



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

FireReady 

LEAVING EARLY

BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLANNING TEMPLATE



➤ Your Bushfire Survival Plan

Use this guide to help you write your Bushfire Survival Plan. It is important to have read the *Prepare for Bushfire* section of the FireReady Kit first. You will need to consider your personal circumstances and how they will affect your plan.

Not everyone thinks clearly in an emergency. A written and well-practised plan will help you remember what needs to be done during a crisis. It also lists the preparations you will need to do to help you become fire ready.

Your plan needs to outline:

✓ Actions before the bushfire season

✓ Actions during the bushfire season (the Fire Danger Period)

✓ Actions leading up to Fire Risk Days

✓ Your back-up plan.

- What year is this plan for? Every year you will need to update your plan. _____
 - Who is this plan for?
-
-

In high-risk areas, leaving early is your only safe option on **Code Red** days. Do not wait and see. Know your trigger to leave – make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there, when you will return and what you will do if you cannot leave.

Only consider staying with your property on **Extreme** or **Severe** days if you are fully prepared and can actively defend your home. 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 arduous and difficult conditions. If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving high-risk bushfire areas early is your safest option.

Children, the elderly, or people with special needs should be well away from the threat. The safest option is to leave early.

Attend a FireReady Victoria community meeting in your local area. Check cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on 1800 240 667 for meeting dates and locations.

- If you – or someone you care for – will need help to prepare and leave early when there is high fire risk, get a Red Cross *Bushfire: Preparing to leave* early guide at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or request a copy by phoning the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.



Fill out this Template
and keep it handy

ACTIONS BEFORE THE BUSHFIRE SEASON

Preparing your property – house maintenance

This includes things such as:

Tick

- Clearing gutters of leaves and rubbish
- Ensuring underfloor areas are enclosed or screened
- Sealing gaps, vents and roof spaces to prevent embers entering your house
- Storing fuels and chemicals away from your house
- Storing LPG gas tanks appropriately. They should be vented away from your house
- Moving woodpiles away from the house
- Ensuring roofing is firmly fixed.

➤ Who will do this? _____

➤ What else will you do?

Preparing your property – vegetation management

This includes things such as:

Tick

- Clearing fine fuels from around your home (fine fuels are those that are the same thickness or less than a pencil, such as grass, bark and leaves)
- Keeping grass areas well trimmed and watered. Grass should be no more than 10 centimetres high
- Raking up and reducing leaf litter (dead leaves). Leaf litter must be no more than one centimetre high
- Removing or trimming shrubs. There should be no shrubs over one metre next to or below windows
- Trimming tree branches overhanging your house.

➤ Who will do this? _____

➤ What else will you do?

➤ List your irreplaceable family keepsakes and valuables. Identify a safe location to store these valuables. Where will you locate them? Consider moving these out of the area during summer.

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ACTIONS DURING THE BUSHFIRE SEASON (THE FIRE DANGER PERIOD)

- List contact details of those who need to know about your plan.

Name	Relationship	Contact numbers

- How will you monitor weather conditions and know the daily Fire Danger Rating (FDR) in your area? _____

Be vigilant in monitoring the weather forecasts to identify predicted days of high fire risk. Take note of the Fire Danger Rating forecasts for coming days, and whether a Total Fire Ban (TFB) has been declared. A TFB is a day where certain activities that may cause fire are banned, as fires are more likely to start. This needs to be taken into account with your planning.

Put together your Relocation Kit

This includes:

Tick

- Protective clothing
- Food and water
- Wool blankets
- Medications and toiletries
- A change of clothes
- A list of the contact numbers for your doctor, dentist, local hospital, chemist, vet, municipal councils, gas, electricity and water providers
- Important papers (e.g. passport, insurance policies, will)
- A first-aid kit
- Pet food, water and bedding if needed.

- Where will you store your Relocation Kit? It must be stored in an easy-to-access location.

- What is your plan for the safety of pets during relocation? Pets need to be kept cool and hydrated.

- Do you have adequate home or contents insurance? ^Y ^N

ACTIONS LEADING UP TO FIRE RISK DAYS

- **Who** will be at home – family or any visitors at the house?

Weekdays

Weekends/school holidays

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- **Where** will you go? What is your planned destination? Can you stay there for a number of days?

- **How** will you get there?

- Know your local area – have a map. List the names of your surrounding towns and suburbs.

- Identify alternative routes out of the area.

Always consider the circumstances of the day.

- Do you have transport organised? ^Y ^N

- Will you have enough petrol or fuel so you don't need to stop to fill up? ^Y ^N

LEAVING EARLY

BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLANNING TEMPLATE

Trigger to leave

Your trigger to leave is what prompts you to act. It could be the Fire Danger Rating of **Severe**, **Extreme** or **Code Red**.

- What is your trigger to leave?

- When will you leave? _____

- Have you discussed the trigger with all household members?

- Is this the same trigger for every household member?

- If not, what does this mean for your planning?

Before you leave

Tick

- Close doors and windows, move doormats and outdoor furniture away from the house, fill gutters with water and other actions identified
- Add final items to your Relocation Kit, such as medications, prescriptions and mobile phone and charger
- Pack the car including your Relocation Kit
- Turn off mains gas supply
- Move pets or livestock
- Leave front gate open for emergency services access
- Remember your most important items such as wallet, cards, keys, banking, medical and insurance documents.

- Who will do this? _____

- What else will you do?

- List the people you will tell that you have gone and where they can find you.



CAUTION

Waiting until alerted to fire in the area is dangerous. You should not wait to receive a warning to leave. Bushfires can threaten lives and homes within minutes.

Once fire is in your area it may become difficult to leave because road conditions will be dangerous. There may be road closures, smoke, fallen trees and embers. Do not expect a firetruck.

Just because you don't receive a warning, does not mean there isn't a threat. The safest option is to leave early.

- Which radio station/s will you be tuned into? How will you monitor conditions?

- How will you know it is safe to return?

- Other things to consider:

How will your plan be affected by several fire danger days in a row? Remember, it is important to minimise the disruption caused to your household by relocating. It is best to go to places where you can continue with normal activities as much as possible.

YOUR BACK-UP PLAN

- Where do you plan to shelter if it is unsafe to leave your property or your area? This is an extremely dangerous situation. Shelter options may include a well-prepared property or home (yours or a neighbour), a private bunker (that meets current regulations) or a designated community shelter or refuge.

- Do you have a designated Neighbourhood Safer Place (**Place of Last Resort**) in your area that could be used as a last resort?

- Other last resort options when fighting for your life may be a stationary car in a cleared area, a ploughed paddock or reserve, or a body of water, such as a dam or swimming pool.

Note: Last resort options do not guarantee survival. There is a high risk of trauma, injury or death.

**For more information about bushfires visit cfa.vic.gov.au or
call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on 1800 240 667
or via National Relay Service on 1800 555 677**

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