

Ensuring our school is bushfire ready

The new Australian
Fire Danger Rating
System is now
in place.

www.cfa.vic.gov.au/afdrs



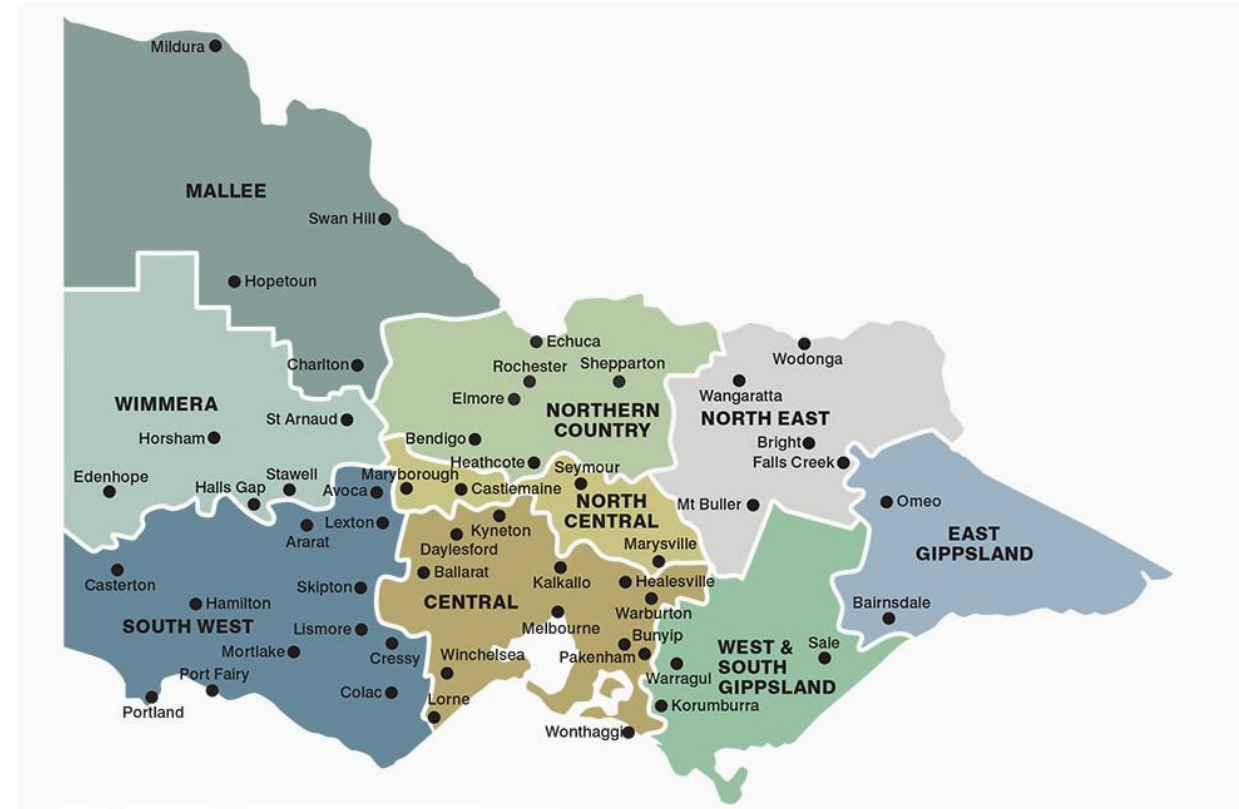
Presentation Overview

1. Forecasts and general bushfire information
2. Our fire risk and actions
3. How our school has prepared for the fire season
4. What can you do to prepare
5. Frequently asked questions
6. Where to find more information

