



Prepare. Act. Survive

If you live in or near the bush, it is your responsibility to prepare yourself, your family, and your home to survive a bush fire. Prepare your home and consider forming a Community FireWise Group with your neighbours or joining a Community Fire Unit. There is a wide range of planning and preparation activities that you can undertake which will dramatically increase the chances of you, your family, and your home surviving a bush fire.

The first step in planning to survive a bush fire is to understand your own level of risk. The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) has created the **Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool** to help you calculate your risk based on your particular circumstances, and it is available at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au. By understanding your own level of risk you will be able to make informed decisions that are right for you and your family. One of the most important decisions you need to make is whether you will **Leave Early** or **Stay and Defend** a well prepared property. This decision is the basis of your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**.

If you have already decided to **Leave Early** or the **Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool** has advised you to do so, turn to page 4 and carefully read the **Leave Early** information before completing your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**.

What will you do?

The following questions may help you make the right decision for you and your family.

- Is your home adequately constructed, maintained and prepared to withstand the impact of a fire, or in other words, is your home defensible?
- Do you need to consider family members who are young, elderly or infirm?
- Are you able to maintain the necessary bush fire preparations for yourself and your property?
- Are you physically and emotionally prepared to actively defend your property?
- What will you do if a rapid onset fire leaves you with no time to leave. Where will you shelter and how will you get there?
- Do you have the knowledge, skills, confidence and equipment to **Stay and Defend** your property?

If you are going 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. If you are going to **Stay and Defend** you must have a plan for how you are going to survive and where you will shelter. In either case have a contingency plan in case things don't go the way you expect.

Once you have completed your **Bush Fire Survival Plan** practise it regularly to ensure everyone involved knows exactly what to do in the event of a fire. **Preparation is the key to survival.**

Prepare yourself

Being involved in a fire will be one of the most traumatic experiences of your life. Bush fires can impact the health, safety and welfare of you and your family.

- You need to be both mentally and physically prepared to carry out your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**.
- Include the whole family in creating your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**.
- Prepare your Bush Fire Survival Kit.
- Prepare your Bush Fire Relocation Kit.

Prepare your property

There are a number of measures you can take to prepare your home and property for bush fire. Once your property has been properly prepared a regular maintenance routine will greatly reduce the work required.

Your maintenance routine should include:

- Mowing your grass regularly
- Removing excess ground fuels and combustible material (long dry grass, dead leaves and branches)
- Clearing leaves, twigs, bark and other debris from the roof and gutters
- Trimming low lying branches 2 metres from the ground surrounding your home

You should also:

- Enclose open areas under your decks and floors
- Install fine steel wire mesh screens on all windows, doors, vents and weep holes
- Relocate flammable items away from your home including woodpiles, paper, boxes, crates, hanging baskets and garden furniture
- Seal all gaps in external roof and wall cladding

Regardless of your decision, an unprepared property is not only at risk itself, but may also present an increased danger for your neighbours and their homes. Fire fighters will carefully assess the risk before deciding if they are able to defend unprepared properties.

Know the **Fire Danger Rating** for any given day. You and your family should be aware of the actions you will take at the various **Fire Danger Rating** levels and it is important to ensure this is incorporated into your **Bush Fire Survival Plan**.

Source:

http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/file_system/attachments/Attachment_BushFireSurvivalPlan.pdf

Please note – this article is not intended to concern residents, rather to act as a reminder for preparation for the bushfire season, particularly as so many of us live close to bushland. *Ed.*

Please assist our police by reporting all suspicious activity to: CRIME STOPPERS use: 1800 333 000.

**For police attendance use: 131 444.
But, for all life-threatening emergencies use: “0 0 0”**



ActewAGL urges residents to keep clear, for safety's sake

4 November 2009

ActewAGL has launched a new public safety campaign urging the community to keep obstructions such as trees, shrubs, rocks and rubbish clear of electricity and gas infrastructure.

General Manager Networks Michael Charlton said, "Trees growing too close to powerlines are a significant safety risk – they can cause fires, bring down lines leading to the risk of electrocution, cause blackouts and make it difficult for maintenance to be carried out. In most cases, trees should be kept 1.5m clear of powerlines in all directions."

"ActewAGL's substations and mini-pillars house electrical cabling. Along with meters, they play an important part in the safe, efficient operation of the electricity network. They also need to be kept 1.5 metres clear in all directions so we have access to them for maintenance and in the case of an emergency."

Over the coming weeks a television commercial and advertisements in *The Canberra Times* and *The Chronicle* will promote some key safety messages and these simple steps that everyone can take when out in the garden this spring:

ActewAGL can require land owners and occupiers to trim trees on their property that have grown too close to powerlines. Ensure your trees are trimmed so that they are 1.5 metres clear of powerlines. If they are already too close, an ActewAGL-accredited tree surgeon must be used.

Trim vegetation and remove obstructions such as rubbish and rocks from around the base of power poles and electrical substations and mini pillars, so that there is at least a 1.5 metre clearance in all directions.

For an information brochure, a list of ActewAGL-accredited tree surgeons or to view the television commercial and press advertisements, visit actewagl.com.au/safety or call 6248 3555.

For further media information only:

Stephanie Luelf
ActewAGL
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ActewAGL reminds ACT residents to keep safety in mind this storm and bushfire season

16 October 2009

Canberra's storm and bushfire season has begun and ActewAGL has some simple steps everyone can take to

help ensure you and your family stay safe around electrical infrastructure.

Acting General Manager Networks Stephen Devlin said, "The storm season extends from the start of September through to February, while October marks the official start of the bushfire season.

"After a storm or bushfire, stay clear of fallen or low powerlines and any objects such as fences or trees that may be in contact with them, as they can conduct electricity.

"Report damage to electrical infrastructure immediately by calling ActewAGL's emergencies and faults number, which is 13 10 93."

During a storm there are a number of precautions you can take to reduce the chance of damage to yourself or your property.

- To avoid appliances being damaged by lightning, turn off and unplug any that are unnecessary.
- To reduce the risk of electric shocks, avoid using landline telephones, touching metallic material such as water pipes and taps, going outside and using any electrical appliances that are wet or are damaged.

For information about how you can prepare your home for storm and bushfire season, visit the ACT Emergency Service Agency's website esa.act.gov.au or call 13 22 81.

For information about electrical safety or to get a copy of ActewAGL's Electrical safety tips brochure visit actewagl.com.au/safety or call 6248 3555.

For further media information only:

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Second-hand Sunday 29 November 2009

Second-hand Sunday is a free community event giving you the chance to give away useful things you don't need anymore.

On the day of the event, participants place items that are still useable but no longer wanted, at the front of their home. Anyone may collect these items during the event.

At the end of the event, disposal of any items not collected is the responsibility of the participant.

Find out what you need to know to join in at http://www.tams.act.gov.au/play/community_events/second-hand_sunday/second-hand_sunday. Please note that you must register with TAMS to participate. Phone 132281

Source and full article at http://www.tams.act.gov.au/play/community_events/second-hand_sunday