



RAI thanks the Tomakin Community Association (TCA) for sharing their Plan for an Emergency document and allowing us to adapt it for Rosedale

Plan for an Emergency



This document was originally prepared in response to feedback received from the community after the Black Summer 2020 Bushfires on the south coast of NSW. It brings together information on what to do in an emergency. It was sourced from information available from the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS), NSW State Emergency Service (SES), and the Eurobodalla Shire Council. **You are strongly encouraged to keep yourself updated by checking primary information sources, such as RFS websites.** While it is hoped there will never be such a situation again, this document will assist community members to better prepare for future emergency situations. While all care has been taken in providing this resource, RAI and TCA accept no responsibility for the accuracy of the information.

RAI sought feedback from the community following the devastating bushfire that hit Rosedale on the morning of New Year's Eve 2019. Lessons learnt from community members were incorporated into RAI's submissions to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and the NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry. Feedback from the community also informs this document.

Types of emergencies can include fire, severe weather, flood, extended power loss, falling trees or branches, or structure damage. This document focuses on bushfires, but planning will assist you in responding to other events, such as flooding and coastal inundation. TCA's Plan for an Emergency document provides further information regarding these types of events. See TCA's website: <https://www.tomakincommunityassociation.com/>

Please read this document, check primary information sources, assess what applies to your household and then MAKE YOUR OWN PLAN

Follow these important steps to prepare ahead of emergencies:

- **Create your own bushfire plan**
https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/36600/Plan-Step1-Discuss.pdf.
Practice your plan before the fire season. Regularly review and update your plan.
- **Keep your emergency kit** in a safe and accessible place.
- Regularly **check your emergency kit** and replace missing, expired or out-of-date items.
- **Discuss what to do** in an emergency with household members so everyone knows the plan in advance.
- **Record important details** such as emergency numbers, two meeting spots (in case you're unable to get to the first spot), medications, pet details, household mobile numbers, insurance providers and contact details of family, friends and neighbours.

- **Make sure your home and contents insurance is up-to-date** and, in particular, the sum insured is enough. It's also a good idea to take lots of photos. Make sure you have your insurer's details handy and know how to contact them should you need to leave in a hurry.

If the situation is life threatening call 000

Leaving Home

Whether you decide to leave home because you're feeling anxious or are told to relocate, your first choice should be to go to family or friends who live at a safe location, e.g. a town centre. If this isn't an option, head for your nearest evacuation centre.

In an emergency, your best option is to evacuate early

Prepare an Emergency Kit

Food and Water

During and after an emergency you might be able to stay in your home, but there may be power outages, problems with communications and road closures. As a minimum, you should have the following supplies stored in a waterproof box:

- at least 3 litres of bottled water for each person
- non-perishable food, such as nuts and canned food
- can opener
- any prescriptions and medications you or your family will need
- baby items (e.g. formula, food, nappies)
- items for elderly members of your household (e.g. hearing aids)
- items for members of your household with special needs (e.g. mobility aids, insulin pumps)
- plates, cups and cutlery
- camping stove or gas cooking equipment
- hand sanitisers
- toilet paper
- insect repellent and sunscreen
- toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, and shampoo
- pet items (e.g. food, water, litter or newspapers, lead, carry cage, bed, bowl, medications)

First Aid Kit

You should be able to buy a first aid kit with what you need from your local pharmacy. It should include:

- plasters in a variety of sizes
- gauze dressings
- sterile eye dressings
- antiseptic spray
- safety pins
- tweezers
- disposable gloves
- Panadol

Communications

Items to include:

- battery operated radio + extra batteries
- if available, UHF radio
- hardcopy of your emergency plan
- phone card or fully charged mobile phone and charger
- list of emergency contact numbers
- pen and paper

Important Documents and Items

Keep all important documents in a sealed waterproof bag in a safe place which you can easily access.

