



BUSH FIRE SAFETY

GRASS FIRES

GRASS FIRES SPREAD QUICKLY AND CAN THREATEN LIVES, PROPERTY, CROPS AND STOCK.

Grass fires can start easily and spread quickly, catching people off-guard. They produce huge amounts of heat and can kill those caught in their path.

PROTECT YOURSELF

The safest place to be during a grass fire is well away from the fire. If you are threatened by or are fighting a grass fire, always protect yourself by covering all exposed skin with protective clothing such as:

- long-sleeved shirt and pants made from a natural fibre such as cotton
- sturdy leather boots and woollen socks
- leather gloves
- a wide-brimmed hat
- a face mask or towel to cover your mouth and nose
- eye protection such as goggles.

When in the vicinity of a grass fire, think about an area of safe refuge. Burnt or clear ground may offer safety.

Stay well hydrated and be aware of your level of physical fitness.

FIRE BREAKS PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, LIVESTOCK AND CROPS

- Maintain fire breaks at all times, especially during the Bush Fire Danger Period by mowing, grazing, brush cutting or ploughing around buildings, crops, pasture, storage areas, along key fence lines and other exposures.
- Fire breaks help prevent fire escaping from your property and reducing the likelihood of fires entering.
- Work together with neighbours to construct effective fire breaks.

MAINTAIN SHORT GREEN GRASS AROUND YOUR HOUSE AND BUILDINGS

GRASS HEIGHT

Fire in tall grass will have tall flames that may burn along trails, roads or fire breaks.

WIND

Wind determines how quickly a fire moves through grass, and which direction it travels in. Wind changes can make the fire move quickly in different directions and can catch you off guard.

GRASSLAND CURING GUIDE

Cured %	Colour	Physiological changes
0	Green	From germination to start of seed head development
20-30	Greenish-yellow	Seed head maturing and opening from top
40	Greenish	
60	Straw. Odd patch of green or yellow-green	Seed dropped, half to one third of most stems green Some paddocks fully cured, others green
80	Straw. Very little green showing anywhere	Some greenness in lower third of stalks. Many stalks fully cured
90	Straw. Odd green gully	Odd stalks may show some greenness
100	Bleached	All stalks fully cured, seed heads and stalks starting to break easily

WHAT IS CURING

- When grasses are dying and drying out they are curing. The browner the grass the more cured it is.
- The more 'cured' grasses are, the more intensely they burn and the quicker the fire will spread.
- Grass on dry ridges cures more rapidly than in moist, low-lying areas or creek lines.
- Grasses respond quickly to changes in air moisture - they absorb moisture from damp air overnight and lose moisture very quickly on high fire danger days. This means that grasses can be ready to burn early in the day.



MACHINERY AND GRASS FIRES

Machinery such as tractors, slashers, harvesters, welders, chainsaws and grinders can start grass fires. Hot vehicle exhaust pipes are also known to start grass fires. During the Bush Fire Danger Period, it is important that any machinery such as listed above are:

- free from any faults and mechanical defects that could start a fire
- fitted with an approved spark arrestor
- carrying a working water fire extinguisher or knapsack

- not used during extreme fire conditions
- slashers should not be used unless conditions are mild and/or they are accompanied by an independent means of fire suppression
- grinders should not be used unless conditions are mild and/or the immediate area is dampened down to prevent ignition.

Prior to any machinery maintenance works, clear the immediate area of flammable materials.

Note: During Total Fire Ban days, no hot work (welding, grinding) in the open is permitted without special permission from the NSW RFS.

For more information on what you can do to prepare for bush fire this season:



NSW Rural Fire Service Website
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
www.myfireplan.com.au



**Your nearest NSW RFS
Fire Control Centre:**



Bush Fire Information Line
1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)

