

SUMMER FIRE SAFETY

LESSONS FOR YEARS 7-10



Teaching with the CFA Fire Ready Kit

All parts of our community – governments, schools, households, individuals and communities and their leaders – can work together to help current and future generations learn to live safely with fire. *Summer Fire Safety* is a simple resource designed to help you teach students about bushfire safety using the *CFA Fire Ready Kit* booklet. You do not need to be an expert, or cover every aspect of bushfire safety, to help make your students and school community safer. All of the latest information and advice is available in the *Fire Ready Kit* and on the CFA website. Students should be encouraged to share these resources at home and help their households to prepare for, and respond safely to, their local fire risk.

ABOUT THIS LESSON PLAN

This lesson plan includes the following teaching and learning activities and resources:

- Teacher-led introduction and Fire Ready Quiz
- Guided reading and questions to use with the *Fire Ready Kit* booklet
- Fire Danger Ratings class activity and photocopyable Fire Danger Rating sign
- Bushfire Survival Planning Templates – homework activity

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- *CFA Fire Ready Kit*
 - Copies can be downloaded from cfa.vic.gov.au
- *Are You Fire Ready?* student handout – one copy per student
- Copies of the Fire Danger Rating sign (optional)
- Internet access (optional)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To increase student knowledge and understanding of:

- Fire risk and fire-prone environments
- The Fire Danger Rating system
- How fire behaviour is influenced by fuel, weather and topography
- Bushfire survival planning
- Actions individuals and households can take before and during the fire season



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CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

This content has been mapped to the Victorian Curriculum. The Victorian Curriculum F-10 incorporates the Australian Curriculum and reflects Victorian priorities and standards.

Health and Physical Education	<p>Levels 7 and 8</p> <p>Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing</p> <p>Levels 9 and 10</p> <p>Plan, rehearse and evaluate options (including CPR and first aid) for managing situations where their own or others' health, safety and wellbeing may be at risk</p> <p>Plan, implement and critique strategies to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities</p>
Geography	<p>Levels 7 and 8</p> <p>Causes of a geomorphological hazard and its impacts on places and human responses to it to minimise harmful effects on places in the future</p> <p>Elaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> researching how the application of principles of prevention, mitigation and preparedness minimises the harmful effects of geomorphological hazards investigating the negative and positive impacts of bushfires on Australian landscapes and ways of responding to the risk and events of bushfires

Sourced from victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au August 2017.



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SUGGESTED TEACHING AND LEARNING SEQUENCE

1. Introduce the topic and ask students to share their knowledge or experience of fires. You may also choose to draw attention to the *Foreword* on page 3 of the *Fire Ready Kit*.
2. Conduct the *Fire Ready Quiz*. You may choose to divide the class into small groups and award a prize to the winning group. A similar quiz is available at cfa.vic.gov.au
3. Provide each student with a copy of the *Fire Ready Kit* and the *Guided reading and questions*. The reading and questions can be completed as a whole class activity or students can work independently, in pairs or in small groups.
4. Print out the two tear-out bushfire survival planning templates for Leaving Early and for those who choose to Stay and Defend their home/property. These templates are also available online from cfa.vic.gov.au. Encourage students to share the *Fire Ready Kit* and CFA website at home and to work with their family to discuss and develop a bushfire survival plan.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

DAILY FIRE DANGER RATING (FDR) ACTIVITY

The Fire Danger Ratings are forecast all year long. The fire season typically runs from around October through April each year.

1. Make seven large colour copies of the Fire Danger Ratings sheet (one for each day of the week) and place them on the classroom wall.
2. Ask students to update the Fire Danger Ratings for their Fire Weather District each morning. Remember, the ratings are forecast up to four days in advance, however they should be checked daily. The ratings can be found at www.bom.gov.au, www.cfa.vic.gov.au and emergency.vic.gov.au on the FireReady app and in newspapers.
3. Create a class roster and ask each student, or pair of students, to report the Fire Danger Rating under the headings "What does it mean?" and "What should I do?" using the table on page 2 of the *Fire Ready Kit*. They should also present the information to the class each morning as an update report.

