BUSHFIRE SAFETY

Prepare. Act. Survive.

YOUR HOME AND PROPERTY SURVIVAL GUIDE

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

BUSHFIRES NT

NT POLICE, FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

KNOW YOUR RISK

BUSHFIRES CAN AFFECT JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

They move fast, can be highly destructive to both land and property, and can pose a serious threat to life.

Do not assume you will receive a warning as a fire approaches and do not expect a fire crew to be available to assist every home. It's important that you have a plan in place and know exactly what you can do to protect yourself, your family and your property.

When is the Bushfire season where you live?
The Fire Season is different between northern (Top End) and southern (Central Australia) regions.

NORTHERN region April through to October
SOUTHERN region December through to May

Fire Seasons can vary from year to year, depending on the fuel loads, long-term climate changes and short-term weather conditions in each area.

DO YOU NEED A BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN?

All Territorians should be prepared for bushfire.

If you answer yes to any of these questions and you do not have a plan, you could be putting yourself, your family and your property at risk:

- Do you live within a few kilometres of bushland?
- Do you live in an area where grasslands meet built up areas or homes?
- Does your local area have bushfire history?
- Do you have trees and shrubs within 20 metres of your home?
- Is your home built on a slope?

HOW VULNERABLE IS YOUR HOME?

ALL HOMES ARE VULNERABLE TO FIRE. HOW DOES YOURS COMPARE?

Use this handy checklist to assess the vulnerability of your home.

DOES YOUR HOME HAVE?

- ☐ Non-combustible walls
- ☐ Sealed roof ridge-capping
- ☐ Enclosed eaves
- ☐ Roof gutters and valleys clear of leaf litter and fine fuels
- ☐ An enclosed underfloor
- ☐ Non- combustible window finishes
- ☐ Non-combustible deck or verandah
- ☐ Clearance from overhanging vegetation
- ☐ Vegetation cleared from under overhead powerlines

DOES YOUR PROPERTY HAVE?

- ☐ Unrestricted driveway and gate access
- ☐ Turning or passing area
- ☐ Two-wheel drive access
- ☐ An alternative way out for vehicles
- ☐ Clear of over head power lines
- ☐ A clear 4 metre wide fire break around the entire property within your boundary

DO YOU HAVE AN ACCESSIBLE WATER SUPPLY?

- ☐ Reticulated water supply
- ☐ Tank supply suitable for fire fighting
- ☐ Accessible external open water supply, such as a dam or pool
- ☐ Fire fighting pump and hose connected to a water supply

If you are unsure about your level of risk or require assistance contact your local fire station/ brigade or call the NT Fire Assistance line on (08) 8999 3473 or Bushfires NT (08) 8922 0844

HOW VULNERABLE IS YOUR HOME?

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START PLANNING

IT'S TOO LATE TO START PLANNING WHEN A FIRE IS ALREADY APPROACHING. HAVE A BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN IN PLACE WELL IN ADVANCE.

Remember, you don't have to live in the bush to be threatened by bushfires, just close enough to be affected by burning material, embers and smoke.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Prepare your property and family now, so everyone knows what actions to take to survive.

Start your Bushfire Survival Plan here:

PREPARE FOR BUSHFIRE SEASON

WILL YOU LEAVE EARLY?

WILL YOU STAY?

TUNE IN TO WARNINGS

KNOW YOUR EMERGENCY SHELTERS OR A SAFE PLACE.

- Your emergency shelter or safe place is a building where you can seek shelter from a bushfire, as a place of last resort.
- It is important to remember that all members of the community must take responsibility for their own safety during a bushfire.
- Not all areas will have a designated emergency shelter or safe place.
- If you have not been notified by the authorities of your closest shelter, you should identify a safe location you can go to as a last resort in your Bushfire plan.
- This might include a shopping centre or oval, which is well away from the bush.
- Make sure you know the travel time and distance to your chosen safe place.
- Never drive through fires or smoke affected areas to get to an emergency shelter or safe place.
- In an emergency call Triple Zero (000).

If you are unsure about your level of risk or require assistance contact your local fire station/ brigade or call the NT Fire Assistance line on (08) 8999 3473 or Bushfires NT (08) 8922 0844

BASIC STEPS TO PREPARE FOR A BUSHFIRE

PREPARE FOR BUSHFIRE SEASON

AN UNPREPARED PROPERTY CAN PUT YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR NEIGHBOURS AT RISK.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:

STRUCTURES

- Clear leaves, twigs, bark and other debris from the roof and gutters.
- Enclose open areas under decks and floors.
- Install fine steel wire mesh screens on all windows, doors, vents and weep holes.
- Point LPG cylinder relief valves away from your house.
- Conduct maintenance checks on pumps, generators and water systems/irrigation.
- Seal all gaps in external roof and wall cladding.

