



Shire of
Collie
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SHIRE OF COLLIE FIRE PREVENTION

Supplementary information

Property owners and occupiers

Key compliance dates

- Properties must comply with the Fire Hazard Reduction Notice by the 1st of November each year.
- Firebreaks must be installed and maintained from the 1st of December to the 31st of May.
- Approved variations must be operational by the 14th of November.

Use this guide with the current Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice. Seasonal conditions may change burning dates, so check with the Shire of Collie or a Fire Control Officer before burning.

IN THIS GUIDE

01

Responsibilities & Permits

02

Firebreaks & APZs

03

Hazard Reduction

04

Seasonal Program

05

Variation Guidelines

06

Contacts & Action

Responsibilities, Burning Restrictions & Permits

Important Information

- All properties must comply with the Fire Hazard Reduction Notice by the 1st of November each year.
- Authorised officers inspect properties across the Shire from the 1st of November.
- Non-compliance may result in enforcement action and penalties. The Shire may complete the required work and recover the cost from the owner or occupier.
- Burning dates may vary with seasonal conditions. Check with the Shire or a Fire Control Officer before burning.
- Owners and occupiers are responsible for extinguishing uncontrolled fires on their property and should maintain effective firefighting equipment.
- Where minimum firebreaks are maintained by spraying, complete the first application by the end of August and repeat if required.

Wood or Solid-fuel BBQs, Campfires & Cooking Fires

- Completely banned during the prohibited burning period.
- Also banned during restricted burning period when the Fire Danger Rating is High, Extreme or Catastrophic.

Shire Fire Mitigation

The Shire undertakes fire-risk verge maintenance within available resources. Where possible, it targets high-risk areas in consultation with local brigades using measures such as controlled burns, slashing and spraying. These actions cannot guarantee that every fire risk will be addressed.

Before requesting a fire permit

Have the following information ready before contacting a Fire Control Officer:

- Names and phone numbers for three able-bodied people aged over 16 who will remain in attendance while the fire is alight.
- Property address and/or location number.
- Available firefighting equipment and confirmation that it is in good working order.
- Size of the proposed burn.
- Confirmation that firebreaks are installed and a fire appliance can access the area.
- Material to be burnt and whether it is dry. Remove plastics, tyres, treated posts or treated wood to a safe place.
- At least 72 hours' notice to the Fire Control Officer and neighbours before the burn.
- On the day, the landowner must register the burn with the DFES Communication Centre on (08) 9395 9210 to avoid unnecessary brigade turnouts.

CORE DEFINITIONS

Firebreaks & Asset Protection Zones

Firebreak

A strip of land cleared of trees, bushes, grasses and other flammable material, leaving bare mineral earth at least 3 metres wide with 4 metres vertical clearance. Overhanging trees, bushes, shrubs and other obstructions must be trimmed back from the firebreak area.



Compliant: bare mineral earth and clear access



Non-compliant: mown grass is not a firebreak

Asset Protection Zone (APZ)

A low-fuel area immediately surrounding buildings. The minimum width is 20 metres and increases on upslope land. Within the APZ:

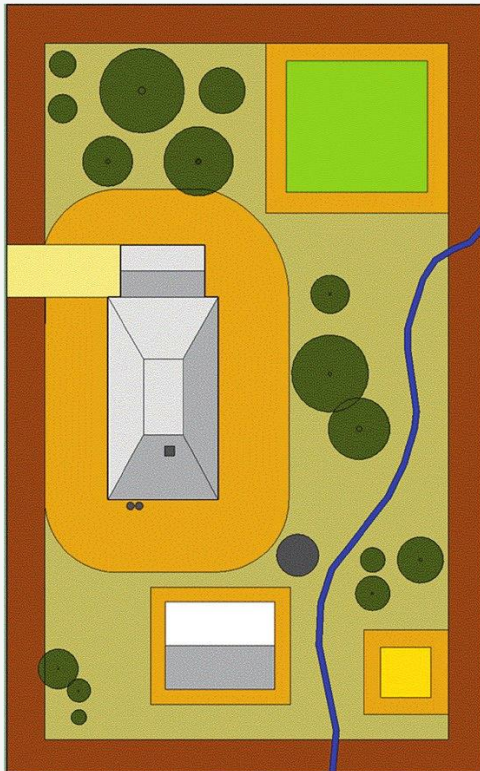
- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep tree crowns at least 10 metres apart. • Skirt or prune trees to a height of 2 metres. • Keep trees at least 2 metres from buildings. • Do not allow branches to overhang buildings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep shrubs at least three times their mature height away from buildings. • Keep lawns short and green where possible. • Remove elevated dead material from tree and shrub crowns. • Use non-combustible materials for fences and sheds and, where possible, locate them outside the APZ. |
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APZ reminder

The APZ is part of a broader bushfire protection system. Firebreaks, access, vegetation management and firefighting water supplies all work together.

