



HUFF STUFF
 Newsletter
 Issue 13
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Greetings everyone,

I hope you had a relaxing and happy holiday break. The weather was perfect and there was no fire activity to interrupt the proceedings. We did however, embark upon a week of searching for missing Shipley resident, Kim Mackell. Unfortunately there is still no trace of him at this stage. What a distressing time for his family and friends.

With the present hot weather it is time to be thinking about your property. Here are some tips for what to do during summer from 'Essential Bushfire Safety Tips' by Joan Webster OAM.

Electronic equipment

- *Keep computer backed up and mobile charged.*
- *Keep important computer files on memory stick and in an accessible place.*

Vegetation Management

- *Keep gutters, roof valleys and around buildings clear of leaves.*
- *Clear long grass and litter.*
- *Keep grass cut and watered.*
- *Rake away all mowed vegetation. Don't leave lying in heaps. Rotting grass ignites more easily from embers than does standing dead grass.*
- *Rake under trees, around buildings, woodheaps, in barns.*
- *Get rid of the rakings.*
- *Thin undergrowth and litter in adjacent bush.*
- *Weed self-seeded saplings as they come up.*

Discuss your preparations with your neighbours.

Something to think about...

As the season progresses please consider the following:

- Has anyone new moved into your street? If so think about a welcome visit.
- Has any of your neighbours' vulnerability status changed?
- Does anyone need assistance with planning for emergencies?
- Could anyone use AIDER (Assistance for Infirm, Disabled & Elderly Residents)?
- Share the HUFF Newsletter.

Total Fire Ban rules



A total fire ban means no fires out in the open. A total fire ban helps limit the potential of fires developing.

During a Total Fire Ban you cannot light, maintain or use a fire in the open, or to carry out any activity in the open that causes, or is likely to cause, a fire.

No general purpose hot works, such as welding or gas cutting can be done in the open.

The NSW RFS strongly recommends you reconsider activities such as using a tractor or slashing, to help reduce the chance of a fire starting on your property. Under certain conditions, the NSW RFS may issue a Cease Harvest request.

Why are Total Fire Bans declared?

Bush fires are more likely to spread and cause damage on days when the weather is very hot, dry and windy. These are usually on very high to extreme fire days.

To reduce the risk of fires damaging or destroying life, property and the environment the NSW RFS Commissioner may declare a Total Fire Ban.

Can I use an electric barbeque?

You can use an electric barbeque for cooking as long as it is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating, and no combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating.

Can I use a gas barbeque?

You can use a gas barbeque under the following conditions:

- It is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating;
- No combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating;
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water; and
 - The barbeque is within 20 metres of a permanent private dwelling such as a home; or
 - The barbeque is within a designated picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest.

Can I use a barbeque or pizza oven which burns solid fuel (e.g. wood, charcoal or heat beads)?

No. A barbeque or wood fire pizza oven which uses solid fuel, such as wood, charcoal or heat beads, cannot be used outside during a Total Fire Ban.

Can I use fire during a Total Fire Ban if I have a fire permit?

Permits are suspended on days of total fire ban. Permits may resume after the total fire ban is lifted, as long as the permit hasn't expired.

It's not all doom and gloom

One of the fun things that our local RFS brigade does is the annual Santa run, a much anticipated event in Blackheath and Mount Victoria.



Santa visited Govetts Leap during the Blackheath RFS annual Santa Run.



Waiting out the storm in Mt Victoria on Xmas eve.



Cute as a button!

Regards, Mina Howard 0419 629 407