ACCESS

- Display a prominent house or lot number to assist emergency responders to locate your property in an emergency.
- Ensure there is adequate access to your property for a fire truck.
- Maintain a four metre wide bare earth or slashed grass (not exceeding 50mm high) fire break, along the inside perimeter of your property.

VEGETATION

- Remove all light vegetation and slashed grass from your fire break.
- Mow or slash your grass regularly.
- Remove excess flammable material like dry grass, dead leaves and branches. *For more information visit the weed management web page www.nt.gov.au/environment/weeds*
- Trim low-lying branches to a height of two metres from the ground.

PERSONAL

- Check that you have sufficient personal protective clothing and equipment.
- Relocate flammable items away from your home, including woodpiles, paper, boxes, crates, hanging baskets and garden furniture.
- Check your first aid kit is fully stocked.
- Make sure you have insurance for your home and vehicles.
- Review and update your Bushfire Survival Plan. A template can be downloaded from www.pfes.nt.gov.au/fire-and-rescue-service/
- A Rural Property Planning Guide can be found at https://denr.nt.gov.au/bushfire-information-and-management

WILL YOU LEAVE EARLY?

IF YOU PLAN TO LEAVE, THEN YOU MUST LEAVE YOUR HOME WELL BEFORE A BUSHFIRE THREATENS AND TRAVELLING BY ROAD BECOMES HAZARDOUS.

BUSHFIRE RELOCATION KIT

Ensure you and your family have all the important items and equipment required to relocate for the time needed.

Cotton blend long sleeve shirt | Jeans | Boots | Hat & safety goggles

Bottled water | Battery powered radio | Batteries | Mobile phone & charger | Blankets (natural fibres)

Passports & birth certificates | Wallets/purses | Medications | Family photos, valuables & documents | Children & infant needs

More details can be found at www.securent.nt.gov.au

Whether you're leaving or staying, there are some basic precautions you should take before the fire front arrives. A well-prepared property stands a greater chance of surviving.

- Move cars to a safe location.
- Remove combustible garden furniture, door mats and other items.
- Close windows and doors and shut blinds.
- Take down curtains and move furniture away from windows.
- Block downpipes (at the top) and fill gutters with water if possible.
- Bring pets inside and restrain them (leash, cage or a secure room). Provide water for pets and livestock.
- Seal gaps under doors and windows with wet towels.
- Wet down the side of the building, deck and shrubbery in the likely path of the bushfire.
- Wet down flammable items close to buildings.
- Put on protective clothing.
- Drink lots of water.
- Tune into warnings - monitor local radio stations, websites and social media for updates.
  www.securent.nt.gov.au
  www.pfes.nt.gov.au
  www.nt.gov.au/bushfires
  www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/state/nt
  www.facebook.com/NTPFES
  www.facebook.com/BushfiresNT
  www.denr.nt.gov.au
- Turn on garden sprinklers for 30 minutes before the bushfire arrives.
- Fill containers with water - bath, sink, buckets and wheelie bins.
- Remember that bush and grass fires can move quickly and catch you off guard.

HAVE A CONTINGENCY PLAN

Have a contingency plan just in case.
A rapid onset fire could make travel dangerous and force you to stay.

WILL YOU LEAVE EARLY?

WILL YOU STAY?

PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SURVIVAL. YOU WILL NEED TO BE MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY READY AND YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE A PLAN.

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY KIT

If you decide to stay or are unable to leave, a Bushfire Emergency Kit will offer you a basic level of protection and should be part of your household contingency plan.

More details can be found at www.securent.nt.gov.au

IS YOUR PROPERTY ABLE TO WITHSTAND THE IMPACT OF A BUSHFIRE?

Do you have well-maintained fire fighting resources and equipment, and know how to use them? Make sure you clearly understand what you need to do to protect your life and property when the fire arrives and discuss details of your plan with family, friends and neighbours.

Whether you're leaving or staying, there are some basic precautions you should take before the fire front arrives. These are covered on the "WILL YOU LEAVE EARLY?" page.

AS THE FIRE FRONT ARRIVES:

- Disconnect hose and fittings and bring inside.
- Go inside for shelter.
- Drink lots of water.
- Shelter in your house on the opposite side from the approaching fire and close all windows and doors.
- Check for embers inside your house, particularly in the roof space.
- Check on family and pets.
- Maintain a means of escape.
- Continually monitor conditions.

