



# CHECKLIST PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY

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**Prepare your home and property for the bushfire season. It is everyone's responsibility.**

**If you live in or near bush take the time to complete and action this checklist.**

## STARVE THE FIRE

Reduce the fuel loads around your home so that embers will have less chance to start a fire when they hit the ground. This will also help reduce the damage caused by the fire.

For at least 20 metres around your home and other buildings:

- Cut long grass and dense scrub. Remove dead material.
- Remove all rubbish and rake up leaf litter, twigs, bark and material that may catch fire.
- Maintain a minimum two metre gap between your house and tree branches. Make sure that no trees overhang the house.
- Prune lower branches (up to two metres off the ground) to stop a fire on the ground spreading to the canopy of the trees.
- Do not clump shrubs, ensure that there is a gap. Shrubs should be planted at a distance of at least three times their height at maturity from buildings.

Other actions you will need to take:

- Keep your gutters free of leaves and other combustible material.
- Create a mineral earth firebreak, with no vegetation along your boundary.
- Build your paths adjacent to the building and have your driveway placed so that it maximises the protection to the house.
- If possible, plan your garden so that your vegetable garden, lawn, pool or patio is on the side of the house likely to face a fire (where the bush is).
- Store firewood away from the building.
- Ensure that your gas bottles are secured and positioned so that it will vent away from the building if it is subject to flame contact or radiant heat.
- Ensure fences are non-combustible so they can help to shield your home from a bushfire and radiant heat.

## FILL THE GAPS

Houses usually catch fire when embers get into the roof space, a wall cavity, on to ledges or under the house. Prevent sparks from entering your house by blocking all the gaps.

- Block any gaps under floor spaces, in the roof space, under eaves, external vents, skylights, chimneys and wall cladding.
- Place metal fly wire mesh on all windows, vents and install an ember protection screen on evaporative air conditioners to keep sparks and embers out.

## FIX THE FIRE TRAPS

- Do not pile wood against or near the house.
- Remove any timber, rubbish and old junk lying around.
- Move all fuel containers into a shed away from your house and have a firebreak around it.
- Keep gas cylinders on the side of the house furthest away from the likely direction of a fire (where the bush is). Ensure the pressure relief valve is directed away from the house. Store gas cylinders upright and secure them with a metal chain to a secure, non-combustible post to prevent cylinders from falling over.

## PROTECT YOUR ASSET

- Have a sufficient independent water supply of at least 20,000 litres and a petrol, diesel or a generator powered pump capable of pumping 400 litres per minute.
- Check that your home and contents insurance cover is adequate. Take into consideration renovations, fixtures and additions such as swimming pools, sheds, gazebos, luxury fittings or new appliances.



