

# MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## Volunteers & V8's: RFS fires cooling things down at Bathurst

5 October 2012

More than 75 volunteers from the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) will be ensuring fires don't get in the way of a good weekend for the 200,000 race fans converging on the 'Bathurst 1000'.

NSW RFS Commissioner Fitzsimmons said there are 6,000 people camping on and around Mount Panorama this weekend who need to be vigilant when using fire, particularly camp fires.

"NSW RFS volunteers have already assisted one group of careless campers by extinguishing a fire that started in their tent on Thursday morning.

"If firefighters had not responded as quickly as they did and managed to extinguish the blaze it could have resulted in further tents being burnt and motor racing enthusiasts being put in danger.

"Campers are allowed to light small camp fires, but they need to take extreme care that fires are closely monitored, never left unattended and completely extinguished before leaving the area.

"It is also very important for campers lighting cooking fires that they choose a place surrounded by nothing that can burn for at least three metres.

"I urge people to listen to the warnings from the volunteer firefighters who will be walking around the Mount Panorama circuit, providing advice on how people can keep their weekend free of any unexpected fire emergencies," said Commissioner Fitzsimmons.

NSW RFS firefighters are prepared to respond to any incident that flares up this weekend including building fires, power issues, tent fires and escaped camp fires.

"If a fire does break out firefighters will work to protect the critical infrastructure on the top Mount Panorama, in particular the Communication Tower, as well as the many helicopter refuelling stations.

"There is an abundance of long, dry grass around the Mt. Panorama area and it will only take one discarded cigarette butt, or escaped camp fire to start a grass fire that could quickly escalate in these conditions.

"We are expecting to see some warm, windy weather throughout the weekend and when you combine that with the high fuel levels in the area, we are facing a potentially dangerous situation," said Commissioner Fitzsimmons.