



Newsletter

KALAMUNDA BUSHFIRE READY GROUPS



Hi Everybody,

We hope you had a great festive season, and that this year will be kinder to us all as 2020 was certainly a challenging year, the early precautions put into place has saved us from many of the problems that other states and the rest of the world are experiencing at the moment. We as a Bush Fire Brigade have been super cautious so that we can all be available for any bushfire call outs in the future.

Working with the City of Kalamunda this past year has seen us achieving some successful Community Engagement programs. Apart from the Bush Fire Readiness program your Bush Fire Brigade has been actively engaged with their presence at markets and school events, as well as the Christmas lolly run which made many young and old children happy.

November saw eight new probationary firefighters receiving their certificates, this was a ceremony held at our station where the families of the new firefighters attended to

witness the ceremony. This was followed by the chiefs inspection of all our bush firefighters and a fitting breakfast to finish our year of 2020.

No doubt many of you have taken the Christmas break to explore a bit more of our magnificent state as well as catch up with family. With many arriving home to find the perfect garden you left covered in leaves and twigs, bark and fallen branches, it's that time of the year when the gum trees unload their leaves with some shedding their bark and the strong easterly winds bringing down branches, as we have said many times it's a continuous job to comply with the requirements and keep your fuel loadings right down, unfortunately mother nature doesn't take a break.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE:

Just a reminder about community resilience, something we have talked about in earlier newsletters, where residents need to accept that they are responsible for making those decisions that will enable them to combat the situation thrust upon them by a bush fire suddenly taking them out of their comfort zone causing a lot of uncertainty and anxiety, you may be lucky and have prior warning or suddenly find you must leave and leave now as your life is in danger it's too late at this stage to decide to make a plan, instead consult the Fire Plan you should have already created to Leave and Leave early or put into action your plan to stay and defend if that has been your decision.



DURING A BUSHFIRE, EMERGENCY SERVICES WILL PROVIDE YOU AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE THROUGH A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT METHODS. Your surroundings could be your best information source. Stay alert to what is happening around you. If you believe you may be in danger, [act immediately to stay safe](#).

There are four levels of warning. These change to reflect the increasing risk to your life or property, and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire arrives.

ADVICE



A fire has started but there is no immediate threat to lives or homes.
Be aware and keep up to date.

WATCH AND ACT



There is a possible threat to lives or homes.
You need to leave or get ready to defend – do not wait and see.

EMERGENCY WARNING



There is a threat to lives or homes.
You are in danger and need to take immediate action to survive.

ALL CLEAR



The danger has passed and the fire is under control.
Take care and remain vigilant in case the situation changes.



FIRE DANGER RATINGS

Use this tool daily during bushfire season to monitor conditions in your area.



CATASTROPHIC

Homes are not built to withstand a fire in these conditions. The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas. Do not stay and defend your property if the fire danger rating is catastrophic.

EXTREME SEVERE VERY HIGH

Seek out information and be ready to leave or stay and actively defend your property if a fire starts. Only stay if you are 100% prepared.

HIGH LOW-MODERATE

Be vigilant. Check your fire plan and continue to monitor conditions as they can change quickly.



WHERE TO FIND ALERTS AND WARNINGS?

Emergency WA emergency.wa.gov.au

DFES Public Information 13 DFES (13 3337)

ABC Radio or 6PR Your local radio frequency

For more information visit
dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfire

or contact DFES Community Preparedness:
Community.Preparedness@dfes.wa.gov.au

or 9395 9816



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September 2020/10/18



HOW FIREPROOF IS YOUR PLAN?

Please don't depend on a fire fighter, police, SES or other emergency services to come knocking on your door as they will be busy trying to combat the fire and keep open your escape routes for as long as possible. If you have taken the time to talk to your family and have made a plan, then you will be well on the way to getting out reasonable safely with your plan.