- passport, birth and marriage certificates
- house, life, health, car, boat, caravan and trailer insurances
- land titles, mortgage papers, lease or rental agreements
- copies of Medicare, credit, bank, pension and personal identification cards
- wills
- inventory of valuable household goods
- back-up copy of important computer files
- important documents scanned and saved to USB memory stick, external hard drive or cloud
- photos and other precious items

Clothing

Store in sealed plastic bags:

- strong, closed shoes or boots
- warm protective clothing, such as jumper, waterproof jacket
- hats
- leather gardening gloves
- spectacles, safety glasses and sun glasses

Tools and Supplies

Items to include:

- battery operated torch + extra batteries
- plastic garbage bags
- utility knife
- masking or duct tape for windows
- basic tool kit such as a wrench to turn off all utilities
- wool or thermal blankets and bedding
- whistle
- tent or a tarpaulin
- books and games for children

Items to help you evacuate quickly

You may need to leave your home quickly if you are in a bushfire prone area. In this situation you will want to have your emergency kit ready to go and have access to your:

- car and car keys (make sure your car has a full tank of fuel and is removed from garage, as the garage door may not be able to be opened during a power outage)
- cash, credit and or debit cards – wallet/purse
- mobile phone and charger

People with medical conditions

When emergencies threaten, people with medical conditions should move to an official evacuation centre immediately. Please take your required medication and copies of prescriptions. Do not present to the hospital unless you require immediate medical attention. The evacuation centres offer food, water, safety, company and access St John's Ambulance personnel.

Reuniting with your family

Being unable to contact family members can be extremely stressful. In case you become separated from loved ones during an emergency, the Red Cross manages [Register.Find.Reunite](#), a national registration and enquiry service. When the service is activated, people can register at redcross.org.au or in person at an evacuation or relief centre. You can also use this website if you are unable to contact a loved one who may have been affected.

Bush Fire

To report a fire emergency or life-threatening situation call triple-0

Know Your Risk

Coastal – If you live along the coast near scrub, you are at risk.

Fires in coastal scrub can be hot and move fast; you might be trapped if the fire approaches from the west.

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

Bush – If you live in an area close to bush or surrounded by bush, you're at risk. Bush fires can be hot, intense and throw burning embers towards your home.



You might have less than an hour's warning of a bushfire. On hot or windy days, bushfires can develop and threaten homes within an hour of a nearby ignition.

Five Simple Steps

1. Prepare your home before the bushfire season starts

1. Install metal flyscreens on all windows and vents.
2. Install metal gutter guards and have plugs available to block downpipes.
3. Install roof sprinklers.
4. Select fire resistant and retardant plants for your garden.
5. Locate garden beds away from your house. Keep a well maintained area around the house and sheds. Use stones or pebbles for landscaping near the house instead of mulch.
6. Avoid wooden fences.
7. Arrange for the removal of branches that overhang power lines and your house.
8. Rake leaf litter, bark and twigs well away from walls and from under your house
9. Store flammable items like petrol, gas cylinders and paint away from the house. Direct the pressure valves of gas cylinders away from your house.
10. Have hoses that are long enough to reach around your house with good quality spray nozzles.
11. Obtain a fire-fighting pump and hose and dedicated water tank of at least 5,000 litres

2. Discuss what to do if a bush fire threatens your home

Leave Early – your safest choice

- 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. Don't wait to be notified by emergency services.
- Where will you go? Where's a meeting place that's safe and away from fire-prone areas? It might be a friend or relative's house, a shopping centre or club, or an emergency evacuation centre.
- How will you get there? What route will you take? What's the backup plan if the road is blocked or too dangerous?
- What will you take? Pack your Emergency Kit - refer "Prepare an Emergency Kit" (see page 2).
- Who do you need to contact when evacuating? Make a list.
- What is your backup plan? What if things don't go to plan? Identify a safer location nearby such as a neighbour's home that is well prepared or a place of last resort. Remember that the safest course of action is to **leave and leave early**.

Stay only if you are well prepared

- Is your home well maintained and prepared to withstand a bushfire? Are you putting anyone at risk by staying? Will you cope in an emergency, which will be traumatic, hot, smoky and physically draining? If not – leave early.
- Be ready well before fire arrives. Do you have all the necessary equipment? Review all the items on the “Decide to Stay” checklist (see page 8) and make sure you have everything. What will you do if you lose mains pressure or power? You should not stay if your bushfire plan relies on a garden hose and if you don’t have a safe place to shelter.
- Do you know what to do before, during and after a fire? Study the “Action” checklist (see pages 8–9).
- Do all members of the household know what to do in all situations? Give each person a specific role.
- What is the backup plan? Consider unexpected events such as being at home alone, if your home is unoccupied, if the fire moves faster than expected, if the mains pressure is lost, or if phones, internet and power go out.




