

Renting and bushfires

Are you prepared?

If you rent a property in an area near bushland you need to be aware of the risks and take steps to protect yourself, your family and your pets. Even metropolitan homes near bushland are at risk because fires can spread from burning embers carried by the wind.

In a bushfire you will need to make quick decisions about what to do. Firefighting resources, including water bombing aircraft, will be busy trying to put the fire out and will not be there to help you defend your home. It is your responsibility to reduce the risks and take action in a fire. Have a bushfire survival plan in place. Be prepared.

Leaving early for a safer place is the best option. Avoid making last minute decisions that could prove deadly. Have a back-up plan. If you don't have time to leave, where will you shelter? Have a survival kit with your important papers, medications and personal belongings ready to go. Consider what you will do with your pets and livestock.

PREPARING YOUR HOME

Mow the lawns regularly, keep the weeds down and ask the owner to clear the gutters. If possible, keep LP gas cylinders on the side of the house furthest away from the direction of the fire. Have the valves pointing away from the house and turn them off as fire approaches.

Check that your contents insurance is adequate to cover bushfires.

TAKE ACTION

Stay alert. On hot dry days go outside regularly to check for signs of a bushfire and keep up to date via radio, television, the internet and information lines.

Take action the moment there is danger. Do not wait for emergency personnel and do not wait and see. Leave for a safer place if you can. Make sure you and your family knows where the safer place is and how to get there. Close all doors and windows and turn off evaporative air conditioners. Take advice from emergency services personnel.

Bushfires move very quickly. Many people plan to move somewhere safer in a fire but leave it too late. Roads can be closed and filled with smoke. If you are new to the area become familiar with alternative routes to leave your home.

Identify a trigger that prompts you to leave early. Have a backup plan in case you cannot get away.

Children, the elderly, people who are sick or have a disability must leave very early. You need to act the moment you know there is danger. Do not wait and see.

Understand bushfire warnings. There are three levels:

ADVICE: a fire has started but there is no immediate danger.

WATCH AND ACT: a fire is approaching and you need to start taking action.

EMERGENCY WARNING: You are in danger and must take immediate action to survive. This message may start with a siren.

ALL CLEAR: The danger has passed. Remain vigilant. It may not be safe to return home.

GET INFORMATION

For information during bushfires:

- Keep up to date via radio, television and the internet
- Call the FESA Information Line **1300 657 209** or visit www.fesa.wa.gov.au

BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN: LEAVING EARLY

OUR TRIGGERS TO LEAVE EARLY WILL BE: *(Consider triggers such as smelling smoke, seeing the fire near your home, loss of water and power)*

WE WILL GO TO: *(Consider safer places that are low fire risk. The safest place to be is away from the fire).*

WE WILL GET THERE BY: *(Depending on where the fire is you may need to consider alternative routes)*

WE WILL TAKE: *(Prepare your bushfire survival kit as well as anything else you may need such as water and food, clothing etc.)*

WE WILL TELL: *(Make sure people know where you are going and let them know when you get there safely)*

Don't forget to close doors and windows before you leave.

For more information on preparing for bushfires contact FESA on **9323 9300** or visit **www.fesa.wa.gov.au** for a copy of *Prepare. Act. Survive.*

OUR BACK-UP PLAN

Sometimes things don't go according to plan. To make sure our family is always safe our other leave early options are:

A safer place away from the fire is:

Our back-up travel routes are:

If all else fails and we cannot leave the house, we will:

Scenarios you should consider:

- What will you do if you have no time to leave and a bushfire threatens your home?
- What if local roads are unusable?
- What happens if the children are home alone?
- What if it is a weekday versus a weekend?