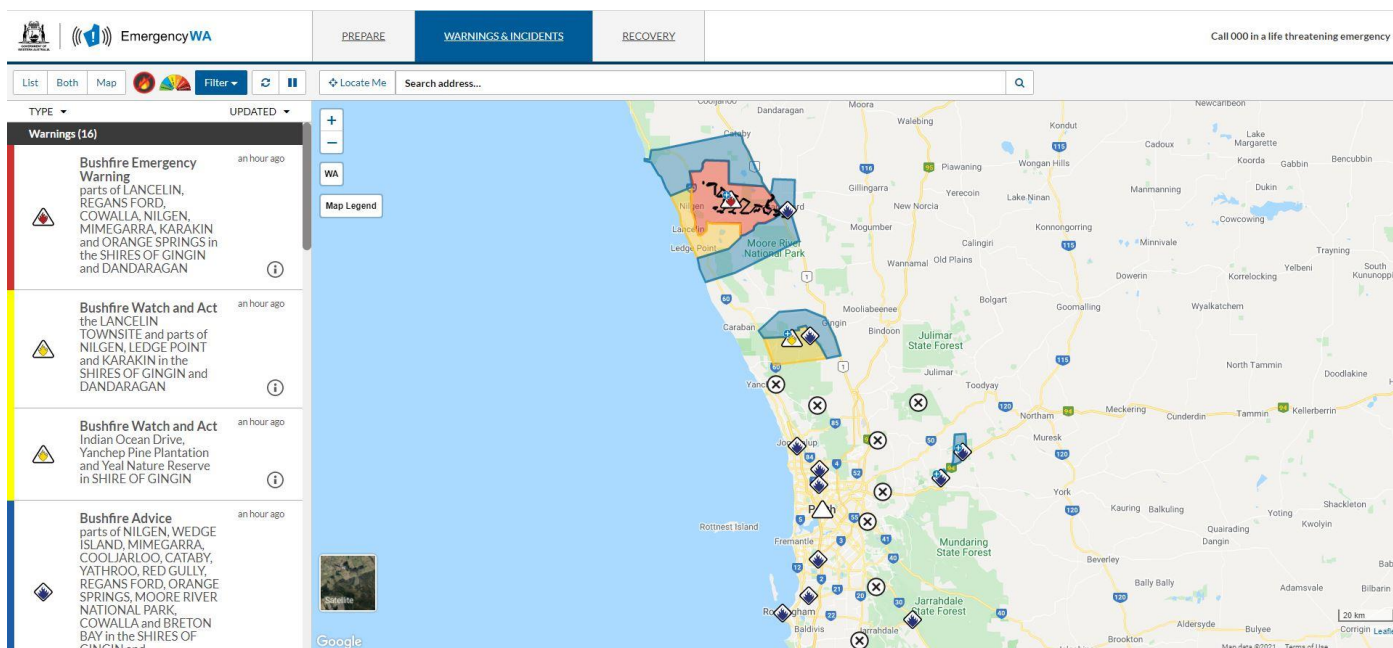


Communications:

As we have always said communications are your main tool to sus out where that fire is and where it is going to, if you are suddenly enveloped in smoke and ash communicate with the rest of your group and get onto www.emergency.wa.gov.au to see where the fire is, it's possible that one of your group further up the road can see flames and help you decide maybe what route to take hence the reason for the group having a communications tree.

Emergency WA will give you the information as to where the fire is and what roads are closed etc, remember that also if you are directly impacted by the fire or about to be, that an emergency alert will probably come through on both the house and mobile phones

You also have the ABC 720 ABC will broadcast 15 minutes after the hour and 15 minutes before the hour or if it is severe, they may suspend their normal program and devote it to providing constant updates and information to you



Preparing to evacuate Emergency Kit:

See above list and in addition:

- Bush Fire protective clothing means you should wear long sleeved cotton shirt or similar such as wool and trousers, a hat, eye protection, strong pair of gloves and covered shoes. Bear in mind that radiant heat can be fatal at 100 metres so wearing any synthetic clothing would result in a meltdown.
- Important Documents such as Passports, Title Deeds, Insurance certificates, Marriage Certificates, Drivers License, we have all seen what can happen when you are unable to prove your identity.
- Old photographs, most important and if you are able to record these on a memory stick it will lessen the worry of losing them.



THIS KIT CAN BE USED FOR ALL TYPES OF DISASTERS, NOT JUST BUSHFIRES.

To prepare your Emergency Kit you will need a bag large enough to fit all the items and an easily accessible spot in your home where it can be permanently stored.

Everyone in your household should know where the Emergency Kit is kept.



