

Be fire safe this summer

Holiday-makers are being urged to put fire safety first over the Christmas break, to help ensure everyone enjoys a safe holiday season.

The CFA declared a Fire Danger Period (FDP) for South Gippsland at the end of November, which is in force until 1 May, 2016 or when otherwise advised.

The FDP is when the Country Fire Authority (CFA) restricts the use of fire in the community. This is to help prevent fires from starting. On days of extreme temperatures, the CFA may declare a Day of Total Fire Ban (TFB). This means no fires are to be lit in the open air unless you have a special permit or comply with certain requirements. If you don't obtain a permit, you could be breaking the law and may be prosecuted.

Once a TFB has been declared, fire restrictions come into force. A TFB is not the same as a FDP.

Given the predicted extreme weather conditions in South Gippsland over the Christmas break period, where fires are expected to spread rapidly and be difficult to control, a TFB may be enforced.

Holiday makers and residents are encouraged to keep up to date with restrictions by using the EmergencyAus or Fire Ready apps that are available on iPhones and Androids.

Coordinator Grants/Emergency Management (MRM), Penni Ellicott, said it was important for people to follow a number of safety precautions during this period.

“Council wants to ensure everyone living and visiting Gippsland this summer remains safe,” she explained. “Remember, just a few glowing embers can start a bushfire, which can devastate lives and property in the upcoming hot summer months.”

It is an offence to leave a fire unattended or to fail to extinguish a fire before leaving it. It is also important for people to test gas cylinders and barbeque hoses and valves before use.

“When firing up the barbeque over the summer break, we’re asking people to remember they are working with gas and fire, which are potentially hazardous and dangerous,” Mrs Ellicott said.



Holiday-makers need to be aware of the High Bushfire Risk townships in South Gippsland. The following seven townships and surrounding areas have been assessed as vulnerable by the CFA - having High or Extreme Fire Risk:

- Koonwarra
- Nyora (proximity near Cherry Tree Road and McDonalds Track)
- Walkerville
- Waratah Bay
- Venus Bay
- Sandy Point
- Mirboo North, including Darlimurla Estate and surrounds

The CFA has a valuable resource available for people to find out what they can and can't do on days of Total Fire Ban and during the Fire Danger Period. View the Can I or Can't I? brochure at www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/can/. You can also apply for a permit and check fire restrictions in other municipalities to help with your travel plans. You can also access the latest emergency news and warnings at the Emergency Management Victoria website at www.emv.vic.gov.au .

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