

HAZARD REDUCTION PROGRAM

Reducing the risk of bushfires
Information for reserve neighbours







About our program

We want to protect you and our environment.

Fire is a part of life in Australia. Although no major fires have occurred in our reserves in recent years, we need to be prepared when it happens.

Despite the intense fires that occur frequently in the Greater Sydney region, very few houses and lives are lost and we aim to keep it that way.

Council manages 740 hectares of bushland. This includes 70 hectares of boundary adjoining over 6500 houses. With an average of 2.95 people per house, there are about 19,000 people adjacent to or near bushland. This program is about your safety and protection.

In a major fire, our emergency services will not have enough fire trucks to protect every house, so we need to prepare our properties and bushland.

Four main strategies to manage risk

1. Asset protection zones (APZs)

Fuel reduced areas on bushland edges

2. Prescribed burning

Manages fuel and keeps the bush healthy

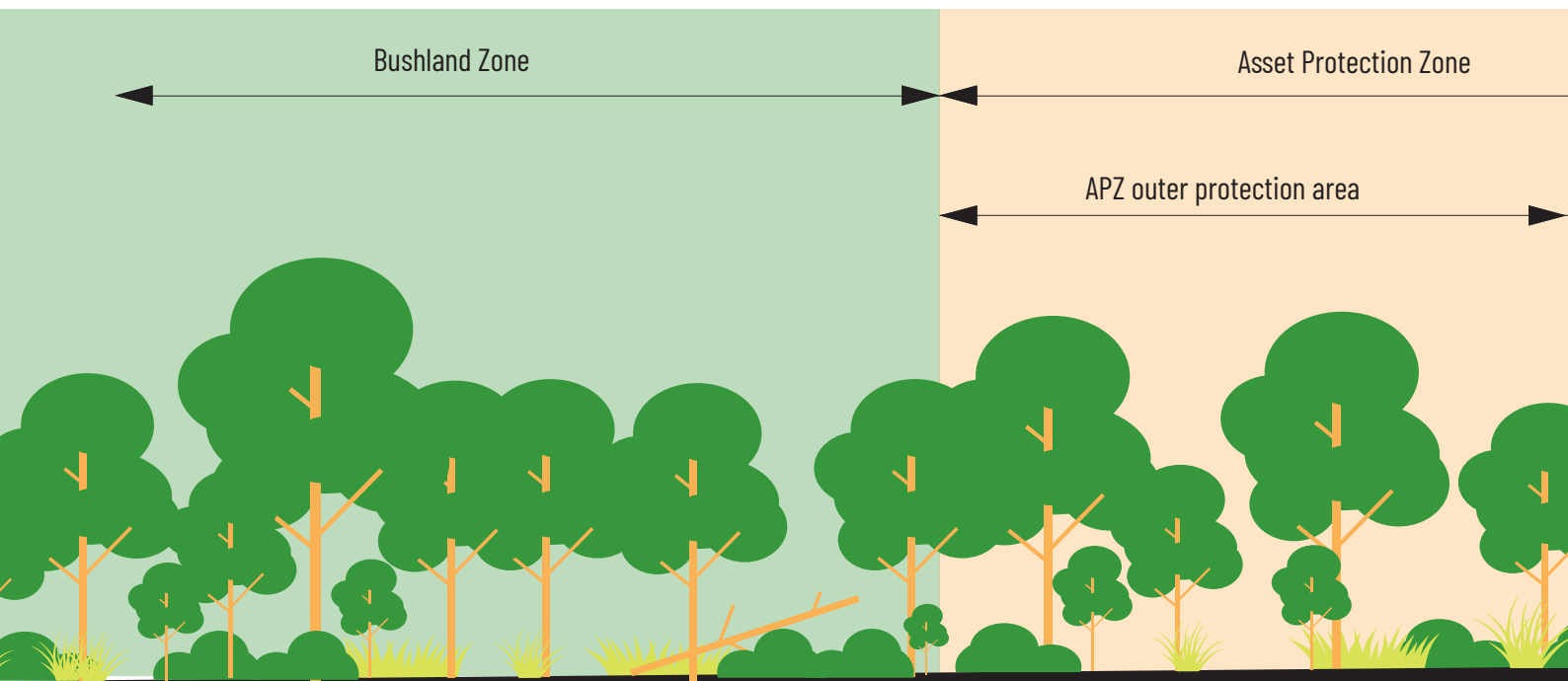
3. Roadside slashing

Reduces the spread of bushfires

4. Fire trail maintenance

Provides safe access for fire fighters in the event of a bushfire

A typical urban/bushland boundary with asset protection



Protecting our environment

Bushland is an important part of our ecosystem. It provides a home to many plants and animals that add colour and interest in our lives. Many Aboriginal and European heritage sites and artefacts are found in our reserves.