ESSENTIALS

Prepare before bushfire season

- ☐ Drinking water.
- ☐ Portable battery operated radio with spare batteries.
- ☐ Waterproof torch and battery powered lights.
- ☐ First Aid Kit.
- ☐ Woollen blanket.
- ☐ Emergency contact numbers.
- ☐ Bushfire protective clothing.



IMPORTANT EXTRAS

Pack on the day of a disaster

- ☐ Wallet, keys and phone with charger.
- ☐ Medication and toiletries.
- ☐ Specific requirements for your family members.
- ☐ Important documents and valuables (in a plastic bag).
- ☐ Spare clothes.
- ☐ Combination pocket knife.



PACKING FOR PETS

Pack on the day of a disaster

- ☐ Food, water and bowls.
- ☐ Bedding.
- ☐ Medication or special requirements.
- ☐ Registration/microchip information.
- ☐ Lead.



For more information visit
dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfire

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Total Fire Bans:

As you have seen in the past couple of weeks, we have had many days of Total Fire Bans, these are as you realise put into place to reduce the chance of an accidental fire developing which can then lead to residents losing their homes and endanger their lives, we have been providing Total Fire Ban warnings which is complimentary, be aware that operational commitments may get in the way so don't rely 100% on the TFBs being sent out. Watch the TV weather news which will give you notice of a Total Fire Ban for the next day, also 720 ABC also broadcasts this fact regularly and also Emergency WA, all of these sources will provide this information.



What you can and can't do on a Total Fire Ban day

What is a Total Fire Ban?

We declare a Total Fire Ban on a day when a fire is most likely to spread rapidly (because of extreme fire weather) or if there are already widespread fires and we don't have the resources to fight more. The lighting of open-air fires or any other activity in the open air that is likely to cause a fire is banned.

Total Fire Bans affect everyone

Every Western Australian is affected including farmers, campers, construction workers and residents in both urban and rural areas. So, make sure you carefully read this document, and if you need more information or advice call the TFB Hotline on 1800 709 355.

There are penalties if you ignore a Total Fire Ban

If you ignore a Total Fire Ban, you may receive an infringement of \$1,000. And if it's a serious breach, you may receive a penalty of \$25,000 and/or be jailed for 12 months.



Don't put people's lives and properties in danger.



STAY COOL

- › Minimise exertion
- › Keep out of the sun. Minimise heat exposure for yourself and others.
- › Limit trips outside and reschedule work meetings and tasks wherever possible
- › Spend time in cooled, well air-conditioned places. If you do not have air-conditioning at home spend time in places that do, such as public libraries, cinemas etc.
- › Keep your building cool. Close blinds during the day, and open to cool in the evening
- › Wear cool, comfortable clothes
- › Spray misted water onto body and clothes
- › Spend time lying on and under a wet sheet. Indoor fans can be helpful
- › Avoid using a fan where the indoor temperature is higher than 37°C
- › Remind the elderly of these cooling strategies, and assist them to achieve optimal cooling
- › Check with your local council to hear their heatwave response plan



STAY HYDRATED

- › Drink plenty of fluids, chilled if possible
- › Drink enough to urinate at least 3 times a day, and urine should be very pale in colour. If yellow, or darker, keep drinking. Avoid tea, coffee and alcohol.



FOOD

- › Ensure that food is refrigerated properly
- › Dispose of spoilt food



TRANSPORT/INFRASTRUCTURE

- › Stay informed and up-to-date about planned blackouts
- › Have a backup plan in case electricity or transport (road/rail) infrastructure fails



WILDLIFE

- › Leave out shallow containers of water for birds, possums and other animals. Place small stones in the bottom of the container and ensure that the water is left in a shady, protected environment (out of view from birds of prey and high enough to be safe from cats).
- › If you find injured or heat-stressed wildlife, bring them into cooler environments and lightly mist them with water
- › If you are concerned about an animal, call a wildlife rescue centre near you



PETS

- › If dogs or cats appear heat stressed, panting or restless, bathe them in cool water. Call your vet if you are concerned.
- › Bring your pets indoors when it's very hot, or ensure they have outdoor shelter
- › Leave out two bowls of cool drinking water (in case one is knocked over)
- › Never leave your pets alone in the car

Heat Wave Conditions: Although this has yet to be declared, with the continuing high temperature levels there will be undoubtedly warnings being sent out over the media and also on the Kalamunda City web site.

