

# Are you bushfire ready?

Protect your property and – most important of all – keep your loved ones and animals safe

**Your guide to help you prepare for a bushfire**

October 2020



## Were you impacted by the 2019 bushfires?

Read on for information about a broad range of ongoing support services, or contact us for advice

Tel 7955 7543 Email [recovery@midcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:recovery@midcoast.nsw.gov.au) Web [midcoast.nsw.gov.au/recovery](http://midcoast.nsw.gov.au/recovery)

# Bushfire preparation

5 simple steps

# GET READY

MidCoast



## 1. Know your risk

Think about the area you live in and the types of disasters that could affect you.



## 2. Plan now for what you will do

Sit down and talk with your family and plan for what you will do if a disaster affects your area.



## 3. Get your home ready

Prepare your home by doing general home maintenance and checking your insurance.



## 4. Be aware

Find out how to prepare and what to do if there is a disaster in your area. Connect with NSW emergency services to stay informed.



## 5. Look out for each other

Share information with your family, friends, neighbours and those who may need assistance.



**Remember: your safest option is to leave early**  
[emergency.nsw.gov.au/getready](http://emergency.nsw.gov.au/getready)

## NSW RFS Danger Ratings

### Low-Moderate High Very High

**What does it mean?** Review your **Bushfire Survival Plan**. Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary.

### Severe

**What does it mean?** Leaving early is the **safest** option for your survival.

Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety – but only stay if you are physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. If you're not prepared, leave early in the day.

### Extreme

**What does it mean?** Leaving early is the **safest** option for your survival.

If you are not prepared to the highest level, leave early in the day.

Only consider staying if you are prepared to the highest level – such as your home is specially designed, constructed or modified, and situated to withstand a fire, you are well prepared and can actively defend it if a fire starts.

### Catastrophic

**What does it mean?** For your survival, leaving early is the **only** option.

Leave bushfire prone areas the night before or early in the day – do not just wait and see what happens.

Make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there and when you will return.

Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions so you should leave early. Follow your **Bushfire Survival Plan** and go to a safe place.

## Alert Levels



### Advice

A fire has started - stay up to date in case the situation changes.



### Watch and Act

Leaving early is the **safest** option for your survival.



### Extreme Warning

You may be in danger and need to **take action immediately**. Any delay risks your life.

## Stay updated



**1800 679 737**

Bushfire Information Line



**95.5 FM**

MidCoast ABC Radio



**rfs.nsw.gov.au/firesnearme**

RFS website



**Fires Near Me NSW**

Download the NSW RFS app (Apple app store or Google Play)



**Social media**

NSW RFS Facebook and Twitter



# 1. Know your risk

Think about the area your home is located. Prepare your home according to the risk.

**My home is located:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Near, or a few streets from bushland<br>Even if you live a few streets back from the bush, burning embers can fly ahead of the fire and put you and your home at risk. | <input type="checkbox"/> Near the coast<br>You can still be at risk. Coastal heath burns hot and fast.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Near grasslands or paddocks<br>You're at risk of grass fires, which can move quickly and catch you off guard.  | <input type="checkbox"/> At the top of a hill<br>Fires travel faster up hills. The steeper the hill, the faster a fire will travel up it, leaving you less time to prepare. |

**If you leave your home, do you need to travel through bushland?**

- Yes.** Then you need to plan to leave early – it's the safest option.



## 2. Plan now for what you will do Go to Plan

Sit down, talk with your family and complete your **Bushfire Survival Plan**.

As part of your planning, make sure you are familiar with fire danger ratings, and bushfire alerts issued by the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). Make sure you know what they mean, and where you can find the latest information.

**Have you completed your Bushfire Survival Plan?**

- Yes.** Great job - make sure you keep it where you can quickly find it.

# 3. Get your home ready

A well prepared home is more likely to survive a bushfire. Even if your plan is to leave early, the more you prepare your home, the more likely it will survive a bushfire or ember attack.

A well prepared home is easier for you or firefighters to defend, and is less likely to put your neighbours' homes at risk. It will also give you more protection if a fire threatens suddenly and you cannot leave.

**Here are some basic maintenance tips to prepare your property:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Roof and gutters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clean out leaves and twigs from gutters</li><li>• Install metal gutter guards</li><li>• Repair damaged or missing roof tiles</li></ul>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Doors, walls and windows</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install fine metal mesh screens on windows and doors</li><li>• Fit seals around doors and windows to eliminate gaps</li><li>• Enclose the areas under the house</li><li>• Repair or cover gaps in external walls</li></ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Water services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attach a fire sprinkler system to gutters</li><li>• Check your hoses are in good condition</li><li>• Check hoses are long enough to reach around the house</li><li>• If you have a pool, tank or dam, put a Static Water Supply (SWS) sign on your property entrance, so firefighters know where they can get water</li></ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Garden</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep lawns short and gardens well maintained</li><li>• Cut back trees and shrubs overhanging buildings</li><li>• Clean up fallen leaves, twigs and debris around the property walls and fences</li></ul>                                     |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Insurance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check and maintain adequate levels of your Home and Contents Insurance and ensure it is up to date</li></ul>  |

**Go to Step 4. Be aware**





## 4. Be aware

Each day during the bushfire danger period, keep an eye on the **Fire Danger Ratings** and watch for bushfire alerts from the NSW RFS.



