FIRE PREVENTION ORDER 2026-2027

FIRST AND FINAL NOTICE

IMPORTANT:
The works outlined in this notice must be completed by the relevant dates, and are to be maintained to these standards to 31 March (inclusive)

PROPERTY CATEGORIES

What applies to you?

CATEGORY 1: Townsite Land

Properties 2,024m² or less – compliance required from 1 November to 31 March

- ✓ Remove all flammable material (except living plants)
- ✓ Keep grass trimmed **below 10cm**
- ✓ Vacant land? Slash, mow, and remove all flammable material

CATEGORY 2: Land zoned Rural Residential, Rural Small Holding or Tourist

Properties over 2,024m², up to 4 hectares – compliance required from 15 November to 31 March

- ✓ **2m wide firebreaks** inside all property boundaries with **4m vertical clearance**
- ✓ **Slash and remove all flammable material** around all buildings, haystacks and fuel storage areas (excludes living plants)
- ✓ Keep grass trimmed **below 10cm**
- ✓ **2m clearance** around all garden refuse and wood piles
- ✓ **20m Low Fuel Zone** around all buildings
- ✓ **Unmanaged land** must have firebreaks and full fuel reduction
- ✓ **Managed land** must have active fuel reduction throughout the compliance period by means of slashing, bailing and/or grazing. Firebreaks, while not compulsory, are encouraged in strategic locations.

CATEGORY 3: Rural Properties zoned General Agriculture or Priority Agriculture

Properties over 4 hectares – compliance required from 15 November to 31 March

- ✓ **Access tracks** to all buildings (3m wide with 4m vertical clearance)
- ✓ Keep grass trimmed **below 10cm**
- ✓ **Unmanaged land,** excluding plantations, must have firebreaks as near as practical to the perimeter of the property or full fuel reduction (excludes living plants).
- ✓ **20m Low Fuel Zone** around buildings, haystacks and fuel storage areas
- ✓ **Managed land,** excluding plantations, must have active fuel reduction throughout the compliance period by means of slashing, bailing and/or grazing. Firebreaks, while not compulsory, are encouraged in strategic locations.

CATEGORY 4: Plantations

Includes harvested plantations – compliance required from 15 November to 31 March

- ✓ **10m wide firebreaks** inside all property boundaries
- ✓ Internal firebreaks, minimum **6m wide,** to limit compartment size to 28 hectares in area
- ✓ Minimum **5m** vertical clearance **above firebreaks**

CATEGORY 5: Fuel and/or Gas Depots

- ✓ Entire property to be kept clear of all flammable material

Compliance required from 15 November to 31 March

- ✓ **3m wide firebreaks** inside all property boundaries with **4m vertical clearance**

CAN'T COMPLY?

If compliance is impractical or may cause environmental harm, you may apply to the Shire for approval of alternative fire prevention measures – **applications must be received in writing by 30 September annually.**

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Authorised Officers will monitor all properties for compliance from 1 November to 31 March each year

REGULATED ACTIVITIES

The following activities have **extra fire safety requirements,** and apply to all properties.

Grinding, Welding & Cutting Equipment

- Only permitted if an **operational 400L firefighting unit** is within **200m** of your activity
- A cleared area of at least **5m surrounding** the work area must be free of all flammable materials

Roadside Verges

- Council's Permits for Road Verges Policy (EMERG/CP-02) states that no verge is to be burnt without a permit – please contact the Shire Administration Office to discuss.

Burning Garden Refuse

- Not permitted on land less than 2024m^2 or situated within a townsite without approval from the Shire – refer to the *Animals, Environment and Nuisance Local Law 2017*
- **3m cleared area** around the burn site
- **Not permitted** during the Prohibited Burning Period
- **Permit required** during Restricted Burning Periods

Campfires & Solid Fuel Cooking

- **Permits required** during Restricted Periods, and when Fire Danger Rating is High or above during Unrestricted Burning Period
- **Not permitted** during the Prohibited Burning Period or during a Total Fire Ban
- Gas barbecues are permitted – **minimum 5m cleared area** surrounding the barbecue required

Slashing

- Residential lawn mowing is exempt
- **Operational 9kg fire extinguisher required** during Restricted and Prohibited Burning Periods
- **Operational 400L firefighting unit required** during Prohibited Burning Periods (in addition to above)

Incinerators

- Incinerators must not be used when the Fire Danger Rating is High or above.
- An open drum, with or without a lid, is **NOT** an authorised incinerator.

