

Travelling During Bushfire Season



If you are travelling or staying near bushland, fire is a real risk to you.

When travelling, it's important to have a plan in case the area is impacted by bushfire. Travelling in an area affected by bushfire is very dangerous and should be avoided. Leaving before a fire threatens is the safest option.

1 Create a bushfire plan for your travels

- How will you keep up to date?
- Where will you go?
- When will you leave?
- What route will you take?

2 Pack an emergency kit

Your emergency kit when travelling should include:

- A copy of this brochure
- Printed maps of the areas you are travelling in as communications may go down if there is a bushfire
- Portable AM/FM battery-operated radio with spare batteries
- First aid kit and medication
- Woollen blankets
- Plenty of water
- Mobile phone and charger
- Protective clothing for everyone (Long-sleeved cotton tops, pants, hats and sturdy shoes)

3 Know the bushfire warning system

During a bushfire, emergency services will issue a warning if the fire is impacting, or likely to impact, community.

There are three levels of warning. These change to reflect the increasing risk to your life or property, and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire arrives.



EMERGENCY WARNING

An out of control fire is approaching fast. There is a threat to lives and homes and you need to take immediate action to survive.

You must seek shelter or leave now if it is safe to do so.



WATCH AND ACT

If your plan is to leave, leave now. If your plan is to stay, get ready to actively defend.

Only stay and defend if you are mentally and physically prepared.



ADVICE

A fire has started but there is no immediate threat to lives or homes. Stay alert and watch for signs of fire.

Be aware and keep up to date at emergency.wa.gov.au or listen to your local ABC radio.

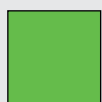
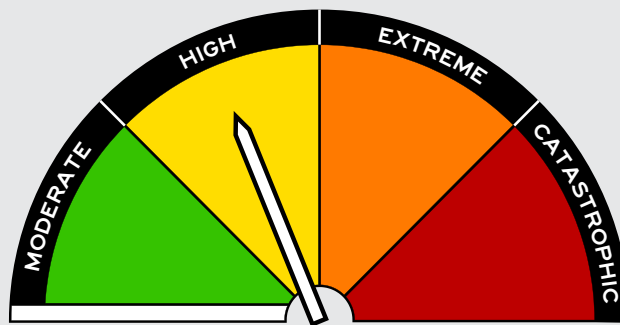


Bushfires can happen suddenly and change quickly. Stay alert to what is happening around you. If you believe you may be in danger, act immediately to stay safe.

4 Know the current fire danger rating for the area you are travelling to

Fire danger ratings describe the potential level of danger should a bushfire start. They are important because they provide people with information so that they can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires.

Australian Fire Danger Ratings



Moderate

Plan and prepare



High

Be ready to act



Extreme

Take action now to protect life and property



Catastrophic

For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

5 Check if there is a total fire ban in the area you are travelling to

A Total Fire Ban (TFB) is declared on days of extreme weather or when widespread fires are seriously stretching firefighting resources. A TFB can affect a variety of activities including four wheel driving, barbequeing and lighting campfires.

- Check if there's a TFB in place by visiting **Emergency WA** or call the **TFB Hotline** on 1800 709 355
- Find out more information on TFBs, including restrictions, at dfes.wa.gov.au/totalfirebans

6 Be prepared to change your travel plans

When travelling, you need to stay aware of the fire danger ratings for your location and be ready to change your plans if there is a higher risk.

- When the fire danger rating is high or above, have a back-up destination. A city or town may be safer than a bushland area.
- If you plan to visit a bushfire risk area, be prepared to change your travel plans at short notice, should a fire start.



Fire can come from any direction and paths can quickly become blocked. You should always be aware of your surroundings and look for signs of bushfire, such as seeing or smelling smoke.

7 Know where to get the latest bushfire information

Bushfire emergency information is available from:



emergency.wa.gov.au



13 DFES (13 3337)



National Relay Service **1800 555 677**



Local ABC Radio



[dfeswa](https://www.facebook.com/dfeswa)



[dfes_wa](https://twitter.com/dfes_wa)



To report a fire, or in an emergency situation, call 000

Bushfires can happen anywhere

You do not need to be in the bush to be at risk of bushfire.

Coastal scrub

Coastal scrub fires can be hot and move very fast.

Parks and reserves

Flames and flying embers can travel many kilometres, crossing roads and impacting homes and surrounding areas.

Grasslands

Grass fires can start easily and spread quickly.

Farms and paddocks

Fires can spread quickly over large areas like paddocks.

Forest and bushland

Fires in these areas can be very intense and extremely difficult for emergency services to reach and extinguish.

When is bushfire season?

Bushfires can happen all year round. But during the hottest and driest times of the year, bushfire risk is at its highest. For Northern WA (Exmouth and above) this is between June and October while Southern WA is between October and April.

Before you leave the house make sure you have:

- Created a travel bushfire plan
- Checked if there are any bushfire warnings
- Checked what the Fire Danger Rating is
- Found out what the local ABC radio frequency is
- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back

What to do if you encounter a bushfire while driving

If you see smoke or flames, leave the area immediately by driving away from the fire.

- If there is a lot of smoke, slow down and be vigilant. There could be people, vehicles and livestock on the road.
- Turn your car headlights on, close windows and turn your air conditioner to recirculate
- If you cannot see clearly, ensure you are not in the path of the fire and pull over to the side of the road.
- Keep your headlights and hazard lights on and wait until the smoke clears.

If you become trapped by a fire

- Park in an area with low or no vegetation, off the roadway.
- Position the car facing towards the direction of escape
- Turn headlights and hazard warning lights on to make the car as visible as possible.
- Tightly close all windows, doors and vents.
- Leave the engine running and turn your air conditioner to recirculate
- Call 000.
- Get down as low as possible below the window level into the foot well and cover yourself under dry woollen blankets.
- Drink water to minimise the risk of dehydration.
- Stay in the car until the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped outside.
- Once the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped, cautiously exit the car.



Sheltering in your vehicle is very dangerous and offers only a slightly higher chance of survival than being caught in the open. It is highly unlikely that a person will survive in all but the mildest circumstances.