



Shire of
Collie
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Fire Prevention Supplementary Information

Important Information for Property Owner/Occupier

- All properties must be compliant with the Fire Prevention Order by 30 November each year.
- An inspection of properties will be carried out in all areas of the Shire of Collie by an Authorised Officer after 30 November each year.
- Action will be taken for non-compliance with the requirements of the Fire Prevention Order.
- Penalties will apply and the Shire of Collie may carry out the required work and charge the cost to the owner/occupier.
- Due to seasonal conditions, dates in regard to burning may be varied. It is recommended to check with the Shire of Collie or a Fire Control Officer prior to burning. The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer declares any variations in dates for the Restricted and Prohibited Burning Period.
- It is the responsibility of all owners/occupiers to extinguish any uncontrolled fire that may be burning on their property. It is recommended that all property owners secure and maintain some convenient and effective type of fire-fighting equipment.
- When sprayed firebreaks are used, it is recommended that they be sprayed by the end of August every year and again if required.

Wood or Solid Fuel BBQ, Camp and Cooking Fires

- Camping and cooking fires are completely banned in the Shire of Collie during the prohibited burning period.
- These fires are also banned during restricted burning periods when the fire danger rating is Very High, Extreme, Severe or Catastrophic.

Shire of Collie Fire Mitigation

The Shire endeavours to undertake fire risk verge maintenance on its roads within the limitations of its available resources. Where possible, the Shire undertakes mitigation strategies targeting high risk areas, in consultation with local brigades, including controlled burns, slashing and spraying to minimize hazards. The Shire is unable to guarantee its actions will address all fire risks.

Fire Permit Application

Before you call a Fire Control Officer ensure you have the following information:

- Who will be the three able bodied persons in attendance at all times whilst the fire is alight including contact phone number?
- What is the address and/or location number, of the property for which the permit applies?
- What fire-fighting equipment and resources will you have at the fire and is it in good working order?
- What is the size of the burn to take place?
- Are there firebreaks installed and can a fire appliance get access to the area?
- What material are you burning? Is it dry? Is there any plastic, tyres, treated posts or woods in the piles or area to be burnt? If so, remove them to a safe place.
- Ensure you give 72 hours notice to the Fire Control Officer first and then ensure you notify neighbours 72 hours prior to commencing your burn.

Definitions

Firebreak: Means a strip of land that has been cleared of all trees, bushes, grasses and any other object or thing or flammable material leaving clear bare mineral earth 3 metres wide and 5 metres vertical clearance. This includes the trimming back of all overhanging trees, bushes, shrubs and any other object or thing over the firebreak area.

**COMPLIANT BARE
EARTH
FIREBREAK**

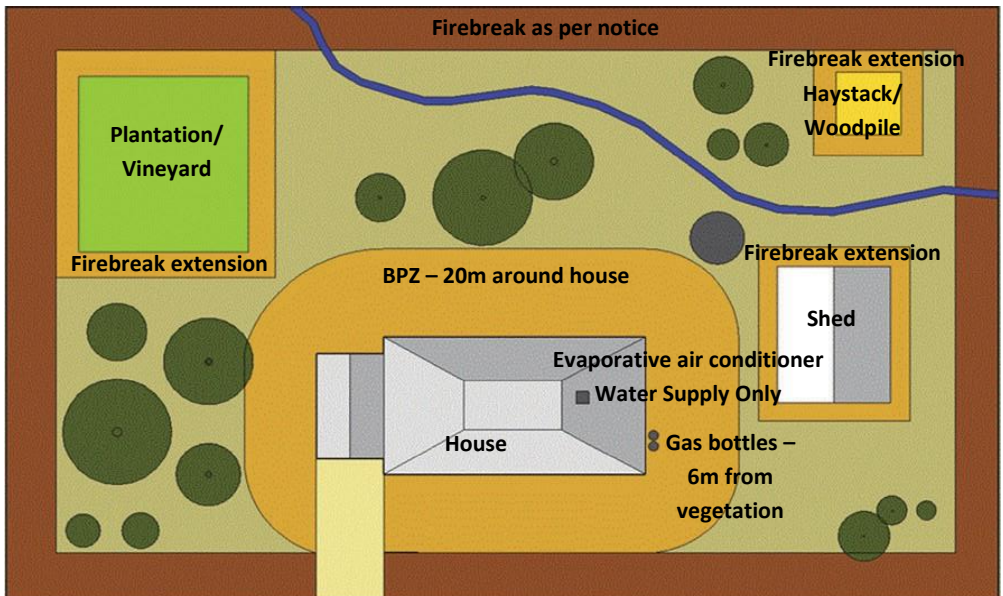


**MOWED GRASS IS
NON-COMPLIANT**



Asset Protection Zone (APZ): Low fuel area immediately surrounding buildings. Minimum width 20 metres increasing with up-slope. Within the APZ ensure;

