



HUFF STUFF
Newsletter
Issue 16
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Greetings everyone,

In the March newsletter we were drowning in too much rain. This time we are starting to worry about lack of rain! Apparently it is going to be a mild, dry winter with only one snow event around the June long weekend. Let's see what happens.

We now have two more HUFF Facilitators from Medlow Bath. Welcome Marlene and Jane. Another three would like to receive the newsletter. Thank you to those residents who attended the HUFF meeting at the Chalet. The beautiful venue was provided by the owners so that we could meet in comfort.

Please continue to keep an eye out for anyone who may need extra assistance with planning for emergencies, AIDER, property assessments and anything else you can think of.

Now that the leaves are falling and our gardens are becoming dormant for winter it is a good time to think about:

Standards for Safe Gardens in bushfire-prone areas.

These are some pointers from Joan Webster's 'Bushfire Safety Tips'.

- Clear trees of shrubs, long grass and debris beneath their canopies.
- Prune branches from well above the ground, and from walls and roof.
- Prune pine trees' lower branches to 8m.
- Use non-flammable mulches: no pine bark, woodchips or straw.
- Trim shrubs away from windows.
- Rake leaves and litter from around the house.
- Have clear paths between garden beds and flammable walls.

Have you considered having a working bee to help each other tidy up gardens? Perhaps share the cost of a skip bin or trip to the tip if you have too much for the green bin. And don't forget to refer any

potential neighbours to AIDER for a one-off free service.

AIDER

The AIDER (Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents) program is a free, one-off service which supports some of our most at-risk community members.

The program helps people live more safely and confidently in their home in areas where bush fires may start.

The AIDER program is designed for people who have limited domestic support available from family, relatives, friends or other services. This could include older people, people living with a disability, and people who are already receiving community assistance and services. Their property must also be on bush fire prone land (land that can support a bush fire or be subject to bush fire attack).



AIDER services can include:

- *clearing gutters*
- *thinning vegetation around the home*
- *removing leaf and tree debris*
- *trimming branches from close to the home*
- *mowing or slashing long grass.*

If you would like to know more about the free, one-off AIDER service, call 02 8741 4955 or email aider@rfs.nsw.gov.au or [download our fact sheet](#).

Our RFS Brigades At Work

It has been a very quiet season for our local brigades regarding bushfires except for the Mudgee and Bathurst fires reported on last newsletter. However we have been called on to help with a body carry-out at Shipley. Skeletal remains were found recently but they are yet to be identified. There has been the odd motor vehicle accident (MVA), and we assisted with traffic control at the ANZAC Day March in Blackheath. This month we will be collecting for Red Shield at static points in Blackheath.

The brigades are hoping to finally get some long-planned hazard reductions completed. One is planned for Stavely Pde, Blackheath, one for Kenny Street, Mount Victoria, some in Shipley, and one behind Delmonte Ave in Medlow Bath.

Fuel for thought -

“The more fuel reduction in the bush, the less embers enter the town. Low-hazard vegetation may need reduction for 300m into the bush, high-hazard vegetation may need reduction for up to 3 km from town.”

J. Webster OAM



Brigade members training in hydraulics (pumps and pumping) for their Advanced Firefighting course. Training continues throughout the cooler months to have members ready for the upcoming fire season.



*Our junior members carried the flags for the RSL.
The future of the RFS!*



Members from Blackheath/Mt Victoria, Medlow Bath and Shipley brigades joined in the traditional ANZAC March.

If you have any questions or need assistance please let me know. Thank you for your ongoing commitment.

Regards, Mina Howard
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