



IT WON'T
DO WHAT YOU
EXPECT.

**If you live outside the
Adelaide inner metro area,
you're at bushfire risk.**

Use this publication to know your
bushfire risk and make a plan.



Government of
South Australia

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.



Know your bushfire risk

This magazine provides you with vital bushfire safety and planning information. It is critical for you and your family's sake that you take the time to study the following CFS information.

Knowing your risk and making a plan may just save your life and property.

After reading this publication the CFS strongly recommends:

- Attending a local Bushfire Blitz meeting in your area
- Joining or establishing a neighbourhood Community Fire Safe Group
- Completing the CFS online Bushfire Household Self-Assessment Tool and making and practising your Bushfire Survival Plan
- Regularly visiting the CFS website www.cfs.sa.gov.au
- Following CFS on Twitter and Facebook
- Downloading the CFS Bushfire Smartphone app.

For information on any of these actions, please call the CFS Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)

www.cfs.sa.gov.au



Recognise your risk

Am I at risk from bushfire?

If you live, work or travel outside of the inner Metropolitan Adelaide area you are at bushfire risk.

Do I really understand how bushfire can behave?

Understanding how a fire can behave may change your thoughts on how you will plan.

THE FACTS ON BUSHFIRE BEHAVIOUR

- Wind, vegetation and topography: either individually or collectively can influence fire behaviour
- Smoke: Just because you think you know a safe way out of your property, does not mean the smoke from a fire will be clear enough to let you see your way out safely
- Wind and fire speed: The speed a bushfire can travel at can be terrifying. Don't leave too late
- Ember attack: Just because you cannot see the fire does not mean you are safe. On a windy day sparks and embers can travel many kilometres ahead of a bushfire to land and ignite your property
- Radiant heat: Silent, and travelling in the most direct line ahead of the fire front, radiant heat is the biggest cause of loss of life in a bushfire.

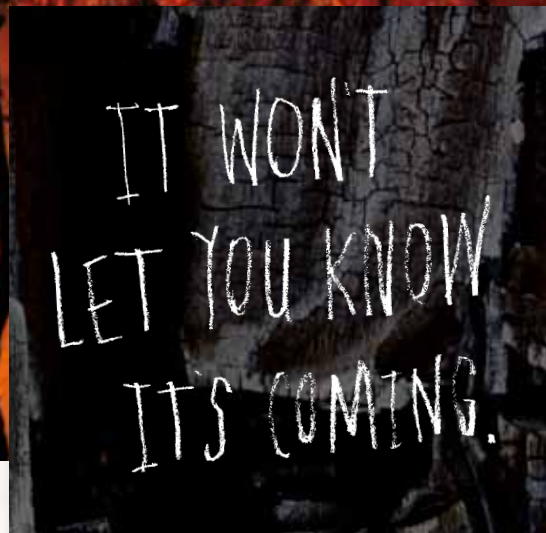
How real is my risk?

Living in a bush setting is a lifestyle choice for many South Australians. The benefits are enormous, but so are the risks.

All people living in or near bush, grassland or scrub - including those in suburban fringe areas of Adelaide and regional South Australia - are in danger of experiencing a bushfire.

In South Australia we have experienced several such events. Ash Wednesday in 1983 and the Wangary Bushfires in 2005 resulted in serious loss of life, but every year across Australia there are thousands of incidents and homes lost to bushfire. The reality of experiencing a dangerous bushfire is a risk that everyone must seriously consider.

While fires are inevitable, they are also survivable - and your chances of saving yourself, your family and your home increase according to your level of planning and preparation. The CFS will not always be able to protect each individual property threatened by fire. People who do not have a Bushfire Survival Plan are putting themselves and their family at risk.



Know your fire bans and Fire Danger Ratings

Fire Ban District

South Australia has 15 Fire Ban Districts. It is important to check the CFS website at www.cfs.sa.gov.au, download the CFS Smartphone app or call the CFS Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677) to find out which district you live in. Each of the districts has their own fire danger season. The fire danger season generally runs from November to April. During the fire danger season you should regularly check the CFS website for fire restrictions and bans in your district.

