

# Ensuring our school is bushfire ready



## Bushfire Preparedness

The new Australian Fire Danger Rating System is now in place.

[www.cfa.vic.gov.au/afdrs](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/afdrs)



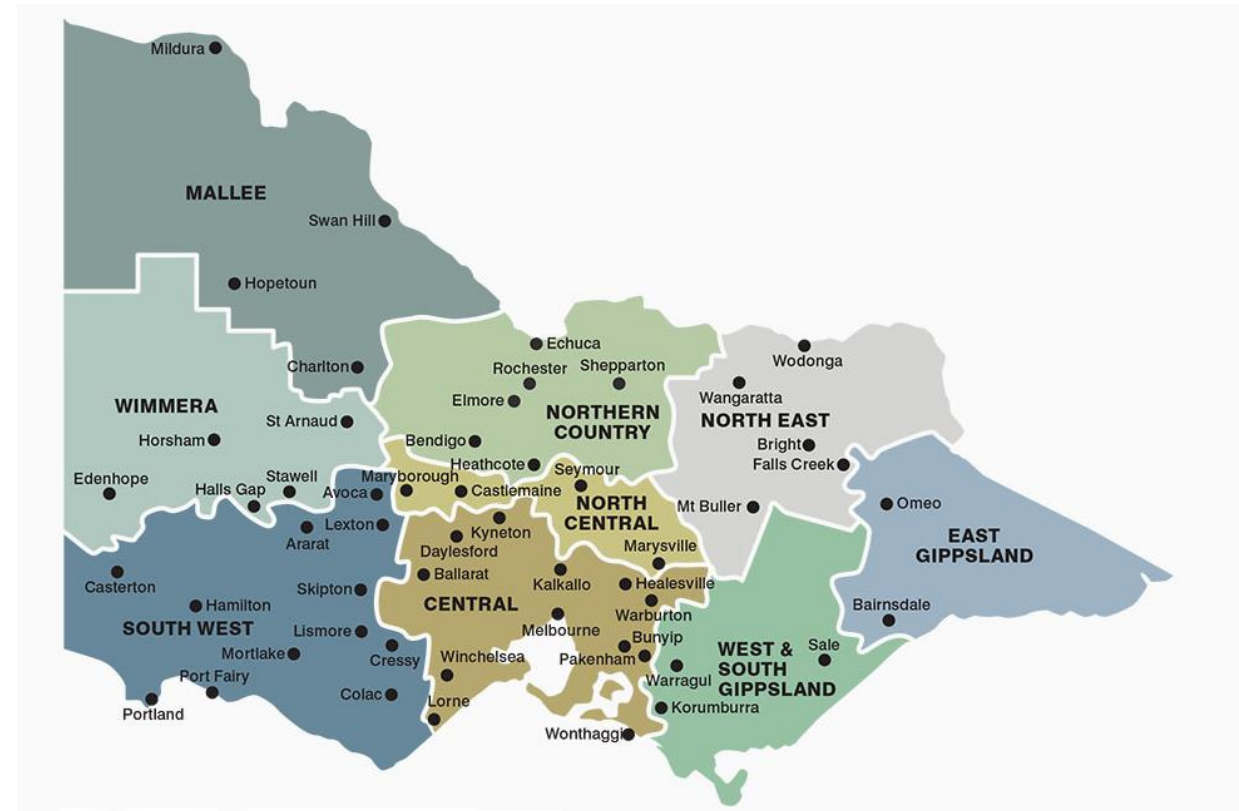
# Presentation Overview

1. Forecasts and general bushfire information
2. Our fire risk and actions
3. How our school has prepared for the fire season
4. What can you do to prepare
5. Frequently asked questions
6. Where to find more information