AFTER THE FIRE FRONT HAS PASSED:

Check for small fires and burning embers:

- inside the roof space;
- under floor boards;
- under the house;
- on verandas and decks;
- in the gutters;
- in garden beds and mulch;
- in wood heaps;
- around outdoor furniture; and
- check your water supply.

Your house is a survival zone.
Make it a priority.

TUNE IN TO WARNINGS

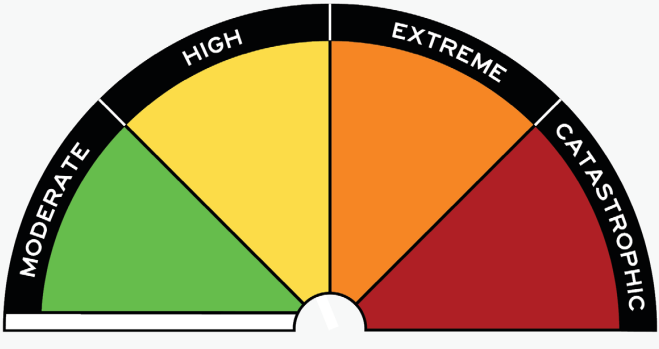
DON'T ASSUME YOU WILL RECEIVE A WARNING AS A FIRE APPROACHES.

It's up to you to monitor conditions, know what the Fire Danger Rating is each day and stay connected to local media, radio stations and websites like

www.securent.nt.gov.au
www.pfes.nt.gov.au
www.nt.gov.au/bushfires
www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/state/nt
www.facebook.com/NTPFES
www.facebook.com/BushfiresNT
www.denr.nt.gov.au

KNOW YOUR FIRE DANGER RATINGS (FDR)

There are four categories of danger ranging from moderate to catastrophic. On days when the FDR rating is catastrophic, leaving early is the only option for your survival. On days when it is lower than catastrophic, your decision to leave or stay will form the basis of your Bushfire Survival Plan.



MODERATE

Plan and Prepare

- Most fires can be controlled.
- Stay up to date and be ready to act if there is a fire.

HIGH

Be ready to act

- Fires can be dangerous.
- There's a heightened risk. Be alert for fires in your area.
- Decide what you will do if a fire starts.
- If a fire starts, your life and property may be at risk.
- The safest option is to avoid bush fire risk areas.

EXTREME

Take action now to protect your life and property

- Fires will spread quickly and be extremely dangerous.
- These are dangerous fire conditions.
- Check your bush fire plan and that your property is fire ready.
- If a fire starts, take immediate action.
- If you and your property are not prepared to the highest level, go to a safer location well before the fire impacts.
- Reconsider travel through bush fire risk areas.

CATASTROPHIC

For your survival, leave bush fire risk areas

- If a fire starts and takes hold, lives are likely to be lost.
- These are the most dangerous conditions for a fire.
- Your life may depend on the decisions you make, even before there is a fire.
- Stay safe by going to a safer location early in the morning or the night before.
- Homes cannot withstand fires in these conditions.
- You may not be able to leave and help may not be available.

Keep up to date with your local Fire Danger Rating Every day at www.pfes.nt.gov.au/incidentmap or www.securent.nt.gov.au

TUNE IN TO WARNINGS

KNOW YOUR BUSHFIRE ADVICE WARNING

**THERE ARE THREE LEVELS OF OFFICIAL BUSHFIRE WARNINGS.
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO RECOGNISE THEM AND ACT ON THEM ACCORDINGLY.**

BUSHFIRE ADVICE

**A fire has started in the area.
Monitor the situation for changes.**

Review your Bushfire Survival Plan.

When an Advice Warning is issued for your area, it indicates a fire or other emergency has started, however there is no immediate threat.

You should:

- Note there is a fire nearby;
- Understand there is currently no threat to property;
- Tune into local radio or log on to the web or social media; and
- Review your Bushfire Survival Plan.

BUSHFIRE WATCH & ACT

There is a heightened level of threat. Start taking action now to protect your family and your property

When a Watch & Act Warning is issued for your area, there is a heightened level of threat, you need to be aware of your situation and take action to be prepared and protect yourself and your family.

Be aware that:

- There is a heightened level of threat;
- Bushfire conditions in your area are changing;
- A fire is approaching you;
- Your life may come under threat;
- You need to start taking appropriate action now to protect yourself and family; and
- You could be impacted and should prepare to enact your Bushfire Survival Plan.

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY WARNING

You may be in danger and need to take action immediately.

Any delay puts your life at risk.

When an Emergency Warning is issued for your area, you are in danger.

