

WELLINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL

Fire Prevention Guide

Burning Off

Check current restrictions

Before you light a fire in the open air, it is your responsibility to check if it's the [Fire Danger Period](#) for Wellington, or a [Total Fire Ban](#) day for West & South Gippsland District.

Restrictions outside the Fire Danger Period

If you live in a Rural Living Zone or Farming Zone: You do not require a permit to burn on your property. However, you are still required to comply with the Standing Requirements for Every Burn (see over page).

If you live in any other zone, including a Residential Zone: You will require a permit to burn on your property. You must be able to demonstrate that there is no alternative to burning, that smoke is unlikely to cause a nuisance to your neighbours and that the burn can be conducted safely.

If you are unsure which planning zone your property is in, contact our Customer Service Centre on 1300 366 244 for assistance.

To apply for a permit to light an outdoor fire, fill out a *Local Laws 4 (schedule 3) Application for a Permit* available on the Local Laws section of our website.

Restrictions during the Fire Danger Period

If you want to conduct a burn during the [Fire Danger Period](#) you must apply for a burn permit, or notify regardless of the zone you line in. You must demonstrate that there is no alternative to burning and that the burn can be conducted safely.

Wellington Shire Council does not issue burn permits during the Fire Danger Period. You will need to apply for a permit by visiting [Check. Apply. Notify - Fire Permits Victoria](#)

If you wish to start your burn-off immediately (within 2 hours), you can register calling 1800 668 511, however early online registration is preferred.

If you are granted a permit, strict conditions will apply in addition to the Standing Requirements for Every Burn (see over page).

What happens if I don't comply with all the Permit conditions?

If you are granted a permit to burn, it will outline conditions and restrictions that you must comply with. This will include, but is not limited to, carrying the permit at all times, having an adult in attendance at all times while the fire is alight and that the fire is completely extinguished before the person leaves.

If you do not comply with all conditions and restrictions on your permit, you risk a hefty fine, imprisonment for 12 months, or both.

What if I light a fire without a Permit?

Lighting a fire in the open air without a permit during the Fire Danger Period is a criminal offence. It carries penalties of up to \$24,421, imprisonment for 12 months, or both.

Lighting a fire in the open air on a declared Total Fire Ban day, even if you hold a permit, is a serious criminal offence. It carries penalties of up to \$48,824, imprisonment for 2 years, or both.

There are other activities such as welding and use of farm machinery that may be restricted or banned during the Fire Danger Period or on Total Fire Ban days.

Refer to the [Can I or Can't I? | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions) website to find out what activities you can and can't do during the Fire Danger Period, and on days of Total Fire Ban: www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions

What am I allowed to burn?

With the required permits, you are allowed to burn grass, stubble, weeds, undergrowth and other dead or dry vegetation associated with normal property maintenance. During the Fire Danger Period, special permits are required to burn items that are not vegetation, such as deceased stock.

You are **not** allowed to burn offensive or toxic materials such as: dangerous goods, plastic, rubber, any petroleum or oil-based materials, paint or paint receptacles, chemicals or glues, batteries or aerosols, painted/treated timber, food waste, fish or other offensive or noxious matter. Burning these materials is strictly prohibited and is a fineable offence.

Standing Requirements for Every Burn

Register your burn with the visiting [Check. Apply. Notify - Fire Permits Victoria](http://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/fire)

Let your neighbours know at least 2 hours before starting a burn

Check weather conditions – do not burn if wind exceeds 10 km per hour (light breeze) or the temperature exceeds 32°C

Make a fire break by clearing at least 3 metres of flammable material around the burn area

While the burn is alight, ensure you have enough people and water on site to control and extinguish the burn safely and effectively

If you fail to meet these requirements you may incur a penalty

Alternatives to burning off

Burning off presents risks and should always be your last choice. Before planning a burn off, consider the following alternatives:

Mulching and Composting – these are ideal ways of reducing your green waste and providing nutrients for your soil and garden.

Council Waste Facilities – you can dispose of your green waste year-round for a small fee or take advantage of our No Fee Green Waste Disposal sessions during November.

Green Waste Pick Up – several private waste and gardening companies offer a green waste pick up and disposal service.

Where do I find more information?

- Visit the CFA website: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- Visit Council's 'Fire' webpage www.wellington.vic.gov.au/fire
- Contact the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer on 1300 366 244 for specific advice



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL
The Heart of Gippsland