FIRE BANS

Refer to Emergency WA to see current alerts and warnings, Fire Danger Ratings, and to prepare your Emergency Plan.

Total Fire Bans

Declared by the Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) – during a Total Fire Ban, all open-air fires and high-risk activities are prohibited.

Failure to comply may result in penalties up to $25,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment.

Harvest & Vehicle Movement Bans (HVMB)

Declared by the Shire during high fire risk periods, restricting machinery use, vehicle movement, and harvesting. These are advertised via ABC radio, our website, and SMS. Register to the Shire's HVMB SMS System to receive an alert when a HVMB is in place.

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BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS (BFCO):

Refer to the slip accompanying this notice to see who to contact for your area – this list is also available on the Shire website along with other helpful resources

BURNING PERMITS & FUEL HAZARD REDUCTION WORKS

- **Permits to burn** are required during all Restricted Burning Periods and may only be issued by an authorised Bush Fire Control Officer (BFCO) – minimum three (3) days' notice required when applying for a Permit.
- Permit holders **must comply with all conditions** and any special conditions imposed.
- Authorised Officers will monitor compliance from 1 November to 31 March each year.

A list of contractors is available via Shire Administration Office – contacts are supplied as a community resource only. Council does not recommend or endorse contractors.

Notification Requirements (Permit Holders)

Before burning, Permit Holders must:

1. **Register their burn** with the Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) on (08) 9395 9209
2. **Notify the Shire Administration Office** at least one (1) day before the day of burning, or by close of business on Friday for weekends (hours may vary during public holidays/other closures)
3. Notify owners/occupiers of **adjoining land at least four (4) days in advance,** unless otherwise agreed
4. **Notify the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (DBCA)** if the area to be burned is within 3km of State Forest (nearest offices located in Busselton and Collie)

DEFINITIONS

Access Tracks

A formed track or driveway that provides vehicle access to buildings or assets, suitable for use by residents and emergency vehicles, including firefighting appliances.

Firebreak

A strip of land that helps stop fire spread and allows firefighting access, cleared to bare mineral earth and free of grass and flammable material.

Note: Firebreaks and Low Fuel Zones are not the same, and are separate from one another – see final page for further details.

Flammable Material or Fuel Hazard

Anything that can carry fire such as grass over 10cm, leaves, bark, twigs, timber or rubbish (excludes living trees, shrubs and gardens).

Haystack or Wood Pile

Any grouped or stacked hay, fodder or firewood.

Fuel Storage Area

Any location or place where flammable fuels are stored or kept on a property such as:

- Fuel tanks (diesel, petrol or similar)
- Gas bottles or LPG tanks
- Drums or containers of fuel or oil
- Areas to dispense or transfer fuel
- Fuel stored for machinery, generators or pumps

Plantation

Land planted with pine, eucalypt or other commercial trees (excludes orchards and vineyards).

Managed Land

Land that is actively used for agriculture, viticulture, horticulture, or similar purposes.

Unmanaged Land

Land that is not actively used, and where active fuel reduction is not occurring.

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What is a Low Fuel Zone?

A Low Fuel Zone is an area around buildings, fuel storage areas and other important assets where grass, leaves and other flammable material are kept low and well managed. Separate from firebreaks, Low Fuel Zones provide an extra layer of protection by reducing how easily a fire can start, spread or intensify.

They help protect families, livestock and homes by lowering fire intensity, giving firefighters safer conditions to work, and giving people a better chance to leave safely when a bushfire threatens.

The following applies to all properties that require a Low Fuel Zone

- Keep grass trimmed below 10cm
- Lawns to be kept short and green, where possible
- Flammable material reduced and regularly maintained (includes dry grass, leaves and debris)
- Be kept clear of excess flammable material, excluding living trees and shrubs where appropriate
- Be actively maintained for the entire compliance period (not just once off), supported by ongoing reduction such as slashing, baling and grazing

Requirements for Living Plants in a Low Fuel Zone

- Tree crowns are a minimum of 10m apart from one another
- Trees are skirted or pruned up to a height of 2m
- No trees located within 2m of a building (measured from the tree crown)
- Tree branches not hanging over any buildings
- Shrubs to be away from buildings and have a clear gap at a distance of 3 times its height at maturity (measured from the shrub crown)
- No elevated dead material within the crowns of all trees and shrubs

The following example illustrates the recommended practice for a Category 2 property to achieve a Low Fuel Zone

House *Trees & Shrubs* *Shed*