You should:

- Take immediate action recommended by the Authorities in its warning message;
- Enact your Bushfire Survival Plan; and
- Make sure you are ready for any emergency and prepare for the fire to impact where you are if you are not able to leave.

Tune into local media including radio stations, social media and websites.

- www.securent.nt.gov.au
- www.pfes.nt.gov.au
- www.nt.gov.au/bushfires
- www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/state/nt
- www.facebook.com/NTPFES
- www.facebook.com/BushfiresNT
- www.denr.nt.gov.au

PHONE TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES.

NORTHERN TERRITORY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND BUSHFIRES NT

The Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service (NTFRS) have multiple responsibilities across the Territory. One of their responsibilities is to manage bushfires around towns and urban areas declared as Emergency Response Areas (ERA).

Outside the NTFRS ERA, Bushfires NT provides support to landholders, volunteer fire brigades and coordinates responses to significant and dangerous bushfires. If your land is located outside the NTFRS ERA, you are responsible for managing fire on your property.

To find out more visit www.securent.nt.gov.au/prepare-for-an-emergency/bushfires/fire-management-in-the-nt

HOW TO HELP

Have you considered becoming a volunteer? Contact your local brigade to discuss how you could help make a difference in your community. No experience is necessary as training is provided.

To find out more visit www.nt.gov.au/emergency/cyclones/volunteering-cyclones,-fire-and-disasters/introduction.

IMPORTANT WEB PAGES TO HELP YOU PREPARE

www.securent.nt.gov.au

www.pfes.nt.gov.au

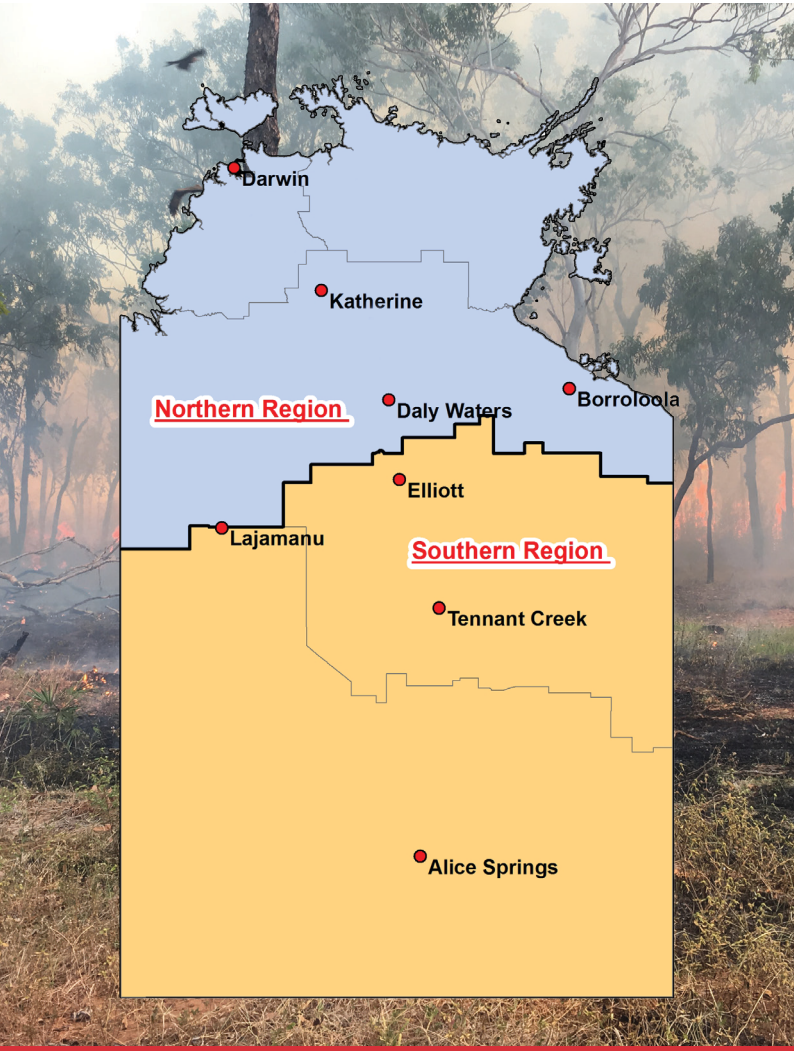
www.nt.gov.au/bushfires

www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/state/nt

www.facebook.com/NTPFES

www.facebook.com/BushfiresNT

www.denr.nt.gov.au



CREATE YOUR BUSHFIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

List name and contact details to remember:

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

BUSHFIRES NT

NT POLICE, FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES