Coverage issues in some low lying areas of Lower Portland, Leets Vale, Cattai and Wisemans Ferry
- Some indoor PSN Coverage issues in the built areas of Box Hill, Gables, Rouse Hill & North Kellyville

## 1.7. Hazards

### 1.7.1. Fire (Bush or Grass)

Major fires in areas of forest, bush scrub and grasslands, particularly in the centre and northern areas of The Hills Shire. Potential for impact upon smaller communities in the centre and north of The Hills Shire.

### 1.7.2. Fire (Industrial)

Potential for industrial fire in office complexes factories and warehouses within industrial estates, particularly in southern area of The Hills Shire. Centre and northern areas, fire mostly restricted to workshop type facilities

### 1.7.3. Fire (Commercial)

Fires in commercial shopping centres, aged care facilities, nursing homes, hospitals and schools. Particularly in southern area of The Hills Shire. Northern and western areas fire potential in ski gardens accommodation.

### 1.7.4. Fire (Residential)

Residential fire risk in medium/high rise apartments. Particularly in new growth centre areas in southern area of The Hills Shire.

### 1.7.5. MVAs, Roads & Access

MVA's frequent across The Hills Shire. Southern area mostly cars etc., northern and western areas heavy vehicles. Roads in areas of new development inadequate, frequently narrow double lane. Roads in northern and western areas of The Hills Shire used by heavy vehicles, accidents frequent

## 1.8. Land Management Authorities

Land Manager	% of Area
National Parks & Wildlife Service	1.5
Forestry Corporation of NSW	0.1
Department of Lands	9
Local Government	7
Private	81.4
Other (including Sydney Water, RMS, Endeavour Energy, Department of Education and Training and Department of Planning)	1

For more specific data on The Hills District, please follow the link to The Hills Bush Fire Risk Management Plan [here](#).

*Note: This link will only work with internet coverage.*

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For further information regarding The Hills District Information pack, please contact the Operational Improvement team via email at **[operational.improvement@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:operational.improvement@rfs.nsw.gov.au)**

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