So, to finish this newsletter off below are some hints to assist you in combating extended very hot conditions extending over 3 to 4 days or more?

Heatwaves are a serious public health issue. Heatwaves kill more people in Australia than any other natural disasters, and even more are affected with illness and discomfort. The people at greatest risk are infants and young children, the elderly, overweight people, and those who work or exercise outdoors.

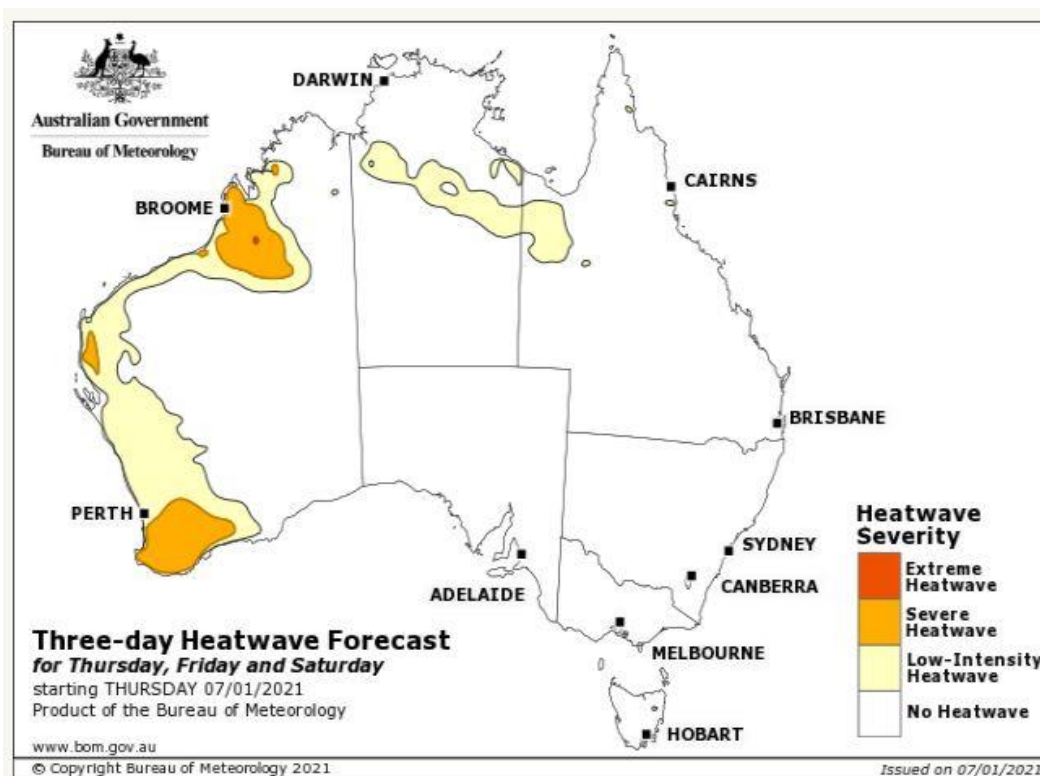
In the Perth metropolitan region, a heatwave is considered to be 3 or more consecutive days over 40c. This is not an uncommon occurrence during the summer; however, there are things you can do to both prepare for a heatwave and during a heatwave.

To prepare for a heatwave:

- Make sure that your fans and/or air-conditioners are serviced and working well
- Stock up on groceries and other necessities so you don't need to go out in the heat
- Make your home cooler by installing closing curtains and blinds, awnings, and shade cloths, external blinds, or roller shutters on sides of the house facing the sun
- Consider the potential for a power failure during a heatwave and prepare by ensuring you have torches, a charged mobile phone, and a generator if possible.

During a heatwave:

- If you do not have air-conditioning you can put a bowl of ice or frozen water bottles in front of your fan to cool the air
- Cool yourself with wet towels and cold showers
- Open doors and windows if there is a cool breeze or sea breeze
- Turn off as many lights as possible and avoid using the oven or stove as these emit heat
- Avoid large and protein heavy meals that tend to increase metabolic rates and warm the body.
- Limit outdoor activity to morning or evening hours. If you are outdoor during hotter hours drink plenty of water and be Sun Smart.
- Ensure your pets have suitable water and shade
- Keep in touch with elderly neighbours or friends to ensure they are handling the heatwave ok.
- Dress in non-heavy clothing with light colours.
- Drink plenty of water – at least 2 litres per day, and avoid dehydrating drinks such as coffee or alcohol. If you are involved in outdoor activity and perspiring 1 litre per hour may be required including some electrolyte to replace the lost salts through sweating.
- Eat smaller, cool meals such as salads
- If you notice any symptoms of heat stress including heavy vomiting, confusion, and swollen tongue.
- Never leave children, adults, or animals in parked vehicles for any period of time.



