**STEP 1 DISCUSS**

What will you do in a bushfire?

Get the whole household together and discuss your plan.

**DE-cide to stay, but be PREPARED**

Defending your home from a bushfire can be challenging and you will need the right equipment. If you decide to stay with your property, it’s your responsibility to be prepared.

**Equipment Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firefighting Equipment We Will Need</th>
<th>Protective Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hose that can reach all round the house</td>
<td>Wide-brimmed hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Supply of at least 10,000L, e.g. Water tank, dam, pool</td>
<td>Eye protection goggles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol/diesel water pump and fuel, safe and accessible</td>
<td>Protective mask - P2 is recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladders to access inside the roof</td>
<td>Loose, long sleeved cotton shirt/Long pants or jeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckets and mops</td>
<td>Gloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovels and metal rakes</td>
<td>Sturdy leather shoes or boots</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action Checklist**

**Before the Fire Has Arrived**
- Turn off gas mains/bottle
- Move flammable items away from the house
- Block drains with sand filled socks and fill gutters with water
- Have a plan for animals and pets
- Patrol the house before the fire arrives for embers
- As the fire approaches wet down the house and garden
- Move firefighting equipment to a safe place inside

**During - As the Fire is Upon You**
- If flames are on top of you or the heat becomes unbearable move inside until the fire front has passed (usually 5-10 minutes)
- Patrol the inside of the house, including roof space, looking for sparks and embers
- Shelter in a room on the opposite side of the house from the approaching fire front and ensure you have clear access to an exit

**After - Immediately After**
- Check the house inside and out for fires. Including roof cavity, under house etc.
- If possible and safe to do so, check that your neighbours are OK
- Alert relatives or friends to tell them you are safe
- Patrol your home for several hours, looking for small fire and burning embers

**The Top 5 Actions to Make Your Home Safer**

1. **Trim**
   - Trim overhanging trees and shrubs. This can stop the fire spreading to your home.

2. **Mow**
   - Mow grass and remove the cuttings. Have a cleared area around your house.

3. **Remove**
   - Remove material that can burn (e.g. door mats, wood piles, leaves, paint, furniture).

4. **Clear**
   - Move flammable items away from the house.

5. **Prepare**
   - Have a reliable source of water.

**Know the Bushfire Alert Levels**

**ADVICE**

A fire has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

**Watch and ACT**

There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing. Start taking action to protect you and your family.

**Emergency Warning**

Emergency Warning is the highest level of alert. You may be in danger. Take action immediately. Any delay now risks your life.

**Fire Danger Ratings**

**Severe**

Only stay if your home is well prepared and you are ready to defend it.

**Extreme**

Only stay if your home is prepared to the highest level and is built to survive a bushfire.

**Catastrophic**

Leaving is your only safe option

**Keep Key Information**

The ACT Rural Fire Service strongly advises saving these numbers, links and App now.

- In an emergency call: Triple Zero (000)
- For information on bushfires call Access Canberra: 13 22 81
- For Fire Danger Ratings visit the ACT Emergency Services website: esa.act.gov.au
- Install the smartphone “Fires Near Me” App
- Local radio, local ABC/emergency broadcaster frequency, TV and news websites.
- Stay up to date at: facebook.com/ACTESA and twitter.com/ACTESA

**Keep in Mind**

Do not rely on just one source!
LEAVING EARLY OR PREPARING TO STAY?

One of the most important things to do before a bushfire is to decide what you’ll do if one should start. This guide can help you make that decision, and assist you with the steps in preparing yourself, your home and your family. Once you’ve had the discussion and made a decision, get your family to sign this document.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

LEAVE EARLY. YOUR SAFEST CHOICE

WHAT WILL OUR TRIGGER TO LEAVE?
What will be your sign to leave? It could be smoke in your area, or as soon as you find out there’s a fire near you.

WHERE WILL WE GO?
Where’s a meeting place that’s safe and away from a fire area? It might be a friend or relatives house, or even a shopping centre.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?
What road will you take? What’s your backup plan in case the road is blocked?

WHAT WILL WE TAKE?
Make a list of items you will have pre-packed to take with you in the event of a fire. Remember to include pets, identification, medications and irreplaceable items i.e. photos and documents.

WHO WILL WE CALL?
Who will you call to let them know you are leaving and that you have got there safely.

WHAT IS OUR BACKUP PLAN?
What if things don’t go to plan? Identify a safer location such as a well prepared neighbour, or place of last resort.

DECIDE TO STAY. ONLY IF YOU ARE WELL PREPARED

BEFORE YOU START, ASK YOUR HOUSEHOLD:
» Is your home well prepared to make it as safe as possible during a fire?
» Check the STEP 2 property protection checklist.
» Are we putting anyone in our family at risk by staying?
« For example children, the elderly, or people with asthma.
» Will we cope in an emergency situation? In a fire, it will be hot, smoky and physically draining. Even trained firefighter can find it challenging.
» If you’re not sure or are not prepared, you should leave early.

DO WE HAVE ALL THE EQUIPMENT WE NEED?
Go through all the items on the Decide to Stay checklist and see what’s missing. Make a commitment to get all equipment by a specific date.

DO WE KNOW WHAT TO DO BEFORE DURING AND AFTER A FIRE?
Study the Decide to Stay action checklist.

DO ALL MEMBERS OF OUR HOUSEHOLD KNOW WHAT TO DO IN ALL SITUATIONS?
Give specific roles to each person.

WHAT IS OUR SIGN TO START DEFENDING OUR HOME?
It could be as soon as you find out there’s a fire near you. Do not wait for an official warning.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR RISK?

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 bushfire season.

3. KNOW
   The bushfire alert levels.

4. KEEP
   Bushfire information, numbers, websites, and the App.

4 SIMPLE STEPS

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DO YOU KNOW YOUR RISK?

Where you live is one of the things that determines if both you and your home are at risk of bush fire, and what kind of fire you might experience. Think about the area you live in:

BUSH
If you live in an area that’s close to or surrounded by bush you are at risk.
Bushfires can be hot, intense and throw burning embers towards your home.

GRASSLANDS
If you live in an area where grasslands meet built up areas or homes, you are at risk.
Grass fires can start easily and spread quickly.

PADDOCKS
If you live on the outskirts of the city or near paddocks, you are at risk.
Fires can spread quickly over great distances.

ON A HILL
If you live at the top of a hill, you are at risk.
Fires travel uphill faster. For every 10 degrees of slope, the fire can double in speed.

20 minutes to review and decide.

We have discussed and agreed with the entire household, in the event of a bushfire we will:

[ ] LEAVE EARLY
[ ] PREPARE & STAY

In the event that an evacuation order is given, evacuation centres will be established at safe locations within the local area away from fire. Locations will be broadcast regularly on radio and TV. Details will also be available at esa.act.gov.au and also Access Canberra 13 22 81.

20

minutes
to review and decide.