



HUFF STUFF

Newsletter Issue 4 December 2015

Greetings everyone,
As the year wraps up we can truly say it's been a very productive one. The final count is 81 facilitators with 9 waiting to be fully inducted. This week I spoke to three more people in Mount Victoria about the project and they expressed interest in coming on board in 2016.

Simon's 'Twitter for Disasters' workshops are beginning to fill up so please take up free this offer. You don't have to 'tweet' yourself, you simply receive 'tweets' from the emergency services as they come in. This could be very useful in times of emergencies.

We have attended several street get-togethers that have been very enjoyable. They are a good way to start the conversation about concerns and finding solutions about what to do in an emergency. At one meeting two young families met and began making plans to spend more time together whilst planning to connect with a third young family. One was in the classic situation of having two young children at home while their partner was away in the city working and had the car.



Tanya and Tom on the Tanker.



Connecting neighbours



A great turn out for Anne and Jean's meeting

Anne and Jean's street meeting was lucky enough to have a couple of Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters (and a fire truck!) to speak about safety in emergencies to their neighbours, distribute some resources and answer questions. If you would like firefighters present at your HUFF neighbourhood street meeting, contact Emily: Emily.hamon@banc.org.au / 0434 705 629.



Tom gives the Breathing Apparatus a go. We think he could wear this to a Star Wars themed costume party!

The draft contact list has gone out. Several people have sent in corrections so please check that your details are right. I will then resend it. I have now completed the list for the RFS mapping program so we will await that with anticipation, hopefully coming early in 2016.

Don't forget to collect your resource folders and anything else you require. BANC will be closed from 21st December until January 4th 2016. However you can still contact us via mobile or email if you need to.

Sadly our funding runs out at the end of December but we will be continuing on in the same capacity as volunteers next year to keep this great work that you are all doing on track.

Emily and I would like to thank you all for becoming part of our team. Having spoken to some elderly residents who had met their facilitators and were feeling very happy, we know that HUFF has and will continue to make a difference in our community.

*Have a great Christmas!
Mina and Emily*

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Emily:

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Reminders

Contact us:

- For how many magnets you need
- If you are having a street get together so HUFF, the RFS or FRNSW can visit
- If you are still unsure of which households you should make contact with
- If we can help you with any resources
- If you need help with **anything!**

A useful piece of information from the [NSW RFS website!](#)

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 such 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;
- The barbeque is within a designated picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest.

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.

More information on permits can be found on our [Fire Permit](#) page.

What is a No Burn day?

The EPA may prohibit the burning of fires in the open or in incinerators by issuing a No-Burn Notice (see section 133 [Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997](#)) if it is of the opinion that, because forecast weather conditions, burning is likely to contribute to the build-up of air pollution.

To find out if a No-Burn notice is in force:

- Check the [EPA website](#); or
- Check the Public Notices section of the Sydney Morning Herald. A No-Burn notice will be published in the newspaper on the day it is in force; or
- Call the EPA Environmental Information Line on 131 555.

Are there any exemptions during a Total Fire Ban?

A range of activities may be exempt from Total Fire Bans, such as emergency infrastructure work, bee hive smokers, mining operations, sugar cane harvesting, use of fireworks or ceremonial fires. The NSW RFS Commissioner is responsible for exemptions to Total Fire Bans. These exemptions are detailed in the [NSW Government Gazette](#) each time a Total Fire Ban is declared.

How do I apply for a Total Fire Ban exemption?

If you want to light a fire, or carry out any hot works activities during a Total Fire Ban you can check the Government Gazette to see if there is a standard exemption that applies to your situation.

If the standard exemptions don't cover your circumstances then you may apply for a specific exemption using our [Total Fire Ban exemption application form](#).

You will receive an acknowledgement email upon our receipt of your application however a minimum of seven days processing time is required for us to assess your application.

If approved the NSW RFS will issue an Exemption that contains any conditions that you must follow when lighting the fire or conducting your activity on the total fire ban day.

What penalties are there for lighting a fire during a Total Fire Ban?

Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts an on the spot fine of \$2200. If the matter goes to court, you could be subject to a fine of up to \$5500 and/or 12 months gaol.

Penalties for a fire that escapes and damages or destroys life, property or the environment can attract much greater fines and gaol terms with maximums at \$132,000 and/or 14 years gaol. Civil law suits can also be brought against the person responsible for a fire by those seeking compensation for losses sustained.