How can we protect this for future generations?

- Fieldwork and research to identify natural and cultural heritage features.
- Designing site specific APZs to avoid disturbing significant features such as habitat trees.
- Employing trained and experienced staff to get the best outcome from minimal clearing.
- Maintaining weeding of vulnerable areas.

Threatened species

There are 22 threatened plant species and seven endangered ecological communities within Campbelltown. To protect these species and their habitat from extinction, we ensure our hazard reduction work does not cause unnecessary harm.

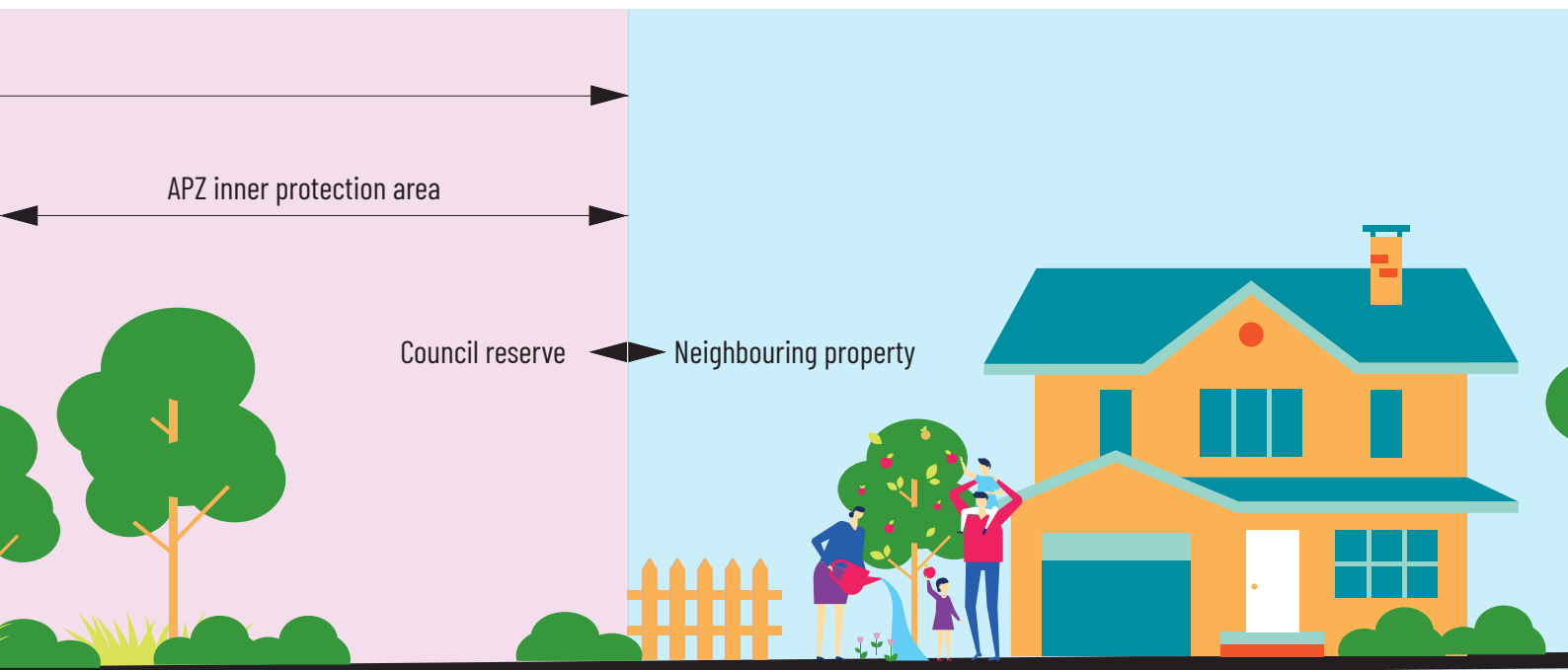
As part of the Sydney bush, most threatened plants have adapted to fire. Protecting plants from fire is unnatural, however special care should be taken to burn them at the right intensity and frequency.

Wildlife Protection

With 41 threatened animal species living in or visiting our bushland, protecting native wildlife is a very important part of the hazard reduction program.

Mitigation measures such as protecting habitat trees and using low intensity burning techniques prevent harm to native animals.