# Forecasts and general bushfire information

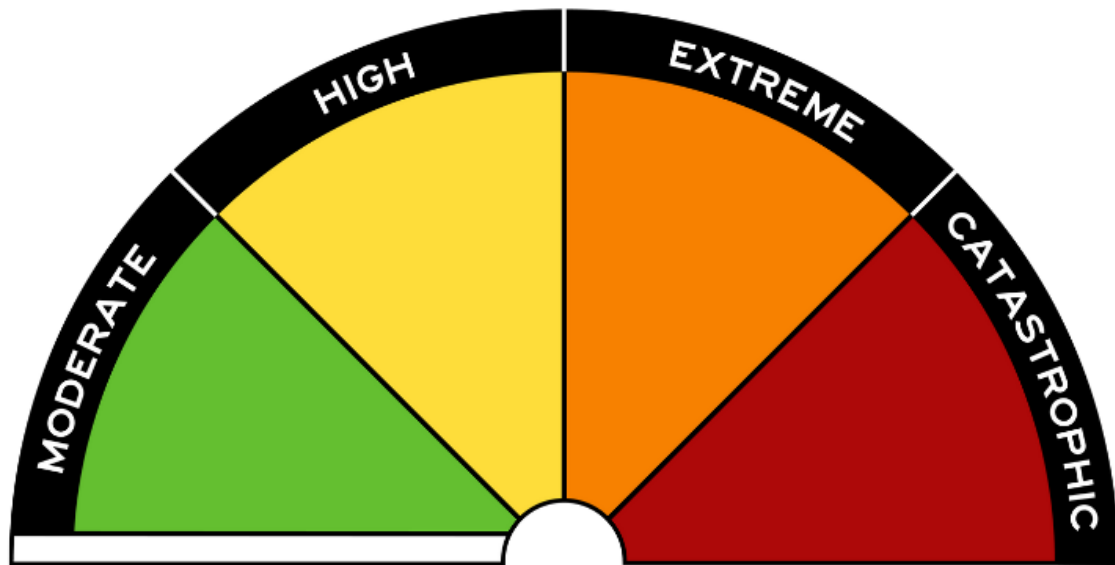
# Understanding fire danger forecasts

- Fire danger ratings (FDRs) provide information about the potential level of danger should a bushfire start.
- FDRs are calculated by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) for fire weather districts using a combination of weather forecasting and information about vegetation in the landscape that could fuel a fire.
- Victoria has 9 fire weather districts, which are based on municipal council boundaries. Our school is in the **South Central** fire weather district.
- The BoM will publish the fire danger rating 4-day forecast on their website during the fire season, but these forecasts are subject to change.



# Understanding fire risk and fire danger ratings

- The ratings provide information so that people can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires.
- It is important, especially during the fire season, to stay up to date with conditions, monitor your surroundings and tune in to official sources for warnings.
- From the 2022-23 fire season, Victoria will be using the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System which has 4 ratings; Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic.



**Catastrophic**

For your survival,  
**leave bush fire risk areas**

**Extreme**

**Take action now** to protect your life and property

**High**

**Be ready to act**

**Moderate**

**Plan and prepare**

On **No Rating** days, no action is required because the risk of a dangerous fire is very low.

# The Bushfire At-Risk Register and Category 4

The Department of Education and Training worked with the CSIRO to develop the *Victorian Education Facilities Fire Risk Methodology*, which is used to assess the fire risk of all early childhood and school education facilities each year.

- **The Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR)**

The schools and facilities in Categories 0-3 are at the highest risk of being impacted by fire in the landscape and are included on the BARR. The BARR functions as a triaged risk register to support preparation for, and response to, the annual fire season.

- **Category 4**

Schools and facilities that are at some risk of fire pre-emptively close in response to days of Catastrophic fire risk. These sites are at a the lower level of risk than those on the BARR.

**Our school is a Category 3 school.**

# Our school's fire risk and actions

# Our fire risk and actions

**Our school is a Category 3 School.**

We will **close** on a day forecasted as a **Catastrophic** fire danger rating in the **South Central** fire district.

All school bus routes that travel through a **Catastrophic** fire districted will be cancelled.



# How will you be advised?

- If our school needs to **close on a Catastrophic fire danger day**, we will advise you by **notification on uEducateUs and/or a letter sent home from school.**
- We will also communicate updates via **uEducateUs.**
- We will try to provide you with advance notice of possible **Catastrophic** days when we can, please be aware that the forecast will not be confirmed until closer to the day.

# Responding to the advice

- Our families play an important role in enacting our bushfire plans.
- Monitor your communications during the fire season to stay up to date. Follow the instructions provided by the school in these communications.
- Be aware that for days when we will close due to **Catastrophic** fire danger, once the closure has been confirmed by the school, we will not change our plan, even if the forecast changes. This will help limit confusion and provide time for you to make alternative care arrangements for your children.
- Find out more - information on school closure and school bus service cancellations, including advice on re-opening is available from the [department's website](#).

