



MEDIA RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER, 2018

FIRE DANGER PERIOD DECLARED FOR THE STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

With the Fire Danger Period now in effect in the Strathbogie Shire as of this week, Council is urging residents, who haven't already, to prepare themselves and their properties now.

According to the CFA, now the Fire Danger Period has been declared, fire restrictions have come into force. This means you cannot light a fire in the open air unless you have a permit or comply with certain requirements.

There are also significant restrictions when it comes to a number of activities including barbeques, campfires, burning off, driving vehicles and using chainsaws.

According to CFA, current climate outlooks produced by the Bureau of Meteorology indicate warmer and drier conditions, which will worsen the current state of dryness in spring and early summer.

Strathbogie Shire's Municipal Emergency Manager, Ken Ross is urging residents, who haven't already, to start preparing their properties now.

"We urge landowners and residents to start preparing to ensure their land is as safe as possible."

Mr Ross said properties within townships or less than 2Ha must remove all flammable rubbish from their yards and ensure grass and weeds are kept cut to a height of no more than 100mm.

"Properties greater than 2Ha must slash around all buildings to a minimum distance of 20 metres," Mr Ross explained.

"Property boundaries must be slashed to a width of 6 metres. When neighbouring dwellings and assets are nearby this must be increased to at least 20 metres."

"If owners and occupiers fail to keep a fire safe environment, a Fire Prevention Notice will be issued by Council.

It is a requirement for the owner or occupier to follow the requests in the Fire Prevention Notice throughout the entire fire season, not just at the time the notice is received.

This year there will also be an additional fee of \$100.00 attached to the Fire Prevention notice to cover administration costs.

A further failure to maintain the requirements of the Fire Prevention Notice will result in a \$1611.90 fine issued by Council," Mr Ross explained.

Council has an active role in reducing fire hazards within and abutting urban areas. If you have any questions or concerns relating to your obligations, please feel free to contact Council Offices on 1800 065 993.

Fire Danger Period information:

- ✓ A written permit is required to burn off grass, undergrowth, weeds or other vegetation during the FDP. This permit may be issued by the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer or the CFA District Office. Please check with your municipality in the first instance
- ✓ Lighting a fire in the open without a permit is an offence and can bring a penalty of over \$19,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment. Barbeques and fires for cooking and warmth do not require a permit, but **must** be lit in properly constructed fireplaces (to view complete conditions visit cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/can)
- ✓ The use of an incinerator, chainsaw/lawn mower, welding/grinding equipment and vehicles that come in contact with vegetation and machinery with an internal combustion/heat engine are permitted provided conditions are followed
- ✓ Farmers can find legal guidelines and practical advice at cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/farms – this information is important especially for new farmers, bush block owners or hobby farmers
- ✓ A Total Fire Ban declaration means no fires can be lit for the declared district for that day unless there is a specific exemption or special permit issued. This applies irrespective of the Fire Restriction status for a given municipality. Further details at cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/can/

For more information and advice about fire safety and restrictions during the Fire Danger Period, please visit the Country Fire Authority's website www.cfa.vic.gov.au.

To receive information about fire events in your region, download the VicEmergency app on your mobile or device, which is also available on the CFA website.

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