

CFS FACT SHEET

No: 2.3.1 Date: 10/10/2017

FIRE DANGER DAYS AND RATINGS

Fire Danger Season

The Fire Danger Season runs from November to April, but the exact dates vary according to the dryness of the soil and vegetation, which is monitored by the CFS.

During the Fire Danger Season restrictions, are placed on lighting fires to reduce the chance of bushfires starting. You must apply for a permit to light fires outdoors at this time unless the fire is of a type prescribed in the Fire and Emergency Services Act and Regulations.

Fire Ban Districts

South Australia is divided into 15 fire ban districts. Each district has its own **fire danger season dates**, so it is important to be aware of which district you live or work in.

Fire Danger Ratings will be issued for each of these districts.

To help you assess your level of bushfire risk and action to take, it is important that you understand the Fire Danger Rating.

Fire Danger Rating

The Bureau of Meteorology in partnership with CFS determines the fire danger rating each day based on a combination of **predicted weather** conditions.

The combination of conditions is numerically rated from 0 to 50 using a fire danger index. This rating indicates the degree of difficulty of suppressing a fire under the predicted weather conditions.

The rating is forecast each day during the Fire Danger Season to predict how a fire would behave if one started - including how difficult it would be to put out, and what impacts it might have on the community.

The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the more dangerous the fire conditions.

The Fire Danger Rating table below explains what each rating means, and what actions you should take for each level. Take the time to review and understand the chart.

The Fire Danger Rating is not a predictor of how likely a bushfire is to occur, but how dangerous it could be if it did occur. It should be used as an early indicator to trigger your plans.

The Fire Danger Rating is issued by 5pm daily and includes forecasts for the next four days. However, the official Fire Danger Rating, and subsequent Total Fire Ban is only issued for the following day. It is also available from the Bureau of Meteorology: www.bom.gov.au, on the CFS website: www.cfs.sa.gov.au

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Fire Danger Rating	What Does it Mean?	What Should I Do?
CATASTROPHIC Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be extremely difficult to control. It will take significant fire fighting resources and cooler conditions to bring it under control. • Spot fires will start well ahead of the main fire and cause rapid spread of the fire. Embers will come from many directions. • Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. • The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas. 	<p>YOU NEED TO ACT NOW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put your survival first and leave bushfire-prone areas the night before or early in the day – this is your safest option. • Act immediately – do not wait and see. • Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass. • Prepare, know and practise a plan for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you will leave • How you will get there • What you will do if you cannot leave • Where you will go • When you will return
EXTREME Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are very hot, dry and windy conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be unpredictable, move very fast. It will be very difficult for fire fighters to bring under control. • Spot fires will start and move quickly. Embers may come from many directions. • Homes that are prepared to the highest level, have been constructed to bushfire protection levels and are actively defended may provide safety. • You must be prepared physically and mentally to defend in these conditions. • The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas. 	<p>YOU NEED TO GET READY TO ACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only stay with your property if you are prepared to the highest level. This means your home has been constructed to bushfire protection levels - enclosed eaves, covers over external air conditioners, metal flyscreens etc. • You must be well prepared and able to actively defend your home. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home - enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc. • If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.
SEVERE Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are hot, dry and possibly windy conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be hard for fire fighters to bring under control. • Well-prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. • You must be prepared physically and mentally to defend in these conditions. 	<p>YOU NEED TO BE AWARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home - enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc. • If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.
VERY HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a fire starts, it is likely to be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety. • Be aware of how fires can start and reduce the risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your Bushfire Survival Plan. • Monitor conditions. • You may need to act. • Leave if necessary.
HIGH		
LOW - MODERATE		

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Total Fire Bans

The CFS Chief Officer declares a Total Fire Ban on days where the fire danger index is 50 or greater, for example when the Fire Danger Rating is Severe, Extreme or Catastrophic.

A Total Fire Ban day can be declared at any time of year and for any fire ban district. The ban stays in place for 24 hours. The CFS releases the information to the media the evening before the Total Fire Ban day to coincide with nightly news broadcasts.

By imposing the ban, the CFS can restrict risky activities. Penalties of fines up to \$10,000 and two years' jail can be imposed if you break the law. On-the-spot fines of up to \$315 may also apply.

You cannot light fires in the open on a Total Fire Ban day, apart from very few exceptions.

The first community warning of bushfire danger may be the declaration of a Total Fire Ban.

Four Day Forecasting

Ahead of the 2017/18 Fire Danger Season, the Bureau and CFS introduced a four day Fire Danger Rating forecast.

Fire Danger Ratings are routinely issued by 5pm daily during the fire season. These ratings are determined in conjunction with Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).

Fire Danger Ratings for days two, three and four are preliminary forecasts and should be used as a guide only. These ratings may change based on both weather and non-weather related factors.

For all weather information, visit the Bureau of Meteorology web page at www.bom.gov.au.

You accept all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this site and any information or material available from it.

If you want to know:

- which Fire Ban District you live in,
- what your district's Fire Season Dates are
- what today's Fire Danger Rating is
- if today is a Total Fire Ban Day
- what you can and can't do during the Fire Danger Season or on a Total Fire Ban Day

You can:

- visit the CFS website (www.cfs.sa.gov.au),
- call the Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)