

What have schools done to prepare for the fire season

Schools:

- Have updated their emergency management plans and Bushfire Response Plans in consultation with TFS, local emergency services, fire authorities and local government authorities;
- Have maintained mitigation strategies for vegetation;
- On tank water, have where practical, taken steps to ensure water storages are kept full and that buildings are ember-proof; and
- On all Category 2 and 3 sites will have roof and gutter cleaning occur during the summer holiday period to reduce the build-up of any fuel such as leaves, twigs etc.

What else can I do?

- Ensure the school has your current contact details;
- Review and update your family bushfire survival plan;
- Keep in touch with your school;
- Familiarise yourself with other bushfire information such as Community Protection Planning for your area, which identify Nearby Safer Places, available through TFS at **www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pagelid=colCommunityProtection**
- Know your emergency broadcaster; and
- Refer to the TFS website

Snug Primary School

has a Bushfire Ready School **Category 1** rating.

Category 2 & 3 - This means on days of forecast FDR of Extreme and above (Fire Danger Index 75+) in your district regardless if there are any fires in their area the school will close. Students and Staff will be relocated to the nearest school.

Category 1 - This means on days of a forecast FDR of Extreme (Fire Danger Index 99) in your district the school will remain open.

Key Contacts and Resources

- **Bureau of Meteorology**
www.bom.gov.au/tas
- **Department of Education**
www.education.tas.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx
- **Emergency Broadcasters**
www.abc.net.au
www.skynewd.com.au
- **State Emergency Service**
www.ses.tas.gov.au
- **Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)**
www.fire.tas.gov.au
- **Tasmania Police**
www.police.tas.gov.au

BUSHFIRE READY SCHOOLS INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Following consultation with the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) the overriding principle of the Department's bushfire response is to keep schools open when bushfires threaten, with students in the care of the school.

Under the Bushfire-Ready Schools initiative, a school's bushfire risk is ranked either Low, 1, 2, or 3, based on an analysis of modelled bushfire attack. All schools have been reviewed for bushfire readiness by TFS. This review focused on the locality of the school and its surrounding environment and the results have been documented in a written site assessment report.

Each individual schools Bushfire Response Plan (BRP) will have information that identifies where students and staff will position themselves. This will vary from school to school and it is advisable for all parents/guardians/carers to be aware of their individual school's plan.

Bushfire Ready Schools Criteria Category 1, 2 and 3

TFS has taken the position, provided certain criteria are met, that occupied schools are a 'safer place' to retain staff, students and others in the event of a bushfire threat. These facilities are considered '*Bushfire-Ready Schools*'.

All schools with a Category 1, 2 or 3 have an individual Bushfire Response Plan that is maintained and tailored to individual school situations.

If your school does not meet the '*Bushfire-Ready*' standard (Category 2 & 3), an evacuation strategy will be put in place.

If your school meets the '*Bushfire-Ready*' standard (Category 1), a 'protect in place' strategy, involving a designated 'Nearby Safer Place' area will be put in place.

Forecast FDR Extreme and above (Fire Danger Index 75+) in your district

For Category 2 & 3 schools on days of forecast FDR Extreme and above (Fire Danger Index 75+) in your district regardless if there are any fires in their area, will close. Students and Staff will be relocated to the nearest Bushfire Ready School.

Category 1 schools will remain open up to a forecast FDR Extreme (Fire Danger Index 99) in your district with a TFS 'Protect in Place' arrangement, applicable to schools under direct threat from bushfire.

On days of FDR Catastrophic (Fire Danger Index 100+) in your area the Department of Education in consultation with the Tasmania Fire Service will make a decision to close or open schools.

While it is not possible to provide the exact number of days, advice from the TFS and the Bureau of Meteorology suggests that schools in high fire risks areas could expect to close an average of 0-2 days a year.

School Closure / Relocation

It is intended that, wherever possible, families will be provided with a full day's notice of a closure/relocation. If unexpected weather patterns are experienced the final decision to close a school will be confirmed no later than midday the day before closure.

"Families are encouraged to include alternative care arrangements for children in the event of a planned closure in their home Bushfire Survival Plan. No child should be left at home alone".

If there is fire in the area

If children are already at school when a bushfire occurs, schools will initiate their Bushfire Response Plans. It is also important to note that the Tasmania Fire Service Incident Controller will make decisions about the safety of vulnerable people threatened by fires on any particular day.

It is important to listen to the emergency broadcasters - ABC local radio; ABC TV, Sky News; and TFS website. Advice of school closures will be communicated through the emergency networks.

Children will not be sent home from school without notification.

School Off-site Activities

Schools will assess the likely threat of fire when arranging off-site activities during the bushfire season.

Off-site activities in areas affected by a predicted high fire danger day will be cancelled.

School Buses

If a bus route is threatened by unexpected fire, the school will enact its Bushfire Response Plan.

Access to bushfire areas will be controlled by the Tasmania Fire Service and/or the Tasmania Police and advised through the emergency broadcasters. Students will remain in the care of the school until they are able to be collected by parents/carers/guardians or the bus transport routes are reopened.