Download the CFS FireApp for all your Fire Danger Ratings.



Fire Danger Ratings

Every day during the Fire Danger Season, weather and other factors are used to calculate the Fire Danger Ratings (FDR) for each district. These ratings are not predictors of how likely a bushfire is to occur, but how dangerous it could be if it did occur.

FIRE DANGER RATING	RECOMMENDED ACTION
CATASTROPHIC TOTAL FIRE BAN	YOU NEED TO ACT NOW Leaving a bushfire prone area the night before or early in the day is the best option for your survival.
EXTREME TOTAL FIRE BAN	YOU NEED TO GET READY TO ACT Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. Only stay if you and your property are prepared to the highest level.
SEVERE TOTAL FIRE BAN	YOU NEED TO BE AWARE Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. Only stay if you and your home are well prepared and you can actively defend it.
VERY HIGH	YOU NEED TO BE PREPARED Check your Bushfire Survival Plan, know where to go for more information, and monitor the situation for any changes.
HIGH	
LOW-MODERATE	

Top 10 bushfire ready tips

- 1** Understand the environment in which you live. Is your house surrounded by (or near) bush, grass or coastal scrub? Do you travel through or plan to holiday in bushfire-prone areas?
- 2** Sit down with your family now and write a Bushfire Survival Plan – your life could depend on it. Download a copy from www.cfs.sa.gov.au
- 3** Make sure you understand and are familiar with the new national Fire Danger Ratings and what those ratings mean for your family's Bushfire Survival Plan.
- 4** Practise your Bushfire Survival Plan with your whole family, including your strategies for dealing with stock or large pets such as horses.
- 5** Create and maintain as much defensible space as possible around your home by managing vegetation, including grass and shrubs.
- 6** Be aware that should you plan to defend your home in accordance with Fire Danger Rating guidelines, you need to be physically capable and mentally prepared.
- 7** Take the time to put together your family's Bushfire Survival Kits, including a Relocation Kit and a Recovery Kit containing the things you'll need to survive in the first 24 to 48 hours after a bushfire. You'll find all the details and fact sheets on the CFS website at www.cfs.sa.gov.au
- 8** Learn as much as you can about bushfire warnings and safety – ask your local CFS about forthcoming community meetings or alternatively, visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au
- 9** Update your home and contents insurance and leave a copy of your policies in a secure place away from your home.
- 10** **PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.**

IT DOESN'T
CARE WHAT
IT BURNS.

Prepare your home

Preparing yourself, your family and your home is your responsibility.

The more you prepare your home the better the chances are that it will survive a bushfire, even if you plan to leave well before a bushfire starts.

Make a Bushfire Survival Plan

Whether you choose to leave early to go to a safer place or to stay and defend your well prepared home, planning and preparation is the key to survival:

- Prepare and practise your Bushfire Survival Plan well before the fire season
- Prepare your home and your property to survive the fire front, ember attack and radiant heat
- Even if your plan is to leave early, the more you prepare your home and property the greater the chance your home will survive the bushfire
- If you prepare your property but don't feel able to stay and defend it, then plan to leave early. Make this part of your Bushfire Survival Plan
- Prepare for those days when the forecast Fire Danger Rating is Very High, Severe, Extreme or Catastrophic
- If you prepare to leave early, consider when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there safely and what you will take with you
- If you are planning to stay and defend, prepare for a frightening experience
- Find out what equipment you need and determine what you will do if things do not go according to plan
- Prepare for when a fire is close to you.



SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

There are two types of sprinkler systems - roof mounted and ground based. Roof mounted sprinkler systems can be designed to reduce the impact from radiant heat, direct flame contact and spark and ember attack. Ground based sprinkler systems can be designed to reduce fire intensity by wetting down vegetation around the home and may even be an extension of your garden watering system. Remember plastic hoses melt. All pumps and pipes need to be underground or protected from radiant heat.

PETS

If you plan to relocate during a bushfire prepare to take your pets with you. Organise such things as their collars and leads, beds and food. Ensure you can restrain or confine your pet as they may be frightened and could panic.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Being caught in a motor vehicle during a bushfire is a major risk - you may die. Always carry water and woollen blankets in your motor vehicle to increase your chance of survival if you are caught in a bushfire. Never travel towards a bushfire or smoke.