A controlled low intensity burn has a much lower impact on native animals than an out of control wildfire.



Prescribed burning

There is science and planning behind the way we burn the bush.

The reserve is divided into sections and then the bush is burned over a number of years. This keeps the fuel levels low and maintains the environment for the plants and animals that call it home.



Q&A

How often can you burn the bush?

We have a planned burning program with the RFS that replicates natural burning fire cycles of five to 20 years. Frequent burning can make bush more flammable by encouraging a thick understorey of bracken and blady grass which burns easier. This can eliminate Banksias, Wattles and Peas, leaving the bush open to weed invasion.

What can I plant in burnt bush?

Nothing, it will grow back. The bush has burned regularly for thousands of years and the plants have evolved to cope with it. A fire help many reproduce e.g. Banksia cones only open after heating with fire.

Can I clear a fire hazard near my house?

Our staff assess requests to burn the bush or clear patches thought to be hazardous, placing it on our works program.

We direct resources where they are most needed, so serious hazards will get quick attention. We will schedule other hazards in to our program and are always happy to discuss neighbouring bushland concerns. Q&A

Can I have a tree adjacent to my property removed because it is a bushfire hazard?

Usually single trees are not a bushfire hazard and as such can't be removed as part of hazard reduction. This can depend on a few factors such as how close

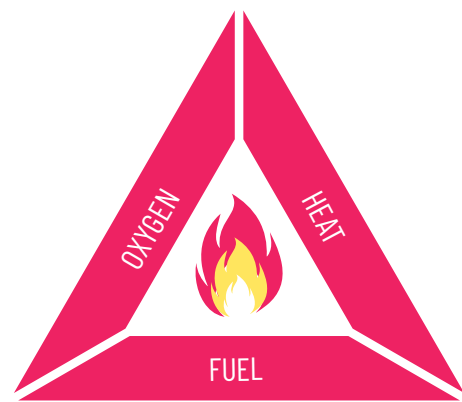


Fire and fuel facts

Fuel management is about reducing the intensity of a fire. We don't expect to stop a large fire, but we can slow it down, and create a defensible space to fight it from.

Fire is a chemical reaction requiring three components as shown in the fire triangle. Reducing oxygen, heat or fuel will slow down a fire and removing one of these components will stop a fire.

When managing a bushfire risk we manage fuel. It's the only one we have control over.



What makes a fuel hazard?

Size: Small fuel such as leaves and sticks under 8cm burn easily. Larger fuel such as logs or smooth tree trunks take more energy to ignite so are less hazardous.

Quantity: Less fuel = a less intense fire.

Arrangement: Fuel must be close enough together for the fire to travel from one to the other, like a network of sticks and leaves in a tea-tree. If they are too densely packed like wood chips or too open like lantana the fire won't get enough energy to jump from one stem to the next.

Connectivity: Continuous fuel creates a path for a fire. Isolated patches of fuel are safer.

Moisture Content: Moist fuel can slow or stop a fire as fires burn faster through dry fuel.

Type: Some fuels such as Eucalypt leaves contain chemicals that make them ignite more easily.

How houses catch alight

1. Direct flame contact: A continuous supply of fuel allows flames to reach the house.

2. Radiant heat: The fire is so intense or close that its heat ignites flammable material directly exposed to it.

3. Ember attack: Burning bark etc is carried by the wind and dropped (mostly within a few blocks from the fire front), causing spot fires. Embers cause most property losses in bushfires. Residents who have a maintained property and stay home can extinguish these fires and save their house.

Managing bushfire risk in Campbelltown - Who is doing the work?

NSW Rural Fire Service:

Hazard reduction burns, pile burns, mechanical works and community education.

Fire and Rescue NSW:

Prescribed burns and community education.

Campbelltown Council Bushland Management:

Hazard reduction planning, environmental assessments, fire trail works program and project management.

Campbelltown Council Open Space Team:

Maintaining APZs, roadside vegetation and fire trails.

Campbelltown Council Road Maintenance Team:

Upgrading and maintaining fire trails

Campbelltown Council bushland contractors:

Constructing, upgrading and maintaining APZs and fire trails, flora and fauna reporting.

Reserve neighbours:

Managing fuels on their own properties.

How long will it take?

Special projects such as the construction or upgrades of APZs and fire trails are prioritised and planned for completion each year.

Maintenance of APZs, roadside vegetation, fire trails and prescribed burning is an ongoing part of our hazard reduction program for bushland management.

How can residents help?