It is not safe to stay if:

- **emergency services have ordered an evacuation, or the fire danger rating is catastrophic**
- **there is an extreme fire danger rating and your home is not specifically designed and constructed to withstand bushfires**
- **your property is not well maintained**
- **you don’t have a safe place to shelter on your property, or**
- **you or the people in your home are not physically and mentally fit and ready.**

3. Ready your home

- Trim overhanging trees and shrubs near your home.
- Remove combustible material from around and under your home, e.g. door mats, wood stacks, leaves, paint, jerry cans, outdoor furniture, plastic pots, pet beds and children’s play equipment.
- Clear and remove all debris from the roof and gutters. Burning embers that land in gutters can set your home on fire. Obtain equipment for blocking downpipes so that gutters can be filled with water.
- Block any gaps in windows, doors and cladding where embers can enter the house.
- Fill water tanks. Prepare fire pumps and ready sturdy hoses that will reach all the way around your home. Place super-soakers or buckets of water with dippers at each corner of the house to put out embers which land on the ground.
- Charge mobile phones and other devices.

4. Know the Bushfire Alert levels and Fire Danger ratings

<p>There are three levels of Bush Fire Alerts:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Advice A fire has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Watch and Act There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Emergency Warning An Emergency Warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.</p> <p>For some fires, you may hear a warning message over your radio or television, such as a siren, or you may receive an Emergency Alert text message or phone call. Other fires may start so quickly that there will be no time for any warning at all.</p>	<p>Bush Fire Danger Rating</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: red; color: white;">FIRE DANGER RATING</th> <th style="background-color: red; color: white;">WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: black; color: white; text-align: center;">CATASTROPHIC</td> <td>For your survival, leaving early is the only option. Leave bush fire prone areas the night before or early in the day – do not just wait and see what happens. Make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there and when you will return. Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions so you should leave early.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: red; color: white; text-align: center;">EXTREME</td> <td>Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. If you are not prepared to the highest level, leave early in the day. Only consider staying if you are prepared to the highest level – such as your home is specially designed, constructed or modified, and situated to withstand a fire, you are well prepared and can actively defend it if a fire starts.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: orange; color: white; text-align: center;">SEVERE</td> <td>Only stay if your home is well prepared and you're ready to defend it.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow; color: black; text-align: center;">VERY HIGH</td> <td rowspan="3" style="background-color: #f0f0f0;">Review your bush fire survival plan with your family. Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: blue; color: white; text-align: center;">HIGH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: green; color: white; text-align: center;">LOW MODERATE</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	FIRE DANGER RATING	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	CATASTROPHIC	For your survival, leaving early is the only option. Leave bush fire prone areas the night before or early in the day – do not just wait and see what happens. Make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there and when you will return. Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions so you should leave early.	EXTREME	Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. If you are not prepared to the highest level, leave early in the day. Only consider staying if you are prepared to the highest level – such as your home is specially designed, constructed or modified, and situated to withstand a fire, you are well prepared and can actively defend it if a fire starts.	SEVERE	Only stay if your home is well prepared and you're ready to defend it.	VERY HIGH	Review your bush fire survival plan with your family. Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary.	HIGH	LOW MODERATE
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The Australian Warning System is a new national approach to information and warnings during emergencies and natural disasters like bush fire, flood, storm, extreme heat and severe weather. The System uses a nationally consistent set of icons, like those above, to show incidents on website and apps.

The System has been designed based on feedback and research across the country, and aims to deliver a more consistent approach to these types of emergencies, no matter where you are. Australia's fire and emergency services aim to provide you with timely and relevant information during emergencies.

But remember – don't wait for a warning. Take don't delay taking action.