LEAF-FREE GUTTERS

Leaves in the gutters help fire get into the roof. They need to be kept clean throughout summer. Fitting leaf guards or a leafless guttering system will help to keep guttering clear.

VERANDAHS, PERGOLAS, CARPORTS AND DECKS

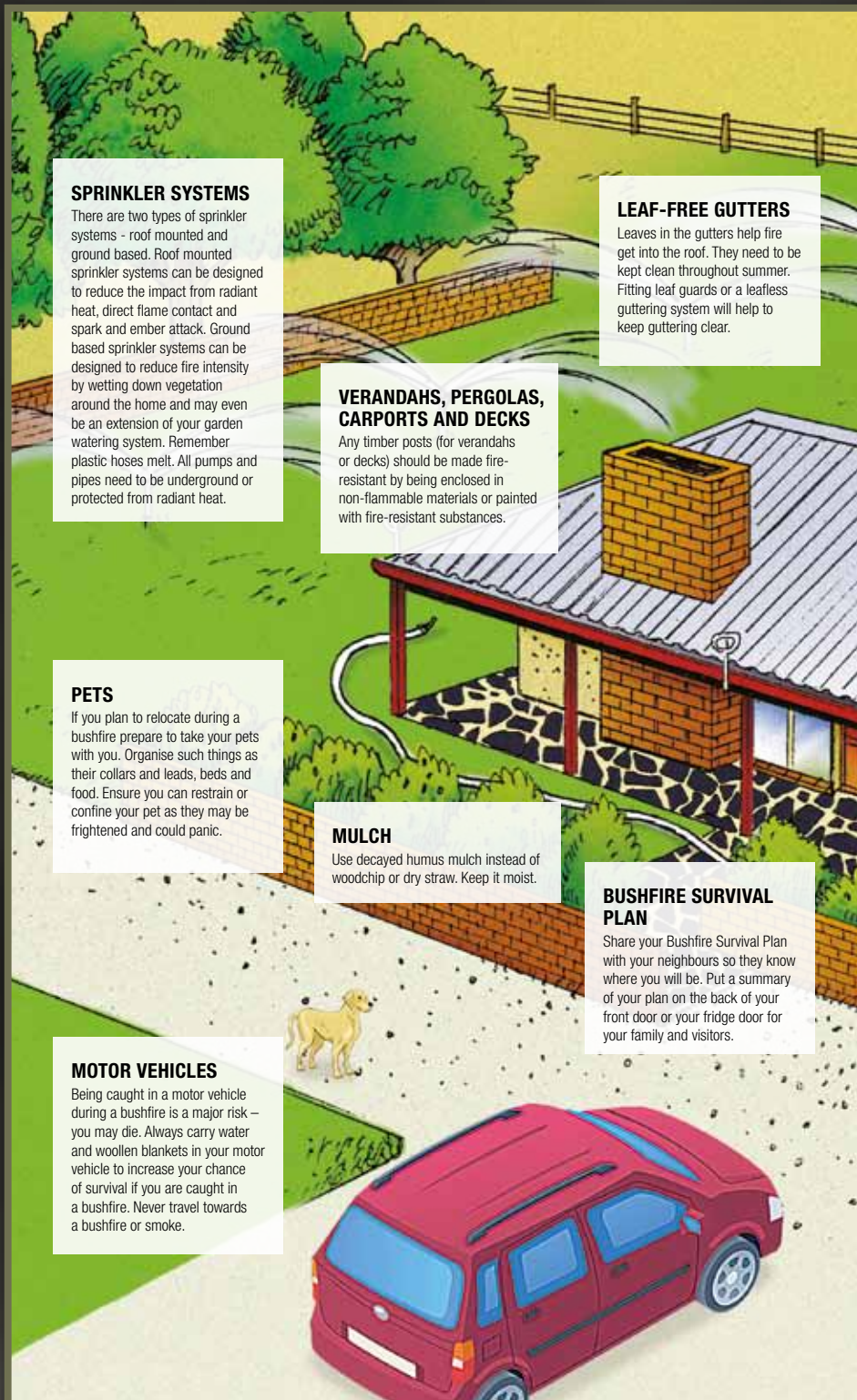
Any timber posts (for verandahs or decks) should be made fire-resistant by being enclosed in non-flammable materials or painted with fire-resistant substances.

