

# CFS FACT SHEET

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## BUSHFIRE SAFER PLACES

In 2016 Bushfire Safer Places have changed

### **WHERE TO RELOCATE TO ON DAYS OF SEVERE, EXTREME AND CATASTROPHIC FIRE WEATHER**

If you live, work or travel in an area where bushfires can occur, and your Bushfire Survival Plan is to leave early, on or before a bad fire day, you need to be aware of where you can relocate to.

CFS has developed a hierarchy of places that can offer relative safety from bushfire. They are broken into two categories, and are called **Bushfire Safer Places** and **Last Resort Refuges**. It is important that you know what each of these are, where they are, and what risk you may be exposed to if you use one of these options during a bushfire.

#### **Hierarchy of Bushfire Safer Places in SA**

Safest ↕ Least Safe	<b>BUSHFIRE SAFER PLACE</b>	<b>Adelaide Metropolitan area, outer suburbs and rural settlements</b>	<b>For if you need to relocate early. Suitable for use during forecast bad fire weather or during bushfire. May be subject to sparks, embers and smoke</b>
	<b>LAST RESORT REFUGE</b>	<b>Designated ovals and buildings in rural areas.</b>	<b>For if your plan has failed. Not suitable for extended use and may provide only limited protection during bushfire.</b>

# CFS FACT SHEET

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## **Bushfire Safer Places**

A Bushfire Safer Place is a place of relative safety and may be used as a place for people to stay in or as a place of first resort for those people who have decided that they will leave high risk locations early on a bad fire weather day.

Properties on the outskirts of such locations generally face a higher level of risk when compared with those nearer the centre of the designated area. The relative safety of these properties can be improved by property owners undertaking appropriate bushfire safety works to ensure they don't place themselves and the greater community at risk.

A Bushfire Safer Place is relatively safe from bushfire because:

- It is located in an area of generally low levels of bushfire fuel;
- It is sufficiently distant from continuous bushland or forest to reduce the risk of sparks and embers;
- Bushfire travel will be interrupted by:
  - Established gardens and lawns;
  - Road networks and other low fuel areas;
- There is likely to be access to emergency, health and other community services.

If your Bushfire Survival Plan includes relocating to a Bushfire Safer Place you should:

- Identify where your nearest Bushfire Safer Place is and if there are extra suitable alternatives;
- Work out how you will get there and if there are any alternative routes to take;
- Work out how long it will take you to get there;
- Decide under what circumstances you will relocate and what your trigger points for action will be;
- Plan for your relocation; when, where and what you will take etc.

The CFS recommends that if you intend to relocate to a Bushfire Safer Place you should do so early in the day. Last minute decisions to relocate in the face of fire are extremely dangerous.

## **Will you be safe in a Bushfire Safer Place?**

There are no guarantees regarding your safety if you choose to stay in a Bushfire Safer Place or if you relocate to one. However, it is unlikely you will be exposed to direct flame or severe radiant heat. You may be exposed to spark, embers and smoke, secondary fires may start in vegetation, gardens and structures from these sparks and embers. Therefore, it is important to remember that even if your property is located within a Bushfire Safer Place you should prepare your home and undertake appropriate bushfire hazard management on your property.

# CFS FACT SHEET

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## Last Resort Refuge

**It is important not to confuse Last Resort Refuges with a Bushfire Safer Place, Last Resort Refuges are your LAST choice of location to shelter from a bushfire.**

A Last Resort Refuge is a space or building which could be used as a place of last resort for individuals to go to and remain in during the passage of a bushfire through their neighbourhood. It is an area that provides a minimum level of protection from the immediate life threatening effects of radiant heat and direct flame contact in a bushfire. A Last Resort Refuge is intended to provide a place of relative safety during a bushfire, but does not guarantee the survival of those who assemble there, and should only be used when personal Bushfire Survival Plans cannot be implemented or have failed.

Please be aware of the following risks associated with Last Resort Refuges:

- Travelling to a Last Resort Refuge may be dangerous. Traffic congestion, fire activity, heavy smoke, accidents or fallen trees may block the route;
- There is no guarantee that you will be safe from fire or radiant heat when travelling to or sheltering at a Last Resort Refuge;
- Do not expect emergency services to be present;
- Last Resort Refuges may have limited capacity;
- Last Resort Refuges do not cater for animals;
- Last Resort Refuges do not provide meals, amenity or special needs (e.g. for infants, the elderly, the ill or disabled);
- Last Resort Refuges may not provide shelter from the elements, particularly flying sparks and embers.

A Last Resort Refuge is not designed to replace a personal Bushfire Survival Plan. You should complete and practice your Bushfire Survival Plan to ensure that you and your family are prepared and that you know what to do in the event of a bushfire.

## Will you be safe in a Last Resort Refuge?

There are no guarantees regarding your safety if you choose to relocate to a Last Resort Refuge during a bushfire. A Last Resort Refuge should not be used as a substitute for adequate preparation of your home and the undertaking of appropriate bushfire hazard management on your property.

It is important to remember that all members of the community must take responsibility for their own safety during bushfire.

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