

TAKING STEPS TO PROTECT FAMILY AND PROPERTY

For the best chance of protecting your family and property in a bushfire, it's important to start preparing and planning well before fire reaches your doorstep. With the fire bush season now upon us the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) is pushing its message of "prepare, act and survive." Here are some key points:

Prepare:

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

Prepare a Bushfire Survival Plan.

One of the most important decisions you need to make to protect you and your family is, will you leave or stay and defend a well prepared property. Regardless of your decision preparation is the key to survival.

- ✓ 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 are going to shelter. Know what equipment you need and have a contingency plan in case things do not go 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 Bushfire Survival Plan Kit.

Prepare your property

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

Prepare to leave:

If your plan is to leave early, prepare for where you are going to go, how you are going to get there and what you are going to take.

- ✓ On days of catastrophic fire danger rating leaving is the only option to ensure you and your family's survival.
- ✓ On days of extreme fire danger rating leaving is the safest option for you and your family, and you should only consider staying and defending if your home has been specifically designed and constructed to withstand bushfires.

Act

You need to act decisively in accordance with your Bushfire Survival Plan when bushfires threaten. Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning so you must be prepared to act without receiving any emergency warnings.

Keen informed:

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

People are more important than houses:

- ✓ Your life and your family's lives are always your first priority during bushfires.

Have a contingency plan:

- ✓ The safest option is always to be away from the fire, but that may not be always 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.