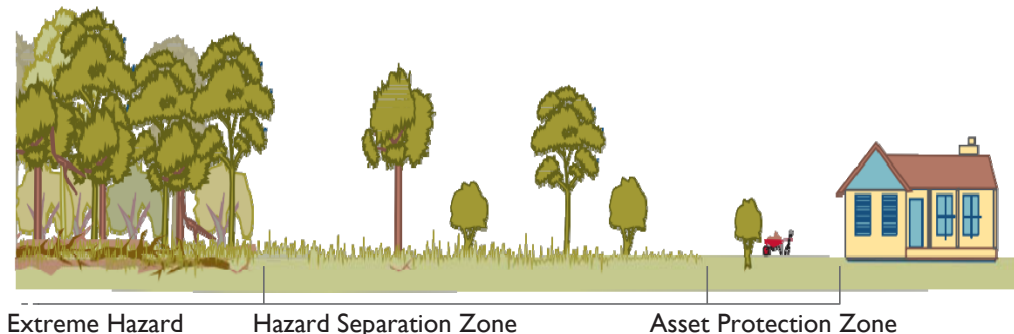
- Tree crowns are a minimum of 10 metres apart
- Trees are skirted or pruned up to a height of 2 metres
- No tree is located within 2 metres of a building
- Tree branches do not overhang a building
- Ensure there is a gap of at least 3 times the height (at maturity) of the shrub away from the building
- Lawns are kept short and green, where possible
- Trees and shrubs do not have elevated dead material within the crowns
- Fences and sheds are constructed using non-combustible materials, but preferably not within the BPZ



Hazardous/Flammable: Means any bush, plant, tree, grasses, vegetable, substance, object, thing or material that may or is likely to catch fire and burn.

Hazard Separation Zone: The fuel reduced area between an area of bushfire hazard and the buildings (and associated asset protection zones) of a development.

Hazard Separation Zone diagram



Trafficable: Means to be able to travel from one point to another in a 4x4 fire vehicle on a firm and stable surface, unhindered without any obstruction that may endanger resources. No firebreak is to terminate without provision for egress to a safe place or a cleared turn around area of not less than a 20 metre radius.

Variation to Firebreak & Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice

Note: Property owners may apply for a variation to manage their properties reasonably within the environment they live in, in accordance with the Council Firebreak Notice.

Information is available by calling the Shire Rangers, the Shire Offices on 97349000.

Hazard Reduction

The installation of a firebreak is only one element of the fire prevention picture. Firebreaks are required to be installed and maintained from 1 December until 31 May each and every year. In some cases firebreaks may have to be reinstalled several times during the restricted and prohibited period.

It is the property owner/occupier, not the contractor that is responsible for the standard and quality of the firebreaks installed and maintained.

The installation of firebreaks need to be in harmony with total fire prevention activities of which some are highlighted below.

Reduction of fuels does not have to be as drastic as removing all vegetation. Environmentally this would be disastrous and often trees and plants can provide you with some bushfire protection from strong winds, intense heat and flying embers.

Methods of hazard reduction:

- Hand clearing;
- Mechanical clearing;
- Chemical spraying (should be undertaken June – September);
- Hazard reduction burning.

In many circumstances, hand and mechanical clearing methods should be considered the best way to protect assets. These methods can be safer than burning, and easier to organise and maintain.

Raking or manual removal of fine fuels: remove fuels such as fallen leaves, twigs and bark on a regular basis.

Mowing grass: keep grass short, green and well watered.

Slashing and mulching: this is an economical method of fuel reduction. To be effective, the cut material must either be removed, be no greater than 5cm in depth or allowed to rot before summer starts. Slashing and mowing may leave grass in rows, increasing fuel loading in some places. Mulching or turbo mowing, also mulches the vegetation leaving the fuel where it is cut, potentially creating a further hazard if greater than 10cm.

Ploughing and grading: these methods can produce effective firebreaks, however they need constant maintenance. Loose soil may erode in steep areas, particularly where there is high rainfall and strong winds.

Hazard Reduction Program

Autumn and Winter (May – August)

- Tree pruning – remove lower branches, check that power lines are clear. Use a professional contractor;
- Reduce fuel levels around the house, clear long grass, leaves, twigs and flammable shrubs;
- Ensure petrol and other flammables are safely stored away from the main dwelling;
- Make sure your fire-fighting equipment is in good working order and serviced when required;
- Accommodation providers must make sure all guests are aware of emergency plan, including evacuation routes.

Spring (September – November)

- Move wood piles and stack timber away from the main dwelling;
- Keep grass short;
- Install firebreaks in accordance with this Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice, your approved variation to this Notice or your approved Bush Fire Management Plan.

Summer (November – May)

- Water lawns, trees and shrubs near buildings to keep green;
- Recheck fire-fighting equipment, screens, water supplies and that gutters remain clear.