5. Monitor information sources

It's important that you stay up-to-date on conditions in your area. The NSW Rural Fire Service strongly advises saving the following numbers, links and apps before the bushfire season commences. Remember not all services will be available in a fire emergency so having more than one option is advisable.

- In an emergency phone 000
- Bushfire information phone 1800 679 737
- Live Traffic Updates phone 132 701
- Websites:
 - NSW Rural Fire Service: rfs.nsw.gov.au
 - Fire danger ratings: rfs.nsw.gov.au/fdr
 - Weather radar: bom.gov.au/products/IDR403.loop.shtml
- Free smartphone apps:
 - Fires Near Me
 - Live Traffic
- Local ABC/emergency broadcaster:
 - ABC TV
 - ABC South East radio on 103.5 FM or 810 AM
- Social Media
 - [Facebook.com/nswrfs](https://www.facebook.com/nswrfs)
 - twitter.com/nswrfs
- NSW Disaster Assistance call 1800 018 444

To report electrical power line hazards phone Essential Energy immediately on 13 20 80. Disconnect household appliances to prevent damage from power surges following power outages.



CHECKLISTS - Fire Emergency

“Leave Early” Checklist

Well before the fire has arrived

- [] Discuss your evacuation triggers and options with household members and neighbours
- [] Ensure that fire-fighting pumps and vehicles are fully fuelled and provisioned (e.g. emergency evacuation kit, fuel, tools, phones)
- [] Move bins away from house, tape their lids shut and lay them down to avoid contents spilling out in windy conditions
- [] Leave mains water turned on with fire pumps, hoses and nozzles visible and ready in case neighbours need to use them to defend your house
- [] Move outdoor furniture etc away from house
- [] Block downpipes with socks full of sand; fill gutters with water
- [] Run sprinklers on decks, wood stacks and any garden beds near your home
- [] Close all internal and external doors, vents and windows
- [] Leave doors unlocked

“Decide to Stay” Checklist

Equipment

- [] Fire-rated hoses that can reach all around the house
- [] Water supply of at least 5,000 litres e.g. water tank, dam or swimming pool
- [] Petrol/diesel water pump; fuel stored in a safe accessible place
- [] Ladders to access the roof space and roof (remember to secure outside ladders so that they don't get blown away while you're on the roof!)
- [] Buckets, mops and scoops
- [] Shovels and metal rakes

Protective Clothing

- [] Wide-brimmed hat
- [] Eye protection goggles
- [] Facemask or moistened cloth
- [] Loose long sleeved cotton shirt
- [] Gloves
- [] Long cotton pants or jeans
- [] Sturdy leather shoes or boots

“Action” Checklist

Before – well before the fire has arrived

- [] Discuss your fire plan with household members and neighbours
- [] Ready fire-fighting equipment and protective clothing
- [] Turn off gas bottles
- [] Block downpipes and fill gutters with water
- [] Run sprinklers on decks and garden beds adjacent to your house
- [] Fill baths, sinks, buckets and bins with water
- [] Move animals to a safe location or confine them to one room
- [] Place ladders next to internal roof access points to allow you to check for spot fires in roof space
- [] Soak towels and rugs and lay them across external doorways, seal windows with duct tape
- [] Move indoor furniture away from windows
- [] Park vehicles well away from vegetation and long grass, packed and ready for an emergency evacuation; leave keys in the ignition
- [] Patrol your property to put out any embers or spot fires

During – as the fire is upon you

[] If the flames are on top of you or the heat becomes unbearable, move inside until the fire front has passed (usually 5-50 minutes). Take shelter in a room on the opposite side to the approaching fire. Do not shelter in an inner room with no clear exit.

[] Patrol inside the house, including roof space, looking for sparks and embers

After – immediately after the fire has passed

[] Check for smouldering fires inside, under and outside the house, including gutters, roof cavity, spaces between decking planks, outdoor stairs and windowsills.

[] Beware of dangers such as fallen power lines, falling trees or branches and smouldering stumps; the roof or walls of damaged houses and sheds may collapse without warning.

[] If possible, check that your neighbours are okay

[] If possible, contact relatives and friends to tell them you are safe

[] In the days following the fire, regularly patrol your home looking out for small fires, smouldering mulch or stumps

