



MEDIA NEWS

YARRA AREA CFA – GRAEME ARMSTRONG – OPERATIONS MANAGER

RELEASE DATE: 6th November 2008

SUMMER IS ALMOST HERE – ARE YOU PREPARED?

CFA Operations Manager Graeme Armstrong said that people need to ask one question, “if you and your family fail to prepare for bushfire this year, if a bushfire does occur near your home what will you be doing the day after?”

People who live in areas that might be affected by bushfire need to make sure their preparations are well under way.

Mr Armstrong said today, “Waiting until the Fire Danger Period is declared is really leaving it too late to prepare, now is the best time to get into your preparation works”.

As to the date when the Fire Danger Period is declared, Mr Armstrong says, “it’s a day to day assessment; I am in constant contact with Brigades, Groups and the DSE monitoring conditions in both the grasslands and bushland. Further to the North and West conditions are slightly different to what we are seeing in Region 13 and that is why our date of declaration may be slightly different”.

Mr Armstrong also said, “We will give as much warning as to the date of declaration as possible but people should understand that the Fire Danger Period will be declared some time soon so I think its vital for them to start their preparations now if they haven’t already. That way when the Fire Danger Period is declared people won’t be caught short on their preparation.”

It’s also important people understand and abide by the local burning off regulation that are in place by Municipalities, in many cases there really is no need to burn off, removal of green waste to collection centres or better still mulching and recycling of green waste through composts is a simple and cheap alternative.

So what can people do to prepare for summer?

Firstly accept that every year we will have fires, mostly these are small and are controlled quickly but occasionally we will have a mix of conditions on a day when a fire occurs that makes controlling them very difficult.

If we accept that we will have fires we then need to understand that even small fires can impact directly on you, if it starts close to your property you may even be the one to call 000 or in the case of larger fires it may simply be that there are not enough resources for us to be everywhere and this is why we say everybody needs to be well prepared.

There are many considerations. What type of vegetation surrounds your home? How well is the house constructed? Is the right fire fighting equipment available? Is the house correctly insured?

Preparing yourself and your home for bushfire takes thought, clearing gutters and mowing long grass will help but successfully defending your house takes effort and a good plan of attack.

A task list of all your preparation activities that you can tick off when they are done is a good place to start and will help keep you on track for your preparations.

CFA's "Living in The Bush" is a great resource for people looking at what they need to do to prepare their properties, to get your copy, contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 240 667 and it is also a great place to ask questions about preparing for summer.

CFA is also conducting a number of bushfire awareness sessions throughout the local area to help residents prepare this summer, come along to one of these free sessions and learn about what you can do to prepare your family for bushfire this year.

You can also visit the CFA website www.cfa.vic.gov.au for more information and the locations of our bushfire information sessions.

ENDS