

Early fire restrictions predicted

Fire restrictions in Gippsland may be introduced as early as mid-November, according to the CFA.

Every year as summer approaches, the CFA and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) introduce the Fire Danger Period and Fire Prohibited Period respectively. This is done to restrict the use of fire in the community to protect people and the environment.

CFA's Assistant Chief Officer, Trevor Owen, said the timing of these fire restrictions depended on factors like weather conditions, weather predictions and the dryness of grassland and forests.

"As the hot, dry weather has hit unseasonably early this year, fire restrictions in Gippsland are likely to be introduced earlier than usual, possibly by mid-November," he explained.

"CFA and DELWP want to remind people to clean up around their houses and properties in plenty of time before the restrictions if they are planning to burn items such as leaves and branches."

The warning coincides with the launch of Fire Action Week from 1-8 November and Council is urging residents and landholders to reduce the risk of fire by planning, preparing and conducting any burning activities, large or small, carefully and safely, particularly if they are close to the bush.

Before lighting up, residents are reminded to register their burn-off with VicFire on 1800 668 511, or email burnoffs@esta.vic.gov.au.

Australian Red Cross is re-launching RediPlan, which is a free online resource to help prepare for a disaster. The revised RediPlan was developed in consultation with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and a selection of councils, and aims to increase the resilience of communities by increasing emergency preparedness.

Rediplan is a national, non-hazard specific, community information program encouraging people to prepare for emergencies and think about the impacts on their lives in the longer term.

Council's Coordinator Grants/Emergency Management, Penni Ellicott, said Fire Action Week was an opportune time to use the resources available and make informed decisions now rather than when a fire starts.

"In the coming weeks, talk to your family, friends and to your neighbours about the fire risk where you live and make plans for what you'll do on hot, dry, windy days," she explained. "Make sure you know where to check Fire Danger Ratings and remember that as ratings increase, so does your risk of fire."



Over 2,300 warnings were issued in Victoria last summer.

“This summer, on hot, dry, windy days, fires will start and spread quickly,” Mrs Ellicott added. “The best way to protect yourself and your family is to leave early. If the Fire Danger Rating is Code Red, Extreme or Severe, you’re risking your life if don’t take action.”

In the lead-up to summer, local CFA brigades are getting out and about in the community to talk about preparing for fire. You can check www.cfa.vic.gov.au/events for information on what’s happening in your local area.

For more information on how to get prepared for summer, go to www.emergency.vic.gov.au

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