



CHECKLIST PREPARE TO ACTIVELY DEFEND

You should have equipment to actively defend your home, protective clothing for all your family and a well prepared property.

WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Everyone must wear protective clothing to avoid injury from sparks, embers and extreme heat. Cover as much of your skin as you can with two layers of loose fitting clothing. It will be very hot so avoid tight fitting clothes and synthetic clothing.

Wear

- ✓ Loose fitting clothes made from natural fibres like pure wool, heavy cotton drill or denim
- ✓ Long sleeved shirts
- ✓ Trousers, jeans or overalls
- ✓ Sturdy leather shoes or boots without elastic sides (not brand new, worn in)
- ✓ Wool or cotton socks
- ✓ A wide brimmed or hard hat
- ✓ Gloves
- ✓ Goggles or glasses to protect your eyes from ash and embers
- ✓ A moistened face mask to protect your face from ash and other particles

Do not wear

- ✗ Synthetic clothing
- ✗ Singlets
- ✗ T-shirts
- ✗ Short sleeved shirts
- ✗ Shorts
- ✗ Dresses or skirts
- ✗ Sandals or thongs
- ✗ Stockings or synthetic socks

HAVE FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT READY

Consider what equipment you will need to actively defend your home.

- Hoses must be long enough to reach all parts of your house. Use metal hose fittings for taps as they are less likely to melt.

- Ladders for inside and outside the house. These need to be long enough so you can check your roof cavity and eaves.
- Knapsack or garden backpack spray to help you put out spot fires. If you decide to use a garden backpack make sure it has been cleaned out before using it in a bushfire.
- Metal rakes and shovels can be used to break up piles of burning material and for covering embers with sand.
- Cotton mops can hold a lot of water and can be used to put out embers.
- Buckets allow you to move water quickly and easily.
- Wet towels and blankets can be used under doors and windows to seal gaps. This will stop embers and smoke from coming inside your house.

MAKE SURE THERE IS WATER

It is likely that you will lose water and power supplies during a bushfire. If you are planning to actively defend, you must have at least 20,000 litres available as an independent water supply.

This should be a concrete or steel tank. Other storage options around your property that you could fill with water include:

- Rubbish bins (wheelie bins) and storage bins
- Bath, laundry tub, sinks, basins and buckets
- Troughs or garden ponds
- Swimming pool and dams if available

To draw on your 20,000 litre water supply, you will need:

- A generator (>1.5 kVA) to drive a home pressure pump or a petrol or diesel firefighting pump.
- Pumps and generators should be able to pump 400 lpm and must be shielded from high temperature.
- Hoses from the pump should be long enough to reach all corners of the home and should be fitted with a nozzle able to deliver 30 to 100 lpm.
- Sufficient fuel or diesel to run your pumps and generators.



CHECKLIST PLANNING TO ACTIVELY DEFEND

AT THE START OF THE BUSHFIRE SEASON:

- Complete the Preparing Your Survival Kit Checklist and the Preparing Your Property Checklist.
- What you will do if you cannot actively defend your home (have a backup plan).

ON THE DAY THE BUSHFIRE THREATENS

- Find out what the Fire Danger Rating is for your area.
 - If it is CATASTROPHIC leaving for a safer place is your best option. This is because homes are not built to withstand such dangerous fires.
 - If it is EXTREME leaving is the best option for your survival.
 - If you have not maintained your property or are in doubt, leave.

BEFORE THE FIRE FRONT ARRIVES

OUTSIDE

- Use a moistened mask or cotton cloth to help protect against ash.
- Move large animals and livestock to a safe location (as identified in your bushfire survival plan).
- Check your water supplies around the house, fill any additional containers that might be available.
- Bring outdoor furniture, mats and any other loose items that may burn inside.
- Wet down the side of the house and surrounding garden area that is facing the fire. If you have power and water, leave reticulation running.
- Block downpipes and fill gutters with water.
- Regularly patrol for spot fires around your home and put them out with your rake or knapsack spray.
- Turn off the mains gas supply to the house and any gas cylinders.

INSIDE

- Put your bushfire survival plan into action.
- Safely relocate young children and elderly family members.
- Everyone remaining needs to put on protective clothing.
- Bring pets inside.
- Turn off your evaporative air conditioner but leave water running through the system if possible.
- Fill basins, sinks, bath, troughs and buckets with water.
- Locate mops and other equipment.
- Soak towels and rugs in water, and lay along the inside of external doorways.
- Soak blankets and keep them handy for protection against radiant heat.
- Take down curtains and push furniture away from windows.
- Place a ladder and torch close to the manhole so you can regularly check the ceiling space for embers.
- Keep electricity on but be aware of electrical safety at all times.

AS THE FIRE FRONT APPROACHES AND DURING THE FIRE

- Take all hoses, hose fittings (including plastic tap attachments) and equipment inside.
- Move everyone into the house when you see flames or it is too hot and smoky to stay outside.
- Frequently check the roof cavity (through the manhole inside the house) for any spot fires.
- Stay inside the house while the fire front passes. This normally takes between five and fifteen minutes. Check for any spot fires inside the house.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated.
- Tune into ABC radio for fire information.



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AFTER THE FIRE FRONT HAS PASSED

- Ensure everyone continues to wear protective clothing.
- Check the house thoroughly for spot fires both inside and outside when it is safe.
- Check for embers or signs of smoke in places such as roof cavity, under house spaces and around verandas, wooden decking, stairs, window sills and doorways. Also check sheds, carports and fences.
- Patrol your home for several hours for small fires and burning embers.

IF YOUR HOUSE CATCHES FIRE

- If your house catches fire as the fire passes and you are unable to put it out, leave immediately after the fire front has passed.
- Move on to a fuel-free area such as a driveway, lawn or on to already burnt ground.
- Beware of any hazards such as burning logs or materials.
- Do not return inside the house for any reason.

LEAVING AFTER THE FIRE FRONT HAS PASSED

- Leaving immediately after the fire front has passed can be dangerous, there may be hazards such as fallen power lines, trees and other risks.
- You need to listen to the radio or check with local police for when it is safe to leave.