Long term precautions

- Ensure firebreaks are prepared in accordance with the latest Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice or any submitted and approved variation to this Notice or Bush Fire Management Plan endorsed by Council;
- Get basic training in fire-fighting from your local bushfire brigade or even join your local brigade;
- Join or start a Bushfire Ready Group (BRG).
- For specific matters, refer to “The Home Owner’s Bushfire Survival Manual” for guidance on retrofitting and protecting your property, this document is available on the Shire of Collie link or by contacting the Shire for a copy.

Additional Information

Trees - live standing trees: Council does not expect you to remove large trees from or adjacent to boundaries so as to install the firebreak. The firebreak can simply detour around the tree/trees so as to afford safe access. This procedure does not require a Variation to Firebreak Order as long as the normal dimensions of the firebreak exist.

Roads, verges, bridle paths, footpaths, Emergency access ways, dual use access ways and reserves: None of the above can be classified as a firebreak for your property. Firebreaks must be on your own property to conform to this Notice. However, any additional fire prevention activities on verges etc, can be completed on application to Council in writing and approval received. Removal of indigenous and substantive trees/vegetation requires Council approval.

Hazard Separation Zone: must be provided between extreme bush fire hazards and buildings to create a minimum separation distance of up to 100 metres if land is available between the buildings and the hazard in order to protect them from burning debris (spotting, airborne embers), radiant heat and direct flame contact.

Maintenance of firebreak, access and vegetation: Once your firebreaks, accesses and vegetation have been managed to meet your legal requirements of this Notice please ensure that these conditions are maintained all the way through until 31 May each year. It is normal

for re-growth to occur between December and May, so keep firebreaks, accesses and mineral earth firebreaks free from obstructions such as fallen tree limbs and ensure vegetation is maintained to appropriate levels.

Effective firebreaks: Firebreaks are there to reduce the spread of a low intensity fire and to provide safe access on your property to fire-fighters.

Firefighters need to be able to use the firebreak as a place of safety for themselves and their vehicles where the fire will not travel under their vehicles or underfoot.

On days of strong winds or extreme conditions it is fully accepted that a 3 metre firebreak will be unlikely to stop a wildfire. The more fire prevention work you undertake, the greater the chance of your family and property surviving the ravages of fire.

Variation Guidelines

The following guidelines are acceptable categories for which a variation to firebreak may be applied:

1. The topography makes the normal placement of a firebreak impracticable or dangerous and alternative firebreak emergency access and fire prevention methods that meet the intention of this Notice is provided and demonstrated;
2. The topography/composition makes the normal methods of construction impracticable (cap stone, rocky or water logged) and alternative firebreak emergency access and fire prevention methods that meet the intention of this Notice is provided and demonstrated;
3. An approved Bush Fire Management Plan for the property is in place and being conformed to and meets the intention of this Notice;
4. The firebreak variation only applies to a portion of the property that is reticulated lawn that is kept green and it can be demonstrated that it is maintained regularly to less than 10cm from the 1 December to 31 May inclusive;
5. The firebreak variation only applies to a portion of the property that is reticulated feed paddocks that is kept green and it can be demonstrated that it is maintained regularly to less than 10cm from 1 December to 31 May inclusive;
6. The variation only applies to the portion of the property that has reticulated garden beds, lawns, orchards or other accepted sustained cultivation. Unless it is deemed by Council or it's authorised officer that the fuel type/ loadings are a hazard.
7. Cleared access provided to enable emergency vehicular access to buildings and outbuildings and all parts of the property in accordance with this Notice;

8. Firebreaks are provided in agreed alternative locations to negate natural obstructions;
9. Constructed driveways may where authorised substitute for firebreaks as long as it remains trafficable for the firebreak as a whole and is maintained clear of all flammable materials at all times in accordance with this Notice;
10. Where clearing is likely to impact upon areas of Declared Rare Flora, Threatened Ecological Communities or Environmentally Sensitive Areas as defined under the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004.

All requests must be made by the property owner or person authorised to act upon the owners behalf, individual requests are required for each property and must be submitted on the approved document/ application form, available from the Shire.

The authorising officer has the right to grant, refuse, alter or add any conditions to an application, where alterations or additions are applicable. Failure to comply within the time frames provided by the authorised officer will result in the refusal of the application and prosecution as if a firebreak/ hazard reduction works had not been installed/conducted in accordance with this Notice.

Where refusal of an application takes place the owner has fourteen (14) days in which to conform to the normal requirements of this Notice.

Please note: you must have your variation in place and operational by the **14 November**. It is your responsibility to demonstrate that the variation will be maintained for the entire restricted and prohibited burning times.

Failure to demonstrate compliance and the ability to maintain the alternative solutions approved within the variation will automatically require total compliance with this Notice in its entirety.



Take Action Now

To access further information on preparing your property learn about the DFES website www.dfes.wa.gov.au or call the DFES public information line on 13 3337

Weather Alerts: Bureau of Meteorology recorded information line on 1300 659 210