



FIREBREAK



www.sassafrascf.org.au

No.46, Spring 2018

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

This could be a long, hot, dry summer ...

You hear it all the time ... "it's going to be a bad fire season this year ... no rain ... El Nino ... hotter ... drier ... Indian Ocean dipole".

But what does it all mean?

Even with the latest and most powerful technology, predictions about what kind of bushfire summer we're going to have are fraught with uncertainty.

The very best we can do is look at the prevailing conditions over a fairly narrow time frame. What we do know going into this summer is that there has been less rainfall than the average of past years, especially during spring. That sets up conditions where the soil moisture content is lower and the vegetation dries out more quickly as the hotter weather sets in.

The key determinant of fire danger in the hills is the immediate weather. Despite some fuel modification through planned burning and mechanical means, there will always be plenty of forest fuel.

The topography (we live in the middle of a forest on the top of a

mountain) means that the speed with which fire spreads is always going to be a problem.

So, a run of hot, windy days on the back of a dry spell will rapidly increase the risk. All that is missing is ignition.

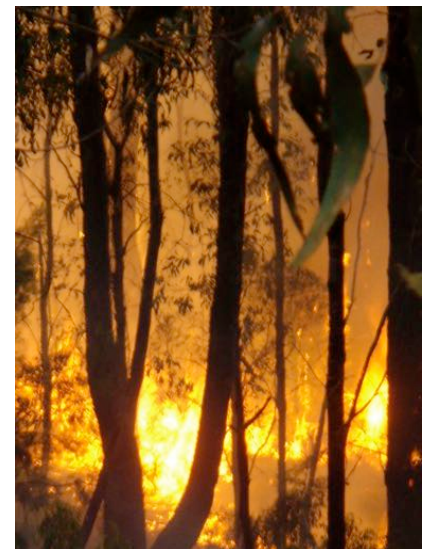
The very best we can do is prepare, prepare, prepare ...

Firefighters prepare for summer in particular through training, skills challenges and ensuring their equipment is maintained and ready to go at all times.

Residents need to prepare by clearing up around their property and having an action plan for those days when the fire risk increases.

This preparation needs to occur EVERY year, not just those years when the media, your neighbour or some other armchair expert decides it's a "bad" year. We choose to live in one of the most bushfire prone places on the planet, so being ready is everyone's responsibility all of the time.

The good thing is that there is lots of accessible and useful information available. Your local brigade can help with both general advice and more



localised information. Come to a community meeting (see over) or feel free to call in at the station Wednesday evenings or Sunday mornings.

www.cfa.vic.gov.au

www.emergency.vic.gov.au

<http://www.facebook.com/SassafrasFernyCreekFireBrigade>

Come and join us

Without volunteers Sassafras-Ferny Creek Fire Brigade wouldn't exist.

Our community needs to contribute to the protection of its own life and property.

Your community needs your help! Come and join the team ...

For more information please call John on 0415 939 459

Come along to our Information Session (and a cuppa) from 2.30pm Sunday, 2nd December 2018



Bushfire + Plan = Survival

Fire Danger Ratings ... what do they mean?

The Fire Danger Rating predicts how a fire would behave if one started, including how difficult it would be to put out.

The higher the rating, the more dangerous are the conditions. The rating is your trigger to act, so to stay safe you need to stay aware of the Fire Danger Rating in your district.

During the Fire season, the Fire Danger Rating will feature in weather forecasts, be broadcast on radio and TV and appear in some newspapers. It can also be found on the of CFA and VicEmergency websites or by calling the VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226

It helps you to know when conditions are dangerous enough to put your bushfire survival plan in to action.

Ratings are forecast using Bureau of Meteorology data for up to four days in advance, based on weather and other environmental conditions such as fuel load.



The rating is your prompt to take action to stay safe.

For detailed information on what each level of rating means and how you should respond, go to:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/about-fire-danger-ratings/>

Another trigger for action is the declaration of a Total Fire Ban. A TFB sets legal restrictions on what activities can or cannot occur in a particular district for that day. It aims to reduce the activities that may start a fire.

For information about TFBs, go to:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/bans-and-rating-faqs>



Briefly ... Briefly ... Briefly ...

Time to get ready for bushfire!

This year, there will be numerous public information events in the local area to help prepare your family and property for bushfire:

- **Saturday 1 December 2018, 2pm- 4pm**
Open Day at the Ferny Creek Community Fire Refuge, School Road (relevant if you live nearby)
- **Wednesday 16 January 2019 at 7pm -**
Community Meeting at the fire station, 21 Clarkmont Road
- **Saturday 19 January 2019, 2pm -** Community Meeting at the fire station, 21 Clarkmont Road

Check out the CFA website for additional bushfire readiness meetings in the local area:

www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Water, water ...

Do you have a swimming pool or large (20,000L+) tank or other water storage on your property? In the event of a major fire, access to water is critical. The local area is well served by mains water and there are also a number of tanks storages for firefighting use. But as a backup, it would be handy to us to know of any other potential water sources in the unlikely event we might need these too ... Please drop us a line: secretary@sassafrascfa.org.au

Junior volunteers

Are you aged between 11 and 15 years and like meeting new people, learning new skills and having fun? Come and join our Junior Volunteers at Sassafras-Ferny Creek Fire Brigade. For more information call John on 0412 17



Brigade & CFA contacts

Fire Station (answering service): 9755 1078

E-mail: secretary@sassafrascfa.org.au

Mail: PO Box 8, Ferny Creek Vic 3786

CFA Region 13 HQ: 8739 1300

VicEmergency Hotline: 1800 226 226

Register your burn-off: 1800 668 511

VicEmergency website: www.emergency.vic.gov.au

CFA website: www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Brigade website: www.sassafrascfa.org.au

Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/SassafrasFernyCreekFireBrigade>