



HUFF STUFF  
Newsletter  
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Greetings everyone,

It certainly has been a wonderful spring with, thankfully, enough rain to keep our gardens looking wonderful. The Rhododendron Gardens have been spectacular this year. Hopefully we will have another quiet Christmas – bush fire wise at least.

I would like to welcome our newest HUFF Facilitator, Elaine Valton. Elaine is relatively new to Blackheath and very new to Hillier Street where she has been busy meeting the neighbours. I am also attaching the flyer that she has produced to give to people when she door-knocks. If you would like to reconnect or just letter box drop, Elaine is happy for you to use her flyer and we can print it off here at BANC.

### ABC Emergency

Quite by accident I found this website which has all sorts of interesting information. From this site I found the following which may be of more interest to us than bush fires at the moment.

**"It is storm season in Australia and, while being struck by lightning is considered a rare occurrence, there are several steps people can take to keep safe.**

ABC science expert Dr Karl Kruszelnicki said there were roughly 100 lightning strikes every second around the world resulting in about 100 deaths per year. He said the safest place to be during an electrical storm was indoors.

#### **If you are indoors:**

If you are indoors, the Bureau of Meteorology suggests unplugging appliances before the storm hits. Dr Kruszelnicki said it was particularly important to stay away from telephones during a storm.

"If you have a landline phone connected by a wire to the exchange, lightning can hit anywhere along that line depending on how the wire travels (underground or overground)," Dr Kruszelnicki said.

"Telstra does warn there are cases where people have been harmed using a corded phone.

"You should switch off all your electrical appliances, even switch them off at the circuit board."

The BOM also advises anyone indoors to close all of their windows and doors and to stay away from openings including fire places.

Dr Kruszelnicki said the safest place to be was in the middle of the building.

"Sit or huddle in the middle of the room and enjoy the show," he said.

#### **If you are outside:**

The BOM urges people to seek shelter in a vehicle or building if possible.

A man was killed and a woman injured while camping under a tree that was struck by lightning on Mt Warning in northern New South Wales on Tuesday morning.

A farmer from Fernleigh, about 80 kilometres south of Mt Warning, also reported losing five bullocks to a lightning strike in the storms that began on Monday night.

The BOM warns not to shelter under tall objects such as trees or poles.

Dr Kruszelnicki said if no safe shelter was available, people should curl into a ball in a standing position.

"You crouch over so you're about half-a-metre-high and have your feet as close together as possible, so you're a single point of contact," he said.

"Do not run, do not lie down."

The BOM also urges people in a group to spread out and stay several metres from each other.

Water and objects that conduct electricity (golf clubs, umbrellas and metal fences for example) should also be avoided."

There is lots more information on this site so have a look.

**And just to stay focused on the fire danger period you can find the following information and more on the NSWRFs site:**

### **Bush Fire Danger Period and Fire Permits**

A Fire Permit is required for burning activities during the Bush Fire Danger Period. Fire Permits help ensure fire is used safely and minimise the danger to you, your property and the community.

### **The key things to remember**

- You need a fire permit if it's the Bush Fire Danger Period.
- Just because it's the Bush Fire Danger Period doesn't mean you can't use fire - but there are restrictions to ensure fire is used safely.
- Getting a permit is free and easy. Contact your local Fire Control Centre.
- There are heavy penalties if you don't follow restrictions or rules.

Please note that other restrictions, approvals and/or permits may apply to council areas where the Bush Fire Danger Period has not been declared. For example, backyard burning

is not permitted in many suburban areas due to Environmental Regulations and Council or Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) permission is required.

*Check these guides for more information on permits and reducing hazards on your property:*

- *Before You Light That Fire - information on permits and steps you need to take before using fire on your property*
- *Can I or Can't I - a simple guide to restrictions such as during Total Fire Bans*

### **Brigade Happenings.**

NSWRFS have brought in new uniforms and the big breakthrough is that we now have women's sizings. This is good news for us girls who have been forced to wear men's sizings. The new PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) Is lightweight and very comfortable to wear while still having the required fire protection rating.



***Some of the girls from Blackheath/Mt Vic RFS brigade wearing the new PPE.***

Have a great festive season everyone. I will see some of you at the volunteers' morning tea next week. Once again, thank you for supporting HUFF.

Regards,  
Mina Howard

*Kind Regards,  
Mina Howard  
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