Forecasts and general bushfire information

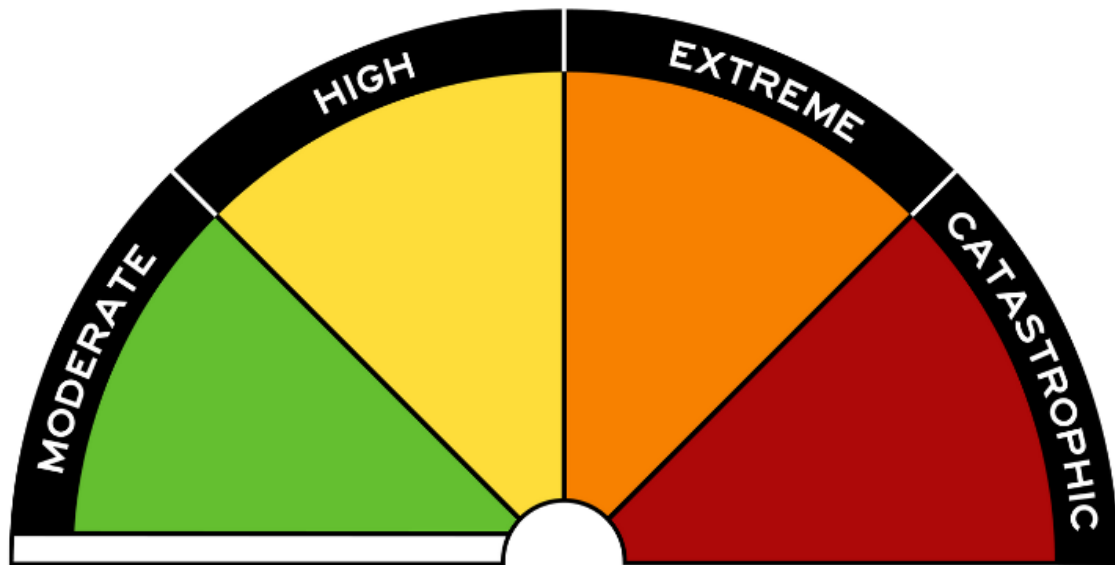
Understanding fire danger forecasts

- Fire danger ratings (FDRs) provide information about the potential level of danger should a bushfire start.
- FDRs are calculated by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) for fire weather districts using a combination of weather forecasting and information about vegetation in the landscape that could fuel a fire.
- Victoria has 9 fire weather districts, which are based on municipal council boundaries. Our school is in the **Central** fire weather district.
- The BoM will publish the fire danger rating 4-day forecast on their website during the fire season, but these forecasts are subject to change.



Understanding fire risk and fire danger ratings

- The ratings provide information so that people can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires.
- It is important, especially during the fire season, to stay up to date with conditions, monitor your surroundings and tune in to official sources for warnings.
- From the 2022-23 fire season, Victoria will be using the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System which has 4 ratings; Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic.



Catastrophic

For your survival,
leave bush fire risk areas

Extreme

Take action now to protect your life and property

High

Be ready to act

Moderate

Plan and prepare

On **No Rating** days, no action is required because the risk of a dangerous fire is very low.

The Bushfire At-Risk Register and Category 4

The Department of Education worked with the CSIRO to develop the *Victorian Education Facilities Fire Risk Methodology*, which is used to assess the fire risk of all early childhood and school education facilities each year.

- **The Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR)**

The schools and facilities in Categories 0-3 are at the highest risk of being impacted by fire in the landscape and are included on the BARR. The BARR functions as a triaged risk register to support preparation for, and response to, the annual fire season.

- **Category 4**

Schools and facilities that are at some risk of fire pre-emptively close in response to days of Catastrophic fire risk. These sites are at a the lower level of risk than those on the BARR.

Our school is a Category 1 school.

Our school's fire risk and actions

Our fire risk and actions

Our school is a Category 1 School.

We will enact our pre-emptive action plan to **relocate to Kangaroo Ground Primary School** on days forecast as a **Extreme** fire danger rating in our **local government area, Nillumbik**

We will **close** on a day forecast as a **Catastrophic** fire danger rating in the **Central** fire district.

All school bus routes that travel through a **Catastrophic** fire district will be cancelled.

Enacting our pre-emptive actions

Based on the department's Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy our school will enact our pre-emptive action plan on days forecast as an **Extreme** fire danger rating in our **local government area, Nillumbik.**

Conditions can vary significantly across the wider weather district, so using local forecasts helps us to respond appropriately to risks in our local area and maintain stability and educational continuity for our students and school community. This policy is consistent for all schools at high levels of risk and this approach is supported by emergency services.

Relocating on Extreme Fire Danger days

When Christmas Hills Primary School relocates to Kangaroo Ground Primary School on Extreme fire danger days and you want your child to attend school, We ask that all students be taken to Kangaroo Ground Primary School Office.

A staff member from Christmas Hills will be waiting at the Kangaroo Ground PS office. You must sign your child in and out of school on these days.

It's advisable for families to have their own fire danger plan, taking into account their specific circumstances and surroundings.

How will you be advised?

- If our school needs to **enact our pre-emptive action plan to relocate**, or **close on a Catastrophic fire danger day**, we will advise you by **such as Sentral notification or a letter sent home from school**.
- We will try to provide you with advance notice of possible **Extreme or Catastrophic** days when we can, please be aware that the forecast will not be confirmed until closer to the day.

