

*Sassafras-Ferny Creek Fire Brigade ... Volunteers serving the community*

## A new truck for Sassafras–Ferny Creek ...

It's not every day we get to introduce a major new piece of firefighting equipment to the local area ... especially when it's a new truck valued at more than \$300,000.

The CFA has replaced our 20-year-old primary vehicle with the latest in heavy tankers, a 3.4C 3800-litre unit, built on a Hino twin-cab chassis. The new truck features the most up-to-date crew protection and firefighting technology. Needless to say, we're pretty excited!

The new vehicle was delivered on 25 July and went into service immediately. It replaces a vehicle introduced as part of a major CFA fleet upgrade after the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983. The new generation of tankers marks a significant investment by CFA in safer, easier to use vehicles that incorporate the latest OH&S features.

Despite the short lead-in, brigade members have quickly come to terms with the new unit and will continue a period of intense training and familiarisation over the coming weeks.

The new vehicle significantly strengthens our existing fleet, which also includes a 2000-litre



medium tanker and a light pumper. The truck is part of an ongoing fleet renewal which will see another of our trucks replaced within the next 12–18 months.

(P.S. Our trusty old truck isn't being retired just yet ... in a measure of how well it has been maintained over all those years, it will see a little more CFA service in the state's south-west.)

## Summer ... and bushfires ... just around the corner

It's a bit hard to focus on the threat of bushfire when there's still a prospect of snow on the mountain! But now is precisely time to start planning for the summer ahead.

There's a lot to do around most homes that we tend to put off to the last minute when it comes to bushfire preparations. This is the time of year to attend to those maintenance jobs like securing loose fascia boards, trimming back overhanging branches and buying basic equipment you might need in the event of a bushfire in the local area.

And while we've had some good rainfall (some falling as snow!), it hasn't been drought breaking by any stretch of the imagination. There is still the prospect of going into the coming summer in rainfall deficit.

In any case, **every** summer presents some bushfire risk in this area and we need to be ready for that possibility. For information on how to start planning for the summer ahead, call CFA Area Office, Lilydale on **8739 1300** or the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on **1800 240 667**.

## Smoke alarms = life savers

Recent RACV Insurance research indicates that nearly 50 per cent of Victorian residents have intentionally disarmed their smoke alarms at some point.

Respondents to the survey said they deactivated alarms to stop the alarm “beeping for no reason” or when “my toaster triggers it” or some other reason. Several respondents said they just didn’t like the noise.

CFA figures show that of 38 fires attended each week on average, only one third of homes had working smoke alarms.

A sleeping person is unable to smell smoke.

*“Smoke alarms are inexpensive and can be easily installed.”*

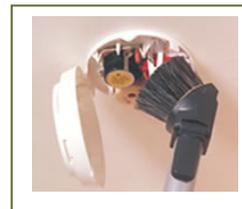
## Briefly ... briefly ... briefly ...

There was a tremendous community response to our recent recruitment campaign. Nine new members are currently undertaking basic firefighter training and seven others have come on board as broader brigade members to help out with a range of non-firefighting tasks. We still have a shortage of firefighters able to turn out during working hours. If you’re available and interested, please give us a call!

The brigade would like to thank the community again for your generous contributions to our annual appeal, which this year raised more than \$17,000. The money goes towards new and replacement equipment, training and the day-to-day administration of the brigade.

Carols on the Mountain is on again this year! Mark the date in your diary now: Saturday evening, 15 December.

*Remember to clean your smoke alarm and check the battery!*



Smoke alarms help save lives by waking occupants and alerting them to the dangers of fire and smoke.

In Victoria, smoke alarms were made compulsory in existing homes from February 1999. New homes must have wired-in smoke alarms installed prior to occupancy.

Smoke alarms are inexpensive and can be easily installed. Be sure to purchase alarms that meet Australian Standard AS3786.

If you have problems, rather than take the battery out of your smoke alarm, consider the following options:

- Move the alarm further away from the cooking area
- Install a photoelectric smoke alarm.

There are special types of smoke alarms available for people who are hearing impaired.

For more information: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

*Sources: RACV, CFA Community Safety*

### **Brigade & CFA contacts**

*John Schauble 9755 1402*

*Anna-Marie Shew 9755 1870*

*Fire Station (answering service): 9755 1078*

*E-mail: [sfcfb@pacific.net.au](mailto:sfcfb@pacific.net.au)*

*CFA Yarra Area Office, Lilydale: 8739 1300*

*CFA Website: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)*

*Victorian Bushfire Information Line: 1800 240 667*

**TO REPORT A FIRE, ALWAYS DIAL 000**