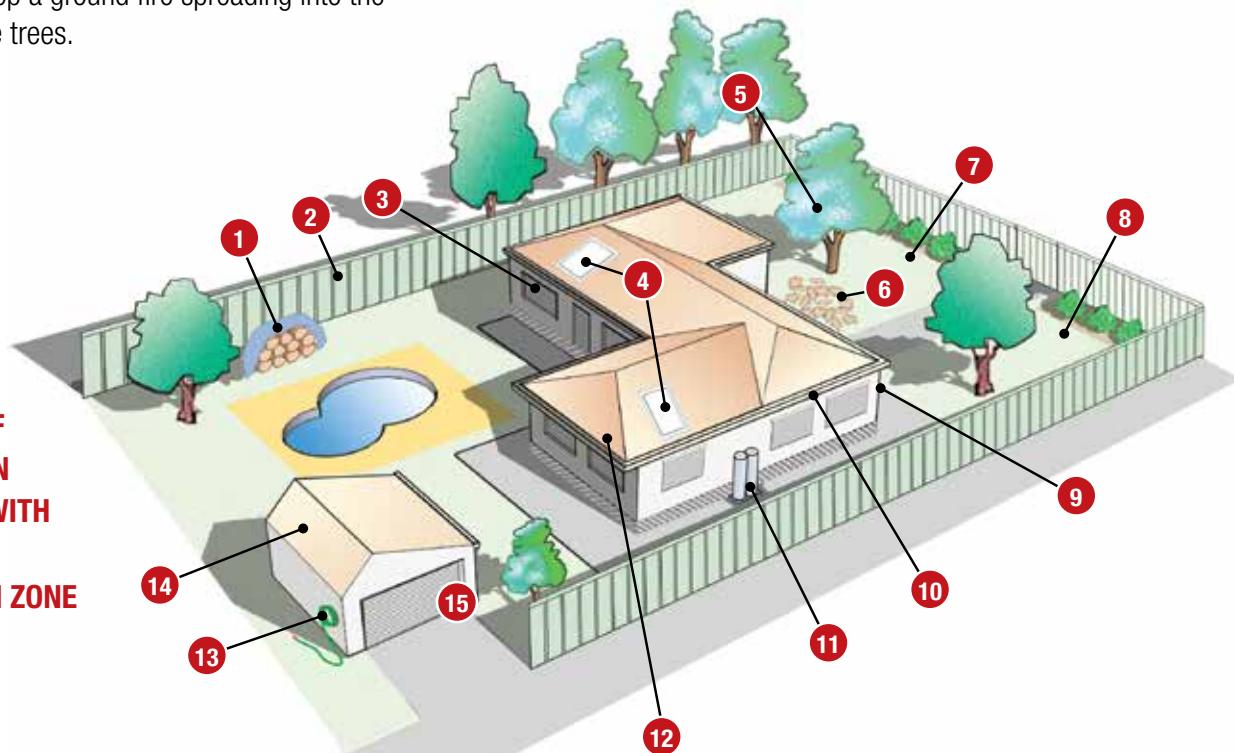
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## BUILDING PROTECTION ZONE (CIRCLE OF SAFETY)

- Create a minimum 20 metre building protection zone around your home and other buildings. Reduce the fuel load in this area by removing all rubbish, keeping grass cut short, and raking up leaf litter, twigs, bark and material that may catch fire.
- Prune lower branches (up to two metres off the ground) to stop a ground fire spreading into the canopy of the trees.
- Create a mineral earth firebreak along the boundary of your property. Make sure you meet your local government's firebreak requirements.
- Cut long grass and prune the scrub so that it is not dense, and does not have fine, dead aerated material in the crown of the scrub.