Responding to the advice

- Our families play an important role in enacting our bushfire plans.
- Monitor your communications during the fire season to stay up to date. Follow the instructions provided by the school in these communications.
- Be aware that for days when we will close due to **Catastrophic** fire danger, once the closure has been confirmed by the school, we will not change our plan, even if the forecast changes. This will help limit confusion and provide time for you to make alternative care arrangements for your children.
- Find out more - information on school closure and school bus service cancellations, including advice on re-opening is available from the [department's website](#).

Responding to the advice

If the school is threatened by fire or we have been notified to do so, then students and staff will move to the refuge (Art room), emergency services will be notified and parents/carers will be notified. We ask that no one travel to the school until notified that danger has passed.

Preparing for the fire season

What can you do to prepare

- **Make sure** you understand the fire danger for our area.
- **Review and update** your family's bushfire survival plan, including how your child will be cared for when the school or childcare service is closed due to threat of fire. **Your child should not be left unattended.**
- **Check** that we have your current contact details, including mobile phone number.
- **Keep in touch** with us by reading our newsletters, checking our website, talking to your child's teacher and to others in our school community.
- **Understand** our Emergency Management Plan and your role in keeping the school, its students and staff safe.
- **Talk to your child** about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.
- **Talk to us** including our principal, teachers or school council representatives if you have any concerns.

Make a bushfire plan

- The Country Fire Authority (CFA) provides great resources to support you and your family to plan ahead for the fire season.
- Remember that you don't have to live in the country to be at risk of fire.
- As a member of our school community, we recommend thinking about how you will plan ahead for the fire season.
- Taking steps to get prepared before the fire season means you know what to do when you're at risk of fire.
- Visit Your Bushfire Plan to use the CFA's resources at:
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/your-bushfire-plan>

Frequently asked questions

Frequently asked questions

If I'm concerned about the risk of fires, can I keep my child away from school, even if the school remains open?

Yes. If your family decides to enact its bushfire survival plan, the most appropriate place for your child may be with you and your family, and not at school.

Talk to us about your family's bushfire plan ahead of the fire season. You should also advise the school as soon as possible of your child's absence if your plan is enacted.

What happens if the Extreme or Catastrophic forecast improves?

The final decision to relocate to KGPS on an Extreme fire danger day or close our school due to a **Catastrophic** fire danger day school will be made the day prior to the planned closure.

Any improvements in the weather forecast after this time will not change the decision to close or relocate.

This will help limit confusion and provide time for parents to make alternative care arrangements for your children.

Frequently asked questions

When the school is closed, will any staff remain on-site?

No. The safety of staff and students is our main priority, and no staff will remain on-site, and all other visitors and contractors will also not be allowed on site.

Is it possible that schools will be closed for consecutive days?

It is possible that our school will be closed for consecutive days. If this occurs, keep up to date via our communications.

We will be closed on **all** forecast **Catastrophic** days.

In addition to our communications, you can also check the Department's website for updates.

Frequently asked questions

What do we do when our LGA has a different fire danger rating to the wider fire weather district?

As we respond to local conditions, there may be days during the fire season when our fire weather district, **Central** is forecast as an **Extreme** fire danger rating, but our LGA is at a lower level of fire danger. **On these days, our school operations will continue as normal,** however we will be taking action in line with fire services advice by:

- checking our Emergency Management Plan and taking any necessary preparedness actions
- actively monitor our local conditions and warnings
- having plans and procedures in place for if a fire starts to support us to take immediate action.

We encourage our school community to consider their own [bushfire survival plan](#) and reassess any travel through bushfire risk areas. We encourage you to follow your family bushfire survival plan and the advice of emergency services.

There may also be days where our LGA is forecast as **Extreme** fire danger, but **Central** is not. On these days **we will enact our pre-emptive action plan.**

Where to find more information



Department
of Education

Further information

The Department of Education:

The department's Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy guides our activities.

It is available online at: [Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/bushfire-and-grassfire-preparedness-policy)

Country Fire Authority (CFA):

- [Plan & Prepare | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)
- [Your Guide to Survival | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)
- [Fire Ready Kit | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)

Other sources:

- VicEmergency is a great source for information, advice and warnings. You can access it via:
 - The VicEmergency app – that can be downloaded on your android and iOS mobile devices
 - Website <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
 - VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
 - Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency>)
 - Twitter (<https://twitter.com/vicemergency>)
- Tune into your emergency broadcasters such as the ABC local radio, Sky News and others.

**Thank you for attending our
bushfire preparedness
presentation.**

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