

**MT WILSON & MT IRVINE RESIDENTS'**

# **BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN**

**Prepared By:.....**

**Date:.....**

*For further information on making the decision to Leave Early or Stay and Defend a well prepared property or on writing a Bushfire Survival Plan consult the NSW Rural Fire Service's booklet 'Bushfire Survival Plan' or their website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)*

***PREPARE, ACT, SURVIVE***

## BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

### GUIDE TO COMPLETING THIS BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

Completing a Bushfire Survival Plan is a risk management exercise. Therefore it is important that you consider all risks and how you can mitigate them.

The safest option will always be to leave early. If you are leaving, **Leave Early**. The NSW Rural Fire Service recommends that you make the decision to leave early on days when:

- \* There is a **Catastrophic** Fire Danger Rating or
- \* The Fire Danger Rating is **Extreme**, if your home has not been specifically designed, constructed or modified to withstand a fire, or if you are not well prepared.

Choosing to ignore these recommendations means you may be risking your life and the lives of your family. Leaving early is always the safest option.

However, Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are extreme fire risk areas with only one road in and out. This road travels on ridge lines through steep, dry sandstone country. It is lined with dry sclerophyll forest with the eucalypts at times touching overhead. During a fire this is a very dangerous road and we know from experience that it can be cut very quickly. During the 1994 fires it was cut by fire within an hour of the fire starting and was closed for days.

Therefore, your brigade also recommends that you not only prepare a 'Leave Early' Plan but also prepare a 'Stay and Actively Defend' Plan. In this way you are prepared for the risk of not receiving adequate information in time to leave early and safely.

Unfortunately, research shows that a significant number of people on receipt of a bushfire warning or notification of a day of high fire potential, chose to 'Wait and See'. This usually means 'do nothing' and is an extremely high risk strategy. Please do not allow yourself to be paralysed by indecision. Please do not be complacent about the risk of fire at Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine. Please do not think 'it can't happen to me'. It can. We have had fires before at Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine and properties have been lost. In order to **Survive**, you must **Prepare** and you must **Act**.

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Residents' Bushfire Survival Plan contains 3 plans and 10 checklists. Please read and complete all pages to ensure you have covered your risks adequately. Complete the 'Leave Early' Plan then the 'Stay and Actively Defend' Plan then the 'Wait and See' Plan. With your complete plan, if you are threatened by bushfire and whether your preferred decision is to Leave Early (best choice), Stay and Defend or Wait and See, you are prepared to act and survive.

If you need further information or assistance in completing this plan please contact your Community Engagement Officer or any active brigade member.

**BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN****LEAVE EARLY**

<b>Family Considerations</b>	What will you take with you? <i>See Checklist 8. Relocation Kit</i>	You and your family planned to leave but it is too late. What will you do?
What will be your trigger to leave early? <i>Consider Total Fire Ban, Fire Danger Ratings, Emergency Warnings.</i>	List your protective clothing. <i>See Checklist 6. Protective Clothing Kit</i>	How safe is your home if leaving is no longer an option?
What actions will you take before and during the fire season? <i>See Checklist 1. Planning and Preparation Before and During the Fire Season</i>	Where will your kits be stored?	What will you do as the fire approaches?
What will you do with your pets and/or livestock?	Who will you tell that you are leaving? Who will you tell when you have arrived?  <i>Your street co-ordinator is... Other...See Checklist 10. Emergency Contact List</i>	<i>See Checklist 3. As the Fire Approaches</i>
What will you do if family members are separated?	What will you do to your property before leaving? <i>See Checklist 9. Before You Leave Your Property</i>	List the equipment you will need. <i>See Checklist 7. Fire Fighting Kit</i>
Where will you go to?		Where is your water supply and how will you access it?
		What will you do if your house cannot be defended or catches fire while the fire front is passing? Where will you go to be safer?
How will you get there?	<b>What is Your Backup Plan?</b> What might go wrong with your plan?	

**BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN****STAY & ACTIVELY DEFEND****Family Considerations**

Who will leave for a safer place?  
*Consider very young, elderly, people with disabilities, ill family members, house guests*

When, where and how will they go?

What triggers mean that you will not stay and defend?  
*Consider being alone, unwell, house guests, FDI too high, house not defensible, equipment/power failure, lack of water.*

If you plan to relocate family members and/or pets/livestock, how long will this take?

Who will you tell of your plans?  
*Your street co-ordinator is...*

*See Checklist 10. Emergency Contact List*

**Property Preparation**

What actions will you take before and during the fire season?  
*See Checklist 1. Planning and Preparation Before and During the Fire season*

List equipment needed and where you will store it.  
*See Checklist 7. Fire Fighting Kit*

**Personal Safety**

How many people will you need to protect your home?  
 Who will be there to help you?

List protective clothing.

*See Checklist 6. Protective Clothing Kit*

Where will your kits be stored?

**On the Day of a Bushfire**

What will you do on the day of bushfire threat?  
*See Checklist 2. On the Day of Bushfire Threat*

What will you do as fire approaches?  
*See Checklist 3. As the Fire Approaches*

What will you do once the fire has arrived?  
*See Checklist 4. During the Fire*

What will you do after the fire has passed?  
*See Checklist 5. After the Fire*

**What is Your Backup Plan?**

What if you are alone?

What if you cannot return to your home to actively defend (*roads blocked*)? Where will you go?

What will you do if your home cannot be defended or catches fire before the fire front passes? Where will you go to be safer?

What will you take?  
*See Checklist 8. Relocation Kit*

## BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

### WAIT AND SEE

What are you waiting to see?

***A plan to wait and see how bad things are is a plan to flee at the last moment and maybe die on the road or to die in an unprepared house.***

You must keep informed and be ready to act. If you decide to wait and see, what will you do?