### Alert Levels



#### Advice

A fire has started - stay up to date in case the situation changes.



#### Watch and Act

Leaving early is the **safest** option for your survival.



#### Extreme Warning

You may be in danger and need to **take action immediately**. Any delay risks your life.

**Remember: your safest option is to leave early**

### Stay updated



**1800 679 737**

Bushfire Information Line



**95.5 FM**

MidCoast ABC Radio



**rfs.nsw.gov.au/firesnearme**

RFS website



#### Fires Near Me NSW

Download the NSW RFS app (Apple app store or Google Play)



#### Social media

NSW RFS Facebook and Twitter

## 5. Look out for each other

Now that you're prepared, who can you assist to also be prepared for bushfire? Make sure your family members, wherever they live, have a **Bushfire Survival Plan**.

**Do you have elderly neighbours or vulnerable people living near you?**

Check in with them and help them prepare a **Bushfire Survival Plan**. Include them in your plan, so that you remember to look out for them if a bushfire threatens you.

For more information about being bushfire ready visit

[midcoast.nsw.gov.au/getready](http://midcoast.nsw.gov.au/getready)



## Bushfire recovery is still available

If you are recovering from the 2019 bushfires, you're not alone.

Whatever you need, there is help available to you including:

- Financial assistance
- Business support
- Mental health services
- Fencing and building replacement
- Temporary accommodation

Find out about the broad range of support services you can access right now by contacting our Bushfire Recovery team, who will put you in touch with the relevant support agency.

#### MidCoast Council

Bushfire Recovery **Tel** 7955 7543

**Email** [recovery@midcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:recovery@midcoast.nsw.gov.au)

Visit [midcoast.nsw.gov.au/recovery](http://midcoast.nsw.gov.au/recovery)



# Our Bushfire Survival Plan



## Part 1

Everyone in your household should be involved in preparing your **Bushfire Survival Plan** so they know what you have agreed to do in the event of a bushfire.



### Our risks

About our home:

- We live in a bushfire prone area
- Our home has not been designed and constructed to withstand bushfire
- We have animals we must care for

Someone lives in our home who:

- Is a child
- Has a health condition that may make it harder for them to survive in a bushfire eg asthma or movement-restricted
- Lives with a disability
- Is elderly



### Our plan to leave

We will leave if any of these apply:

- We are aware there is a fire in our area
- The bushfire risk is **severe, extreme** or **catastrophic**
- A **Watch and Act!** or **Emergency!** alert is issued (but don't wait for an alert)



### What we will take

A list of what we will take with us when we leave:

- A 'go bag' with essential clothing and personal care items
- Prescription medications
- Important documents and cards eg insurance papers, Medicare cards, passports etc
- Pets
- Money
- Irreplaceable items such as photos
- Portable power bank and phone chargers
- Our emergency kit  
(see bottom of page for what to include)

Other items:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Prepare an emergency kit

An emergency kit can help save precious time in an emergency situation.

It provides items you might need if you lose power or need to leave your home in a hurry.

Keep your emergency kit in a waterproof storage container.

**On a regular basis, update your emergency kit.** Check use-by dates and restock items if needed.

Your emergency kit should include:

- Portable radio with spare batteries
- Torch with spare batteries
- First aid kit (with supplies necessary for your household)
- Candles and waterproof matches
- Important papers including emergency contact numbers
- Copy of any Home Emergency Plans
- Waterproof bag for valuables

# Our Bushfire Survival Plan



## Part 2



### Where we will go

Identify a meeting place that's safe and away from a fire area.

Could be a friend or relative's place, a shopping centre

---

---

---

### How we will get there

The road we will take:

---

---

---

What is our alternative route in case the road we want to take is blocked?

---

---

---

### We will call

We will call this person to let them know we're leaving, and that we've arrived safely:

Name: 

---

Tel: 

---



### We care

We will check in with these neighbours to make sure they are preparing also:

Name: 

---

 Tel: 

---

Name: 

---

 Tel: 

---

Name: 

---

 Tel: 

---

Name: 

---

 Tel: 

---

### Alternative leaving plan

Prepare an alternative plan in case your original plan is not possible.

**Our nearest neighbourhood safer place is:**

---

---

---

Find nearby locations at [rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/neighbourhood-safer-places](https://rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/neighbourhood-safer-places)

Plan your travel route, plus alternate routes in case the road is blocked or too dangerous to drive on.

---

---

---

**Other safer locations we can go to include:**

This might include a nearby shopping centre or sports oval which is well away from the bush

---

---

---

### Back-up plan

In case things don't go to plan, and we cannot leave, the safest location nearby for shelter is:

---

---

---