HOW THE ELEMENTS WORK TOGETHER

Property Layout, Separation Zones & Access



Example property layout. Refer to the current Notice for exact requirements.

Key definitions

Inflammable: Any bush, plant, tree, grass, vegetable, substance, object, thing or material that may catch fire and burn.

Hazard Separation Zone: The reduced-fuel area between a bushfire hazard area and the buildings, including their associated APZs, within a development.

Trafficable: A firm, stable surface that can be travelled on by a 4wd fire vehicle without obstructions that could endanger crews or equipment.

A firebreak must not terminate without safe egress or a cleared turnaround area with a radius of at least 20 metres.

Hazard separation



Extreme Hazard → Hazard Separation Zone → Asset Protection Zone → Building

Planning principle

Where land is available, separation between extreme bushfire hazards and buildings may need to extend up to 100 metres to reduce exposure to embers, radiant heat and direct flame contact.

Hazard Reduction

Variation to the Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice

Property owners may apply for a variation that manages the property reasonably within its environment while still meeting the intent of the Council Firebreak Notice. Contact Shire Rangers or the Shire offices on (08) 9734 9000 during business hours.

A firebreak is only one part of fire prevention. Firebreaks must be installed and maintained from the 1st of December to the 31st of May each year and may need to be reinstated several times during that period.

Owner responsibility

The property owner or occupier, not the contractors, is responsible for the standard and quality of installed and maintained firebreaks.

Fuel reduction does not mean removing all vegetation. Large-scale clearing can be environmentally damaging, and trees and plants may help shield properties from strong winds, intense heat and flying embers.

Methods of hazard reduction

Hand clearing Remove fine fuels and small vegetation manually.	Mechanical clearing Use mowing, slashing, mulching, ploughing or grading where suitable.
Chemical spraying Best undertaken from June to September.	Hazard reduction burning Requires careful planning, approvals and suitable conditions.

Practical maintenance

Raking and manual removal: Regularly remove leaves, twigs, bark and other fine fuels.

Mowing: Keep grass short, green, and well-watered.

Slashing and mulching: Cut material should be removed, left to decompose before summer, or kept no more than 10 cm deep. Rows of cut grass can increase fuel loading, and mulched material deeper than 8 cm can pose an additional hazard.

Ploughing and grading: These methods can create effective firebreaks but require ongoing maintenance. Loose soil may erode on steep land, particularly in high rainfall or strong winds.

Seasonal Hazard Reduction Program

Autumn & winter | May–August

- Prune lower tree branches and loose bark; confirm power lines are clear. Use a professional contractor.
- Reduce fuel around the house: long grass, leaves, twigs and flammable shrubs.
- Store petrol and other flammables safely away from the main dwelling.
- Service and test firefighting equipment.
- Accommodation providers: ensure guests understand the emergency plan and evacuation routes.

Spring | September–November

- Move woodpiles and stacked timber away from the main dwelling.
- Keep grass short.
- Install firebreaks in line with the current Notice, an approved variation or an approved Bush Fire Management Plan.

Summer | November–May

- Water lawns, trees and shrubs near buildings to keep them green.
- Recheck firefighting equipment, screens and water supplies.
- Keep gutters clear.

Long-term precautions

- Prepare firebreaks to the latest Notice, approved variation or Council-endorsed Bush Fire Management Plan.
- Join a Bushfire Ready Group (BRG).
- Use the DFES Prepare for Bushfire resources for specific guidance.

Maintain conditions through to the 31st of May.

Regrowth commonly occurs between late November and May. Keep firebreaks and access routes clear of fallen limbs and other obstructions, and maintain vegetation at the required level.

Why ongoing work matters

Effective firebreaks help slow low-intensity fires and provide safer access for firefighters. They also provide an area where crews and vehicles are less exposed to fire travelling beneath or beneath them.

In strong winds or extreme conditions, a 3-metre firebreak is unlikely to stop a fire. The more preparation undertaken across the property, the better the chance of protecting people, buildings and other assets.