# How has our school prepared for the fire season

# How our school has prepared for the fire season

To prepare for this year's fire season we have:

1. Updated our emergency management plan:
  - in consultation with the department, local emergency services and/or local council
  - to reflect the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS)
2. Reviewed how we communicate with our school community.
3. Reprioritised how we manage vegetation at the school.
4. Cleared gutters and grounds and other priority works.
5. In class, we will also be discussing the importance of being bushfire ready with your children (supported by specifically-developed curriculum).

# Responding to a fire in the lanscape

- While every effort is made to anticipate fire threats, our school may be threatened by an unpredicted outbreak of a fire, or a known fire may unexpectedly change its course.
- If this occurs, our Emergency Management Plan will ensure that we respond to the threat in a prepared, timely and appropriate manner.
- If we need to use our Emergency Management Plan to respond to a fire in the lanscape, we will communicate with you by **[add communication method]**. We ask that you follow the advice provided in the communications. **[insert additional requests as required]**.
- We will be working with the department's emergency management staff and emergency services to act on the best available advice to keep us safe.

# What you can do to prepare

# What can you do to prepare

- **Make sure** you understand the fire danger for our area.
- **Review and update** your family's bushfire survival plan, including how your child will be cared for when the school or childcare service is closed due to threat of fire. **Your child should not be left unattended.**
- **Check** that we have your current contact details, including mobile phone number.
- **Keep in touch** with us by reading our newsletters, checking uEducateUs notifications, talking to your child's teacher and to others in our school community.
- **Understand** our Emergency Management Plan and your role in keeping the school, its students and staff safe.
- **Talk to your child** about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.
- **Talk to us** including our principal, teachers or school council representatives if you have any concerns.

# Make a bushfire plan

- The Country Fire Authority (CFA) provides great resources to support you and your family to plan ahead for the fire season.
- Remember that you don't have to live in the country to be at risk of fire.
- As a member of our school community, we recommend thinking about how you will plan ahead for the fire season.
- Taking steps to get prepared before the fire season means you know what to do when you're at risk of fire.
- Visit Your Bushfire Plan to use the CFA's resources at:  
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/your-bushfire-plan>



# Frequently asked questions

# Frequently asked questions

*If I'm concerned about the risk of fires, can I keep my child away from school, even if the school remains open?*

Yes. If your family decides to enact its bushfire survival plan, the most appropriate place for your child may be with you and your family, and not at school.

Talk to us about your family's bushfire plan ahead of the fire season. You should also advise the school as soon as possible of your child's absence if your plan is enacted.

*What happens if the Catastrophic forecast improves?*

The final decision to close our school due to a **Catastrophic** fire danger day school will be made the day prior to the planned closure.

Any improvements in the weather forecast after this time will not change the decision to close.

This will help limit confusion and provide time for parents to make alternative care arrangements for your children.

# Frequently asked questions

*When the school is closed, will any staff remain on-site?*

No. The safety of staff and students is our main priority, and no staff will remain on-site, and all other visitors and contractors will also not be allowed on site.

*Is it possible that schools will be closed for consecutive days?*

*If yes, how will parents be advised?*

It is possible that our school will be closed for consecutive days. If this occurs, keep up to date via our communications.

We will be closed on **all** forecast Catastrophic days.

In addition to our communications, you can also check the Department's website for updates.

# Where to find more information



Education  
and Training

# Further information

## The Department of Education and Training:

The department's Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy guides our activities.

It is available online at: [Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/bushfire-and-grassfire-preparedness-policy)

## Country Fire Authority (CFA):

- [Plan & Prepare | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)
- [Your Guide to Survival | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)
- [Fire Ready Kit | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)

## Other sources:

- VicEmergency is a great source for information, advice and warnings. You can access it via:
  - The VicEmergency app – that can be downloaded on your android and iOS mobile devices
  - Website <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
  - VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
  - Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency>)
  - Twitter (<https://twitter.com/vicemergency>)
- Tune into your emergency broadcasters such as the ABC local radio, Sky News and others.

**Thank you for attending our  
bushfire preparedness  
presentation.**

© State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) 2022



Ensuring our school is bushfire ready: Bushfire Preparedness is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), indicate if changes were made and comply with the other licence terms, see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The licence does not apply to:

- any images, photographs, trademarks or branding, including the Victorian Government logo and the DET logo; and
- content supplied by third parties.

Copyright queries may be directed to [copyright@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:copyright@education.vic.gov.au)



Education  
and Training