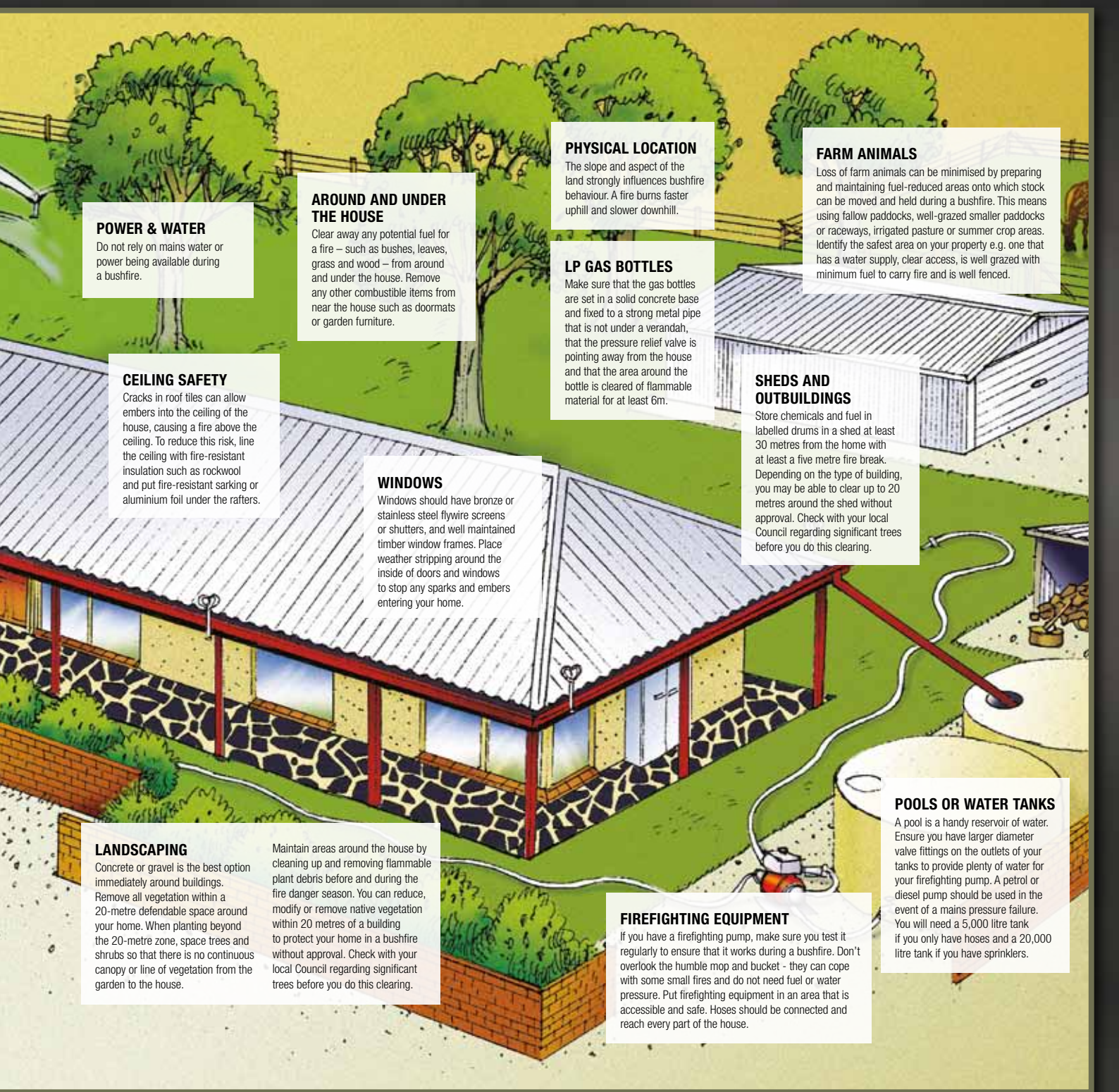
MULCH

Use decayed humus mulch instead of woodchip or dry straw. Keep it moist.

BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

Share your Bushfire Survival Plan with your neighbours so they know where you will be. Put a summary of your plan on the back of your front door or your fridge door for your family and visitors.





POWER & WATER

Do not rely on mains water or power being available during a bushfire.

AROUND AND UNDER THE HOUSE

Clear away any potential fuel for a fire – such as bushes, leaves, grass and wood – from around and under the house. Remove any other combustible items from near the house such as doormats or garden furniture.

CEILING SAFETY

Cracks in roof tiles can allow embers into the ceiling of the house, causing a fire above the ceiling. To reduce this risk, line the ceiling with fire-resistant insulation such as rockwool and put fire-resistant sarking or aluminium foil under the rafters.

WINDOWS

Windows should have bronze or stainless steel flywire screens or shutters, and well maintained timber window frames. Place weather stripping around the inside of doors and windows to stop any sparks and embers entering your home.

LANDSCAPING

Concrete or gravel is the best option immediately around buildings. Remove all vegetation within a 20-metre defendable space around your home. When planting beyond the 20-metre zone, space trees and shrubs so that there is no continuous canopy or line of vegetation from the garden to the house.

Maintain areas around the house by cleaning up and removing flammable plant debris before and during the fire danger season. You can reduce, modify or remove native vegetation within 20 metres of a building to protect your home in a bushfire without approval. Check with your local Council regarding significant trees before you do this clearing.

PHYSICAL LOCATION

The slope and aspect of the land strongly influences bushfire behaviour. A fire burns faster uphill and slower downhill.

LP GAS BOTTLES

Make sure that the gas bottles are set in a solid concrete base and fixed to a strong metal pipe that is not under a verandah, that the pressure relief valve is pointing away from the house and that the area around the bottle is cleared of flammable material for at least 6m.

FARM ANIMALS

Loss of farm animals can be minimised by preparing and maintaining fuel-reduced areas onto which stock can be moved and held during a bushfire. This means using fallow paddocks, well-grazed smaller paddocks or raceways, irrigated pasture or summer crop areas. Identify the safest area on your property e.g. one that has a water supply, clear access, is well grazed with minimum fuel to carry fire and is well fenced.

SHEDS AND OUTBUILDINGS

Store chemicals and fuel in labelled drums in a shed at least 30 metres from the home with at least a five metre fire break. Depending on the type of building, you may be able to clear up to 20 metres around the shed without approval. Check with your local Council regarding significant trees before you do this clearing.

POOLS OR WATER TANKS

A pool is a handy reservoir of water. Ensure you have larger diameter valve fittings on the outlets of your tanks to provide plenty of water for your firefighting pump. A petrol or diesel pump should be used in the event of a mains pressure failure. You will need a 5,000 litre tank if you only have hoses and a 20,000 litre tank if you have sprinklers.

FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

If you have a firefighting pump, make sure you test it regularly to ensure that it works during a bushfire. Don't overlook the humble mop and bucket - they can cope with some small fires and do not need fuel or water pressure. Put firefighting equipment in an area that is accessible and safe. Hoses should be connected and reach every part of the house.

Download your Bushfire Survival Plan at www.cfs.sa.gov.au

Prepare. Act. Survive.

Planning To Leave Early? “Leaving early” means leaving before your chosen escape route is compromised by fire and smoke, or by strong winds that may bring down trees and power lines well before the fire arrives.

The only way to guarantee this is to leave before a bushfire even starts – the night before or early in the day of a forecasted fire danger day.

It is as important to have a written and practised plan if you decide to leave as it is if you decide to stay.