Prepare a Bushfire Survival Plan

One of the most important decisions you can make is to Leave Early or Stay and Defend a well prepared property.

Prepare your property

Keep your home and property maintained. There are a number of measures you can take to prepare your home and property, see over leaf.

Join a local Community Fire Unit

Training and equipment are provided to help bush neighbours defend their properties.

Don't use the APZ as storage or dumping ground

Storing materials such as firewood, garden waste, or other structures creates a fire hazard and weed problems. It can also block access for firefighters.



Prepare Act Survive

We are doing all we can to minimise the risk of bushfire, but we can't eliminate it. It's vital that you are prepared so here's some basic information.

Your Bushfire Survival Plan

The middle of a bushfire is no time to start thinking about what you should do. A Bushfire Survival Plan will help you avoid making last minute decisions that could be deadly. The plan will outline what you need to do to prepare yourself, your family, your pets and what actions each member of your family will need to do to be safe.

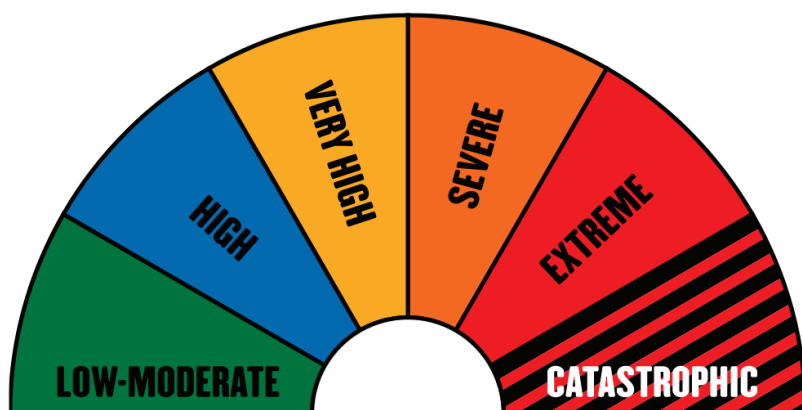
Download your Bushfire Survival Plan today at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Preparing your property

In bushfires many houses are destroyed through ember attack, when burning leaves and twigs carried by the wind land on or around the house.

Be prepared for bushfire by doing the following:

- Keep lawns short and gardens well maintained. Clean up fallen leaves, twigs and debris from around the property
- Have hoses long enough to reach around your house
- Check that your insurance is adequate and up-to-date
- Install metal gutter guards
- Repair damaged or missing roof tiles on roof
- Fit seals around doors and windows to eliminate gaps
- Enclose the area under the house
- Repair or cover gaps in external walls
- Consider attaching a fire sprinkler system to gutters



Know the Bush Fire Alert Levels

Fire danger ratings

Before a fire even starts, monitor the Fire Danger Ratings daily at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fdr. The higher the fire danger rating, the more dangerous a fire is likely to be. Under catastrophic conditions leaving early is the only safe option. When it's

SEVERE you should only stay if your home is well prepared and you're ready to defend it.

EXTREME, only stay if your home is prepared to the very highest level and is specially built to survive a bush fire.

CATASTROPHIC is as bad as it gets - no homes are built to withstand a fire in these conditions. Leaving early is your only safe option.

Keep Informed

Fire can threaten suddenly and without warning so you must be prepared to act without receiving an emergency warning.

- Know what the fire danger rating is for your area
- Get the **Fires Near Me NSW App** for your smart phone
- Watch for signs of fire, especially smoke and flames
- If you receive a Bush Fire Alert, take it seriously and act promptly. Look and listen for information on TV, radio, the internet, mobile phones and when speaking with neighbours

How to find out more

NSW Rural Fire Service or **Fire & Rescue NSW** can provide you with more advice about preparing your property and developing your Bushfire Survival Plan for you and your family. Contact us for more information about our Hazard Reduction Program.

Macarthur Rural Fire Service

9608 7777

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Fire & Rescue NSW

www.fire.nsw.gov.au

Campbelltown City Council

4645 4000

www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au

Cnr Queen & Broughton Sts Campbelltown

PO Box 57 Campbelltown 2560

Be prepared

Preparing for a bush fire is easier than you think. It's your responsibility to prepare yourself, your home and your family.

There are four simple steps to get ready for a bush fire:



1. DISCUSS

What to do if a bush fire threatens your home.



2. PREPARE

Your home and get it ready for bush fire season.



3. KNOW

The bush fire alert levels.



4. KEEP

All the bush fire information numbers, websites, and the smart phone app.

**PREPARE
ACT
SURVIVE**







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