Alternatively, ask each student to do this activity individually, or in pairs, during the fire season.

This activity may cause some concern if students feel they and their family are under-prepared for days of increased fire danger. The parents and guardians of students are responsible for household bushfire survival planning and preparation. Teachers should encourage students to discuss any concerns with their family.

BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLANNING – TAKE HOME ACTIVITY

The *Fire Ready Kit* contains two Bushfire Survival Planning templates – 'Leaving Early' and 'Defending Your Property'. As an extension activity, ask students to take them home and complete them with their family. Even students who do not live in a high-risk area can learn by doing this activity. Students can complete the Bushfire Survival Planning Template.



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FIRE READY QUIZ

TEACHER COPY

- 01 Victoria is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world?
TRUE or FALSE

Victoria is one of the most fire prone regions in the world because of its weather patterns and vegetation. Other fire prone areas include California and Spain. So remember, if you live in or are visiting a high-risk fire area in Victoria, you need to know which fire weather district you're in, check your Fire Danger Rating daily, keep up-to-date about warnings and fire information, and have a bushfire survival plan.

- 02 People living in cities, towns and surrounding suburbs can be at risk of bushfire and grassfire. **TRUE** or FALSE

Bushfires and grassfires can occur where suburbs meet the bush or where houses have grassland, parkland or bush around them. People who travel or holiday in high-risk bushfire areas are also at risk of bushfire. Even people considering a day trip should be prepared.

- 03 After a wet winter there's far less chance of fires in summer. **TRUE** or **FALSE**

Rainfall increases the growth of vegetation – especially grass – meaning that higher rainfall can actually result in greater fuel loads for fire. In years of wet weather Victoria often sees an increase in the number of large grassfires. It only takes two weeks of hot, dry and windy weather to create dangerous fire conditions, and even less time for dangerous grassfire conditions.

- 04 Fire Danger Ratings can be different in each of the nine districts across the state. **TRUE** or FALSE

Victoria is a large state with varying landscapes and weather conditions. It's your responsibility to know which district you're in (there are nine in Victoria) and to check the rating daily for the area you live or go to school in or are traveling to or through.

- 05 Some kinds of barbecues are OK on a Total Fire Ban day. **TRUE** or FALSE

Solid and liquid-fuel barbecues and ovens are banned on Total Fire Ban days. However, gas or electrical barbecues that are fixed appliances – built into permanent structures of brick, stone or concrete – ARE allowed, provided you adhere to the guidelines for use. Portable gas or electric barbecues are also allowed if they are commercially manufactured exclusively for meal preparation and you make sure they are in a stable position when alight. (Free of vegetation)



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FIRE READY QUIZ (CONT.)

TEACHER COPY

- 06** I've cleared up around my property so I'm prepared for fire.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- Clearing up around your property is just one part of planning and preparing for fire. You need a well thought-out bushfire survival plan, which has been agreed to and discussed with all members of the household. While leaving early is always the safest option, there are many things you can do to prepare you and your family for fire. Follow the links at the end of the quiz for simple advice to help you on your way.*
- 07** If a fire threatens, someone will tell me when it's time to leave.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- Don't wait to receive a warning. It's up to you to know when to leave. It's your family's responsibility to make the best possible decision for your family based on the current Fire Danger Ratings and official warnings for your area.*
- 08** It's too dangerous to stay and defend your home on a Catastrophic day.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- True is right. Most homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. Defending a house requires at least two able-bodied, fit and determined adults who are physically and mentally prepared to work long and hard in difficult conditions. Catastrophic days are rare – when forecast they are very serious.*
- 09** If there is a bushfire or grassfire near my home a CFA fire truck or fire-fighting helicopter will always come and help. TRUE or **FALSE**
- There are no guarantees that fire crews will attend your property. CFA firefighters will be doing everything they can to prevent injury to people and damage to property during a bushfire. You should never expect a fire truck at your door to personally protect you and your home.*
- 10** You (the student) are young and cannot help yourself, your pets and the people you live with to be safe from bushfires. TRUE or **FALSE**
- You can make a big difference at home. You can help the people you live with to prepare and plan for fires. A bushfire survival plan should include what you need to do to protect your pets. You can also help prepare your property.*
- During the fire season, you can monitor the Fire Danger Ratings, alerts and warnings and share and discuss the information with your family and friends. At the end of this lesson, you can share the Fire Ready Kit with your family and complete one of the Bushfire Survival Planning Templates available online at www.cfa.vic.gov.au*