Heatwave Situation for Thursday, Friday, & Saturday (3 days starting 7/01/2021)

An area of extreme heatwave conditions is to develop over the Kimberley and Northern Interior of WA while severe heatwave conditions continue across southwestern WA. Low intensity heatwave conditions are expected across the remaining areas of western WA and across the NT/Qld border.

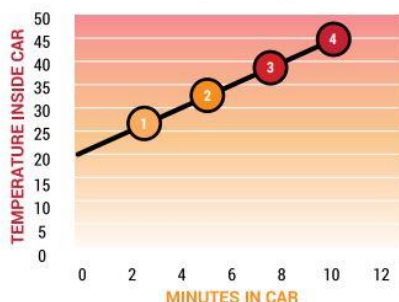
Pets:

- During a **heatwave** (or extreme temperatures), it is best to have your dog inside in a well-ventilated area, which will give them a break from the scorching sun. Sleeping spots. Dogs will normally find the coolest spot of the house or yard themselves, but place outside beds or mats in shady or cool spots.
- Cats tend to want to stay indoors and find the coolest spot
- Walking the dog should be confined to early morning or late afternoon once the temperatures start dropping
- Remember dogs like humans can take a certain amount of hot pavements however, their pads can be burnt and cause them a lot of pain so grass would be a better medium for walking on, this also applies to dog beaches where the sand away from the water's edge can be very hot.

The longer you're away from your car, the more dangerous it becomes

Tests performed by Victoria's Metropolitan Ambulance Service on a 29°C day, with the car's air-conditioning having cooled the interior to 20°C, showed it took just 10 minutes for the temperature to reach 44°C.

In a further 10 minutes it had tripled to a deadly 60.2°C.



- Cooling mechanisms kick in**
 - Panting and drooling starts
 - Blood vessels dilate
- Blood pressure is affected**
 - The heart works harder to supply blood to the dilated vessels
 - Blood starts to pool in organs
 - Blood pressure starts to drop
- Organs start to become damaged**
 - Kidney cells suffer thermal damage
 - Small blood clots form, causing more kidney damage
 - The cells lining the intestine and stomach suffer thermal damage, leading to severe bloody diarrhoea and vomiting
 - Tiny blood clots form in the brain and the brain swells
- After the body reaches 43°**
 - Irreversible brain damage
 - Seizures, coma or death

Signs of heatstroke



Other factors that can heighten the risk:

	OBSESITY
	THICK/LONG HAIR COAT
	EXTREMES IN AGE (YOUNG/OLD)
	EXCESSIVE EXERCISE
	RESPIRATORY DISEASE/ BREATHING PROBLEMS (i.e. flat-faced dogs, laryngeal paralysis, collapsing trachea)
	HEART PROBLEMS/ CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
	NEUROLOGICAL DISEASE
	DEHYDRATION

Treating heatstroke

If a dog is displaying any signs of heatstroke, move them to a cool, shaded area and call a vet immediately.

For the best chance of survival, dogs suffering from heatstroke urgently need to have their body temperature lowered gradually:



Move them to a shaded/cool area.



Immediately douse the dog with cool (not cold) water, to avoid shock. If possible, you can also use wet towels or place them in the breeze of a fan.



Allow the dog to drink small amounts of cool water.



Continue dousing the dog with cool water until their breathing starts to settle but never so much that they begin to shiver.



Heatstroke is an emergency. It is always better to be safe and have the dog checked out by a vet, even if they appear to be recovering.

The effects of heatstroke can be long-lasting, causing serious long-term health problems such as organ damage. Damage can continue to happen hours, or even days, after the animal is removed from the hot car, so **vet treatment is essential**.

Take care and don't hesitate to call us if you have any queries or email us.
Have a safe January and until February keep cool.

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