In planning to leave early, you need to consider:

- When will you leave – have you decided what will be your trigger?
- Will your plan be different for weekdays, weekends or if someone is home sick?
- Are all members of your household going to leave early?
- Which members of your household (if any) will stay and defend?
- Where will you and your family go to ensure you are all safe? (Do you have friends, relatives or fun activities in a nearby Bushfire Safer Settlement or Precinct?)
- What route will you take to get there?
How long will it take to get there?
- What will you take when you leave early?
- What will you do if there are many fire risk days in one week?
- What warnings can you expect to get?
- Do your friends, family and neighbours know the details of your plan?
- What will you do with your pets and animals?
- What will be your trigger to return?
- Do you have a contingency plan if it is unsafe to leave?

Contingencies

It is important to recognise that in an emergency unexpected things are likely to occur, so you will need to adapt to changing circumstances and have a plan that will work in different situations.

CONSIDER

- Will your plan need to be different on weekends from weekdays?
- Will you have different plans for different Fire Danger Ratings (e.g. ‘stay and actively defend’ up to Severe, but ‘leave early’ for Extreme and Catastrophic)?
- What if your children are at school?
- What if you have house guests or someone is home sick?
- What if a fire starts quickly and you don’t have time or it is unsafe to leave?
- What if your plan is to stay, but conditions make it too dangerous?

Your plan (or plans) should have contingencies for different situations.

Fires are unpredictable.

Leave or stay, you should always have a contingency plan in case circumstances change.



How and where you can receive your bushfire information

How we warn the community



Incident starts



Crews arrive



Information sent to Incident Management Team



Incident controller decides to issue warning



CFS creates and sends warning



Check the CFS website and CFS FireApp



Follow CFS Updates on Facebook and Twitter. Sign up to receive Warnings via RSS



Call the Bushfire Information Hotline 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677).



Check local TV station broadcasts



Listen to ABC local radio, 5AA and other broadcast partners

In extreme circumstances



You may receive a call to your landline phone or an SMS to your mobile

emergencyalert.gov.au

Where to go: Bushfire Safer Places in SA

CFS has developed a hierarchy of places that can offer relative safety from bushfire. It is important that you know what each of these are, where they are, and what risk you may be exposed to if you use one of these options during a bushfire.

On fire danger days, your safest option is to visit friends, family or attractions in a Bushfire Safer Settlement or Precinct.

SAFEST LEAST SAFE	BUSHFIRE SAFER SETTLEMENT	Inner Adelaide Metropolitan suburbs.	Suitable for use during forecast bad fire weather or during bushfire.
	BUSHFIRE SAFER PRECINCT	Designated within outer suburbs and rural settlements.	Suitable for use during forecast bad fire weather or during bushfire. May be subject to spark and ember attack and smoke.
	LAST RESORT REFUGE	Designated ovals and buildings in rural areas.	Not suitable for extended use and may provide only limited protection during bushfire.



More details and designated places can be found on the CFS website: www.cfs.sa.gov.au or in the CFS Smartphone app.



Keys to Survival

There are seven keys to bushfire survival. It is recommended that you review these and your circumstances as part of developing your Bushfire Survival Plan.

You need to consider each of these key points when thinking of how you would respond to a bushfire.

Understanding bushfire behaviour

It is important to understand the characteristics and behaviour of bushfires, which are influenced by vegetation, topography and climate.

What do you know about bushfire behaviour?



Recognising fire danger days

Bushfires can be more dangerous on certain days. Learn to recognise the characteristics and terminology of these days.

Do you know the signs?



Preparing your home and property

Even if your Plan is to leave early, a well prepared home is more likely to survive a bushfire.

How prepared is your property?



Creating Emergency Kits

Kits keep all the things you will need together and accessible. Think about: what you need to help survive the day; what to take with you to safety; what you need for the 24–48 hours following a fire.

What would you pack?

Considering your physical and emotional preparation

It's important to be realistic about what you can and can't do. Ensure you and your family understand fully what a bushfire can mean in terms of fear, stress and threat to personal life.

How prepared are you?

Acting on fire danger days

Put your preparation and plans into action on fire danger days.

What will you do on a day of high fire danger?

Writing and practicing your Bushfire Survival Plans

Your plan is central to your survival.

Have you got a Plan?

For further information visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au or call the Bushfire Information Hotline 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677).



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