

Preparing for bush fire in Lake Macquarie



Living with bush fire

Almost 60 per cent of Lake Macquarie City is covered in bushland

Bush fires are an integral part of the Australian environment, but when they burn out of control or near populated areas, they can pose a serious threat to the community and ecosystems.

It is important to plan and prepare for bush fire now, even if you don't live next to bushland. About 90 per cent of homes destroyed by bush fire are lost due to 'ember attack' - embers blown ahead of the fire front that catch alight when they land.

Preparing a Bush Fire Survival Plan is one of the most effective ways to be ready.

What can I do?



Download Fires Near Me app
on your smartphone



Have a Bush Fire Survival Plan ready
and be prepared



Keep Asset Protection Zones clear
of vehicles and other equipment



Chat to your neighbours
about preparing for bush fire



Prepare and maintain your property
to reduce the threat of bush fire on you
and your home



Volunteer your time
with the NSW Rural Fire Service



Join a local Community Fire Unit team
supported by Fire & Rescue NSW



Stay informed and be prepared



Council's responsibilities

The District Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2020 covers all of Lake Macquarie. It identifies assets at risk and outlines treatments to reduce the risk of bush fire. The plan can be found online ccbfmc.org.

Under the plan, Council is responsible for reducing the risk of bush fire to community assets and the environment. This includes:

✔ Asset Protection Zones (APZs)

Fuel-reduced areas between homes and bushland. Council maintains nearly 200 APZs across the city, measuring more than 71km.

✔ Fire trails

Council manages over 12km of fire trails across the city to help firefighters access and fight wildfires. These trails also provide containment options for hazard reduction works.

✔ Hazard reduction burns

Planned and undertaken in partnership with NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire & Rescue NSW to reduce fuel loads in bushland areas.

✔ Development controls

Development applications located in bush fire-prone areas are subject to higher construction standards to reduce bush fire risk.

✔ Community Engagement

Council engages with the community to provide understanding of bush fire risk and help the community better prepare for bush fires. Council bush fire officers also consult directly with residents and neighbours about identified risks and hazards.

FAQs

Can I clear vegetation from the public bushland reserve next to my property?

No. You can't clear native vegetation outside your property. If you believe there is a significant bush fire risk adjacent to your property, contact Council or NSW RFS to complete a bush fire assessment.

My neighbour's property is overgrown and is a bush fire risk to my property. What can I do?

Contact NSW RFS [online](http://rfs.nsw.gov.au). An officer will inspect and assess the area.

It's been years since authorities did a hazard reduction burn. How often are they done?

Authorities have a planned burning program in place that considers natural fire cycles. Frequent burning can be detrimental to ecosystems and encourages the growth of invasive plant species, creating higher fuel loads.

Can I conduct my own hazard reduction burn?

Visit rfs.nsw.gov.au for details about hazard reduction burning on private land, and required approvals.

What is a Total Fire Ban day and what does it mean?

On a Total Fire Ban day, no fire may be lit in the open, including incinerators and solid fuel barbecues, and all fire permits are suspended. No general-purpose welding, grinding, soldering or gas cutting can be done in the open. Electric and gas barbecues may be used under supervision by an adult as long as they are at least 2m from combustible materials, and a continuous water supply is available.

Resources

Visit the [NSW RFS website](#) for fact sheets and videos that can help you and your family prepare for bush fire season.

- ✓ [Prepare a Bush Fire Survival Plan and check your plan](#)
- ✓ [Prepare your home](#)
- ✓ [Prepare yourself and your family](#)
- ✓ [AIDER program](#) – Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents
- ✓ Be aware of [neighbourhood safer places](#) in your area as a last resort
- ✓ Refer to Council's [Control of Open Burning Policy](#) if burning piles of vegetation on private land.

Want to know more?

Lake Macquarie City Council

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NSW 2284
4921 0333
council@lakemac.nsw.gov.au
lakemac.nsw.gov.au

NSW Rural Fire Service

1300 060 807
[Report a bush fire hazard](#)
webmaster@rfs.nsw.gov.au
rfs.nsw.gov.au

Fire & Rescue NSW

9265 2999
info@fire.nsw.gov.au
fire.nsw.gov.au

Bush Fire Information Line

1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)