FIRE READY QUIZ

- 01 Victoria is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world?
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 02 People living in cities, towns and surrounding suburbs can be at risk of bushfire and grassfire.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 03 After a wet winter there's far less chance of fires in summer.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 04 Fire Danger Ratings can be different in each of the nine districts across the state.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 05 Some kinds of barbecues are OK on a Total Fire Ban day.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 06 I've cleared up around my property so I'm prepared for bushfire.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 07 If a bushfire threatens, someone will tell me when it's time to leave.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 08 It's too dangerous to stay and defend your home on a **Catastrophic** day.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 09 If there is a bushfire or grassfire near my home a CFA fire truck or fire-fighting helicopter will always come and help.
TRUE or **FALSE**
- 10 You are young and cannot help yourself, your pets and the people you live with to be safe from bushfires.
TRUE or **FALSE**

GUIDED READING AND QUESTIONS

You will need a copy of the *CFA Fire Ready Kit*. A copy can be downloaded from cfa.vic.gov.au.

KNOW YOUR FIRE WEATHER DISTRICT

(PAGE 1)

- 01 How many Fire Weather Districts are there in Victoria?
- 02 Which Fire Weather District is your home in?
- 03 Which Fire Weather District is your school in?

KNOW YOUR DAILY FIRE DANGER RATING

(PAGE 2)

- 01 What does the Fire Danger Rating predict?
- 02 What does **Catastrophic** mean?
- 03 What should people do when the Fire Danger Rating **Catastrophic** is forecast?
- 04 What does 'wait and see' mean? (Hint: see page 12)

Introduction:

AM I AT RISK? (PAGE 5)

- 01 Which environment presents the most extreme risk?
- 02 Which of the four environments best describes where you live?
- 03 Study the illustration of the 'near coastal scrub' environment on page 8. If a fire was to start, what problems might there be getting to the beach?

Section One:

YOUR BUSHFIRE PLAN: THE BASICS

(PAGE 11)

- 01 Who needs to plan ahead for the fire season?
- 02 What does leaving early mean?
- 03 Why should you leave early?
- 04 How many 'key decisions' need to be made as a minimum before the fire season? List three.
- 05 Study the 'Your Emergency Kit' on page 16. What other things would you want to take with you if you had to leave early?

Section Two:

ON FIRE RISK DAYS: LEAVING EARLY

(PAGE 17)

- 01 What should you check each day?
- 02 What do you need to do when the Fire Danger Rating (FDR) reaches your trigger point?

Section Three:

DURING A FIRE: IF YOU CANNOT LEAVE

(PAGE 21)

- 01 What is radiant heat? (See page 24 and 43)
- 02 What are some of the ways you can protect yourself from radiant heat?
- 03 What is the 'only sure way' to survive a fire and avoid radiant heat? (See page 24)

Section Four:

STAYING INFORMED (PAGE 29)

- 01 CFA suggest you make a habit of doing what during the fire season?
- 02 How are warnings different to Fire Danger Ratings? (See page 32)
- 03 Why is it dangerous to rely on an official warning? (See page 33)

Section Five:

PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY (PAGE 37)

- 01 A fire will burn faster uphill. True or False (See page 40)
- 02 Fires often start on hot, dry and windy days. In Victoria, hot, dry winds typically come from which direction? Why is a south-west wind change so dangerous?
- 03 Study the picture on page 46 and 47. How short should grass be kept? What should you do with dry grass, leaves, twigs and loose bark?

Section Six:

DEFENDING YOUR PROPERTY (PAGE 57)

- 01 What is required to defend a home?
- 02 What are some of the risks of defending your home?
- 03 Are most houses in high-risk areas built to withstand fires on **Catastrophic** days?