COMMON PROPERTY QUESTIONS

Additional Information

Live standing trees

Council does not expect large trees on or near boundaries to be removed solely for the purpose of installing a firebreak. A compliant firebreak may detour around a tree while maintaining required dimensions and safe access. This does not require a variation.

Roads, verges and reserves

Roads, verges, bridle paths, footpaths, emergency access ways, dual-use access ways and reserves cannot be counted as your property firebreak. Firebreaks must be located on your property.

Work outside your property.

Additional fire-prevention work on verges or similar land requires a written application and Council approval. Removing indigenous or other substantial vegetation requires DPLH approvals beforehand.

Asset Protection Zone

Between extreme bushfire hazards and buildings, the APZ and separation area may need to provide up to 100 metres of separation, where land is available, to reduce exposure to embers, radiant heat and flame contact.

Maintenance of firebreaks, access and vegetation

Once the property meets its legal requirements, the property owner must maintain those conditions from the 1st of November to the 31st of May. Keep firebreaks and mineral-earth surfaces free of fallen branches and other obstructions, and maintain vegetation at appropriate levels.

Effective firebreaks

Firebreaks reduce the spread of low-intensity fire and provide access for firefighters. They should provide a safer area for crews and vehicles, where fire is less likely to spread beneath.

Firebreaks are not a guarantee.

Strong winds and extreme fire conditions can carry flames and embers across a standard 3-metre firebreak. Combine firebreaks with APZs, access, fuel reduction, water supplies and a practised emergency plan.

Variation Guidelines

A variation may be considered where an alternative arrangement meets the intent of the Notice and can be demonstrated and maintained.

- 1** Topography makes the normal firebreak location impracticable or dangerous, and alternative emergency access and fire-prevention measures are provided and demonstrated.
- 2** The topography or ground compositions, such as capstone, rocky or waterlogged land, make normal construction impracticable, and alternative measures are provided and demonstrated.
- 3** An approved Bush Fire Management Plan applies to the property, is being followed and meets the intent of the Notice.
- 4** The variation applies only to reticulated lawn that is kept green and regularly maintained to remain below 10 cm from the 1st of December to the 31st of May inclusive.
- 5** The variation applies only to reticulated feed paddocks that are kept green and regularly maintained to remain below 10 cm from the 1st of December to the 31st of May inclusive.

Evidence matters

Applications should clearly show how the alternative solution will provide emergency access, reduce fuel and remain effective throughout the restricted and prohibited burning periods.

Variation Guidelines

- 6** The variation applies only to reticulated garden beds, lawns, orchards or other accepted sustained cultivation, unless Council or an authorised officer considers the fuel type or loading to be a hazard.
- 7** Clear access is provided for emergency vehicles to buildings, outbuildings and all parts of the property in accordance with the Notice.
- 8** Firebreaks are provided in agreed alternative locations to avoid natural obstructions.
- 9** Where authorised, constructed driveways may substitute for firebreaks if they remain trafficable for the full firebreak route and are kept clear of flammable material at all times.
- 10** Clearing is likely to affect Declared Rare Flora, Threatened Ecological Communities or Environmentally Sensitive Areas under the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004.

Application and decision process

- The owner, or a person authorised to act for the owner, must submit the request.
- A separate request is required for each property using the Shire's approved application form.
- The authorising officer may grant, refuse, alter or add conditions to an application.
- Failure to comply within the stated timeframe may lead to refusal and prosecution as though the required firebreak or hazard-reduction work had not been completed.
- If an application is refused, the owner has 14 days to meet the normal requirements of the Notice.

Take Action Now

Variation Deadline

Your approved variation must be in place and operational by the 14th of November.

You must be able to demonstrate that the variation will be maintained throughout the restricted and prohibited burning periods.

Failure to demonstrate compliance or the ability to maintain the approved alternative solution will automatically require full compliance with the Notice.



Non-compliant vacant block: long dry grass and unmanaged fuel

Property preparation resources

For information on preparing your property, visit the DFES website or call the DFES public information line on 13 33 37.

www.dfes.wa.gov.au

SHIRE OF COLLIE

Shire Rangers / Shire Offices
(08) 9734 9000 | Business hours

BURN REGISTRATION

DFES Communication Centre
08 9395 9210 | On the day of the burn

This supplementary guide does not replace the current Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice or directions issued under the Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA).