

Safety Bulletin

Fire Danger Ratings & Fire Response

Health & Safety - Issue 1: January 2020

Introduction:

Bushfires and other wildfires can occur in Victoria. Fire Danger Ratings are published by Emergency Management Victoria to forecast how dangerous a fire would be if one started. There is a six-level scale for Fire Danger Ratings:

1.	Code Red	These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas. Leaving high risk bushfire areas the night before or early in the day is your safest option - do not wait and see. Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass
2.	Extreme	If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Spot fires will start, move quickly and come from many directions. If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving high risk bushfire areas early in the day is your safest option
3.	Severe	If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable. If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.
4.	Very High	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety. Check your bushfire survival plan. Monitor conditions. Action may be needed. Leave if necessary.
5.	High	
6.	Low-Moderate	

Advice and actions:

The following recommendations made for all employees and students for **Code Red** periods:

1. Avoid non-essential travel in any fire effected regions or areas.
2. Contact any employee or student currently undertaking field work, working or undertaking placement in the effected regions to review their emergency response plans. Check the following records:
 - Student placement records (Sonia)
 - Check field work plans and records
 - Sporting club events and activities calendars
 - Vehicle booking records
3. Consider evacuation if safe to do so.
4. If essential travel is required ensure travelers:
 - monitor the current warnings (via [Emergency Management Victoria](#))
 - follow all directions and instructions from police and emergency services
 - schedule communication check-in arrangements with a nominated colleague and family/friends
 - have sufficient supplies (including fuel, water, batteries and communications devices) to support the travel
 - understand circumstances may change and travel may be affected by road closures or evacuations

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For accurate and current warnings monitor:

- Emergency Services Victoria website: <http://emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/>
- Emergency Services Victoria App
<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/vicemergency/id356559665?mt=8>
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.naturallybeing.fireready>
- local ABC radio stations <https://radio.abc.net.au/stations>; <http://reception.abc.net.au/>

Other resources:

1. [Thermal Comfort safety advice](#) especially for outdoor work
2. Psychological support services for students, employee and their immediate family members, including:
 - [Counselling and psychological services](#) - for individual counselling, emergency counselling and resources for students and employees
 - [Employee Assistance Program](#) - a confidential personal and professional development resource available for employees and their immediate family members