*See Checklist 1. Planning and Preparation Before and During the Fire Season*

*See Checklist 2. On the Day of Bushfire Threat*

*See Checklist 6. Protective Clothing Kit*

*See Checklist 7. Fire Fighting Kit*

*See Checklist 8. Relocation Kit*

*Your safest option is to leave early. If you decide to leave early, what will you do?*

*See Your Leave Early Plan*

If it is not safe to leave your 'Wait and See' Plan is now a 'Stay and Actively Defend' Plan. What will you do?

*See Your Stay and Actively Defend Plan*

**CHECKLIST 1. PLANNING AND PREPARATION BEFORE AND DURING THE FIRE SEASON**

<b>Planning</b>	<b>To do</b>	<b>Property Preparation</b>	<b>To do</b>	<b>Insurance and Possessions Preparations</b>	<b>To do</b>
Review your Bushfire Survival Plan for this season and discuss it with all members of your household  Practise your plan and your backup plan		Clear around fences, gates, sheds, garages, carports and under power lines  Insulate gas tanks, pipes and relief valve Clear vegetation, ground litter & light mulch, mow regularly Maintain access to water supply Clear around and under house Keep fuel & chemicals in appropriate storage containers Provide access for fire fighters		Make an inventory and photographic record of household possessions, buildings and garden Take precious possessions to a safe place Store favourite photos and vital information electronically Prepare your Relocation Kit Check Insurance cover	
<b>Home Preparation</b>				<b>Communication Preparation</b>	
Have a prominent house number Wire/metal screens or shutters on all openings including under house Prepare emergency food packs Repair flaking paint on window sills and door frames		Remove wood piles from near house Trim branches overhanging house and shrubs below windows		Have battery operated radio and spare batteries Prepare your Emergency Personal Contacts List Know where you will get information from during a bushfire	
<b>Equipment Preparation</b>		Clear roof and gutters of leaf debris		<b>Other</b>	
Prepare your Protective Clothing Kit Prepare your Fire Fighting Kit Have torches in known locations in the house and spare batteries Maintain your fire fighting pump, fuel, hoses and nozzles Maintain sprinkler system (on roof & garden)		<b>Children and Pets</b>			
		Allocate tasks for children or prepare activity bag  Have emergency pet food			

**CHECKLIST 2.ON THE DAY OF BUSHFIRE THREAT**

	<b>What needs to be done and who is responsible?</b>
Enact Bushfire Survival Plan	
Check Protective Clothing Kit	
Check Relocation Kit	
Check backup safer place	
Check Fire Fighting Kit	
Place survival, firefighting and relocation kits in easily accessible area	
Confirm location & contact numbers for family	
Check first aid kit & medications	
Recharge mobile phone	
Be alert - monitor fire information and weather (radio, web). What is the Fire Danger Rating for your area?	
Fit transistor radio with fresh batteries	
Prepare area inside for pets and bring them close to house	
Check emergency food packs	
Check fuel and chemicals are in appropriate storage containers	
Prepare car and park in garage or clear space and wind up windows	
Check water supplies and hoses	
Test pumps, sprinklers, generators, hoses	
Clear gateways, driveways, doorways and around windows and check roof and gutters for leaf debris and clear	
Check access for firefighters is clear	
Watch and smell for smoke every 30 mins	
Check with street co-ordinator	
Other:	

**CHECKLIST 3. AS THE FIRE APPROACHES**

	<b>What needs to be done and who is responsible?</b>
Alert family and neighbours	
Put on protective clothing	
Monitor the radio (ABC 702) for information	
Prepare drink flasks and drink water regularly	
Bring pets inside and cover birdcages with woollen cloths	
Allocate jobs for children or place in identified part of house with activity bag, blankets and water	
Check torches are in easily accessible places	
Close windows, doors, skylights and metal screens/shutters	
Seal all gaps (wet towels/blanket) around windows and doors	
Place ladder for roof spaces access (keep inspection hole open) and have torch nearby	
Put planks across rafters for crawling in roof space	
Cover flammable furniture with blankets or heavy rugs	
Remove curtains (unless wool) and flammable items near windows. Protect windows with blankets, foil or cross with tape	
Fill bath & containers with water and place around building, in rooms and in roof space. Include a dipper with each.	
Put ladder against roof (to check eaves and guttering). Do not climb on roof	
Block downpipes and fill gutters with water	
Bring door mats, outdoor furniture, hanging baskets, plastic flower pots into the house	
Turn off gas and electricity at mains; turn off gas bottles and direct relief valve away from house and flammables	
If water supply adequate, hose down side of house and garden facing fire	
Check for embers regularly	
Other:	

**CHECKLIST 4. DURING THE FIRE**

	<b>What needs to be done and who is responsible?</b>
Make sure you are well covered to protect from radiant heat	
Shelter in house till fire passes. It will protect you from radiant heat	
Disconnect smoke alarm	
Be actively defensive	
Check for embers entering house and extinguish them	
Close internal doors but maintain a watch on fire progress outside. Shelter in a room with at least 2 exits. Avoid sheltering directly under or in front of a window	
Check roof space for embers and extinguish	
Disconnect hose and fittings and take into house. Attach to laundry tap.	
Monitor ABC radio for information	
Check each other and pets for heat stress or breathing difficulties. Drink water every 10 minutes and loosen clothing	
Never go outside while flame front is passing	
Check exposed windows for openings/cracks	
Other:	

*Should your house catch fire call the fire service on 000. If you are unable to extinguish it, move to an unaffected area of the house and leave immediately after the fire front has passed. Move onto a fuel-free area, eg lawn or burnt ground. **Do NOT return inside a burning house for any reason .***