### EXAMPLE OF A SUBURBAN PROPERTY WITH A BUILDING PROTECTION ZONE

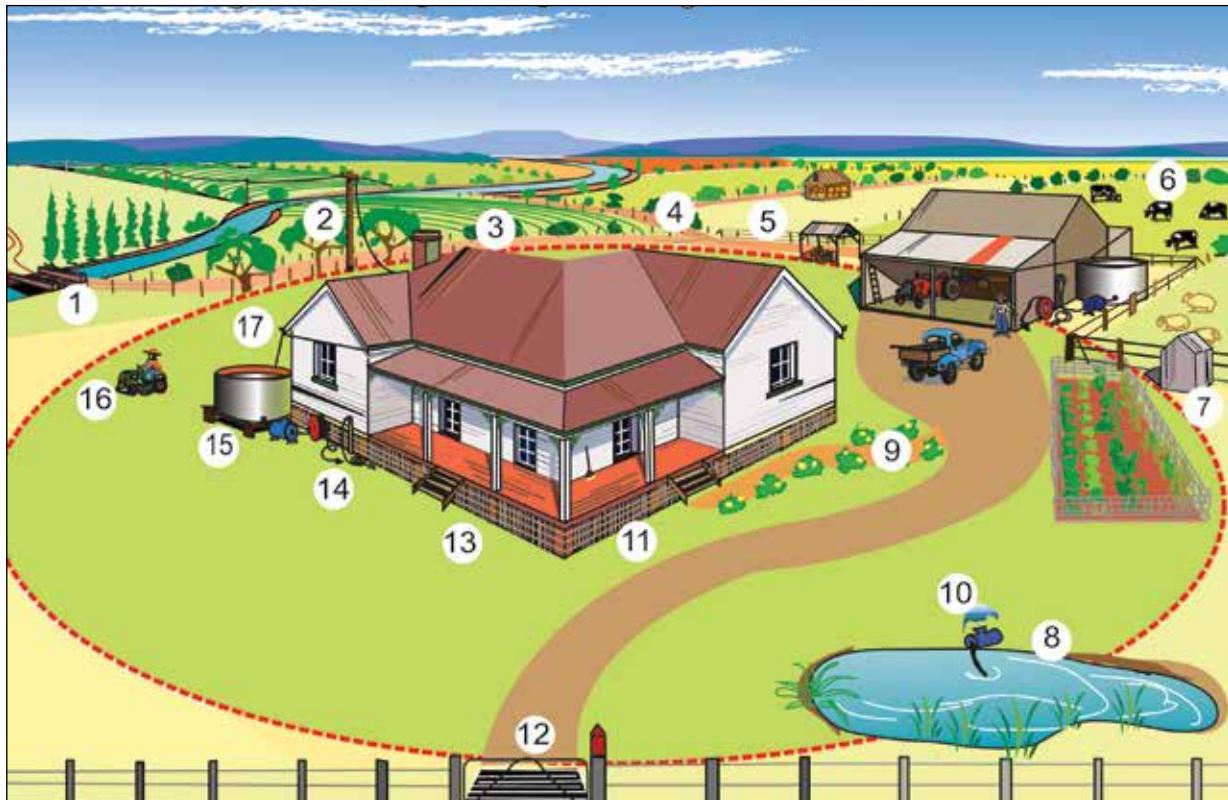


- 1 Do not pile wood against or near the house
- 2 Install a fire or heat radiation shield such as a solid fence
- 3 Place metal fly wire mesh on all windows, vents and install an ember protection screen on evaporative air conditioners to keep sparks and embers out
- 4 Block any gaps under floor spaces, in the roof space, under eaves, external vents, skylights, chimneys and wall cladding
- 5 Create and maintain a minimum two metre gap between your house and tree branches
- 6 Rake up leaf litter and twigs under trees
- 7 Remove shrubs and small trees under and between larger trees
- 8 Ensure garden mulch is kept away from the house and grass is kept short
- 9 Ensure all gaps in external wall claddings are sealed
- 10 Keep roof gutters and valleys clear of leaves and bark
- 11 Keep gas cylinders on the side of the house furthest away from the likely direction of a fire (where the bush is). Ensure the pressure relief valve is directed away from the house. Store gas cylinders upright and secure them with a metal chain to a secure, non-combustible post to prevent cylinders from falling over
- 12 Block any gaps in the roof space
- 13 Hoses must be long enough to reach all parts of your house. Use metal hose fittings for taps as they are less likely to melt
- 14 Remove flammable materials and store them away from the house
- 15 Have a sufficient independent water supply of at least 20,000 litres and a petrol, diesel or a generator powered pump capable of pumping 400 litres per minute.
- 16 Refer to DFES' Homeowners Bush Fire Survival Manual available at: [www.dfes.wa.gov.au](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au)



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## EXAMPLE OF A REGIONAL PROPERTY WITH A BUILDING PROTECTION ZONE

- 1 Check bridge loading for fire tanker access
- 2 Trim branches away from power lines
- 3 Replace or repair damaged roofing and weatherboards where embers can enter
- 4 Put in firebreaks along paddock boundaries
- 5 Store firewood away from the house
- 6 If fire threatens move livestock to a well grazed paddock
- 7 Store petrol and gas safely away in a shed
- 8 Draw water from dams and pools. Don't rely on mains water supply
- 9 Keep a well maintained area with fire retardant plants
- 10 Install pumps with a spray nozzle
- 11 Seal under floor spaces to prevent embers entering
- 12 Check cattle grid loading for fire tanker access
- 13 Place water pipes underground from the dam pump to the house
- 14 Have a hose fitting on an internal tap to douse spot fires in the roof cavity
- 15 Fill water tanks and connect them to pumps for firefighting
- 16 Keep grass cut
- 17 Install gutter guards and keep gutters clear of leaf litter