

# MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## Prepare now to survive the bush fire season

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Preparing now for the bush fire season will give people a better chance of saving their homes and families if a fire threatens this summer, said NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons.

“This week is ‘Bush Fire Awareness Week’ and it is a timely reminder for people to get ready for the impending bush fire season.

“In the last two months alone we have already seen more than 1,500 bush fires throughout the State, with volunteer firefighters working in very challenging conditions.

“Properties have already been destroyed as a result of these serious bush fires that have affected a number of locations from the Tweed and Gwydir areas in the State’s north, right down to the Cooma Monaro area in southern NSW.

“This is particularly concerning considering we are yet to enter the hottest months of summer.

“These fires are a clear indication that fires can threaten and impact homes at great speed, even in the absence of hot weather,” said Commissioner Fitzsimmons.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said the fires are being fuelled by high levels of growth following the increased rainfall experienced over the last two years.

“This growth presents a significant challenge for landholders and rural fire brigades, particularly in grassland areas, because grass fires can start early and move quickly, often catching people off guard.

“Bush Fire Awareness Week reminds people to plan in advance what action they will take in an emergency, so they are not making life saving decisions at the last minute.

“I’m urging residents to know their risk, and undertake the necessary preparations. Seek advice from your local brigade about simple preparation tips to keep your home and property safe.

“Very basic tasks like keeping the lawns cut and clearing overhanging tree branches and leaf litter may save your home and possessions if a bush fire does threaten this summer.

“Having a Bush Fire Survival Plan, that you have discussed with your family, and a well-prepared-property are essential for anyone living in bush fire prone areas.

“It is also important for people who work or travel through bush fire prone areas to know what you will do in the event of an emergency,” said Commissioner Fitzsimmons.

More information about Bush Fire Awareness Week and protecting your property from fire is available on the NSW RFS website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au).