

WELLINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL

Fire Prevention Notices Frequently Asked Questions

Why does Council serve Fire Prevention Notices?

Under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, Council has a legal obligation to reduce the community's risk from bushfire. Council's Fire Prevention Officers are authorised to inspect private land and serve Notices directing owners to take necessary hazard reduction works.

Council also has the legal right to do anything necessary to remove a fire hazard on private land and recoup the costs from the owner.

When is the Fire Danger Period?

The Country Fire Authority introduces summer restrictions based on actual risks or conditions. Start and end dates vary between council areas

Visit the CFA's [Warnings and Restrictions](#) for further details.

Why did I receive a Fire Prevention Notice?

A Council Fire Prevention Officer assessed your property for fire hazards and determined that you must reduce hazardous fuel loads on your property.

What do I have to do?

Your Fire Prevention Notice will tell you what "TYPE" of work is required with further details on the back.

In general, all Notices will require you to mow or slash long grass, weeds, or bracken across your entire property as these are responsible for most bushfire spread and intensity.

Occasionally, you will be directed to complete additional work such as clearing a fire break, pruning trees or removing green waste. It is important to read your Notice carefully and ensure you understand **all** the work required.

What if I have already cut my grass since the inspection date?

There is often a small delay between our inspections and the service of Fire Prevention Notices. If you have already carried out **all** works specified on the Notice since the date we inspected, then you don't need to worry.

Just ensure you monitor and maintain reduced hazard conditions on your property for the duration of the Fire Danger Period.

Can I remove trees and shrubs?

A planning permit is normally required to remove native trees and shrubs. In some circumstances you may be able to remove vegetation without a permit for bushfire protection under the 10/30 and 10/50 rules.

Contact Council's Environmental Planner on 1300 366 244 to check if these rules apply to your property.

What if I have stock on my land or plan to cut it for hay?

If you intend to cut your paddock for hay, put stock on your paddock or carry out other works, contact the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer and inform us of your intentions before the completion date on your Notice.

You may still be required to cut a fire break or complete other works as directed.

What if I disagree with my assessment?

You can submit an appeal in writing to the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer before the due date on your Notice.

Can I have an extension?

Any requests to extend the due date of your Notice must be submitted in writing to the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer before the due date on your Notice. You must have a valid reason to explain why additional days are needed.

Requests can be submitted by emailing enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au

Can I burn off during fire season?

If you want to conduct a burn during the Fire Danger Period, you will need to apply for a burn permit from [Notify of a burn-off or the start of permit activity - 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.

What if I think my neighbour's land is a fire hazard?

Contact Council if you are concerned about a property. A Fire Prevention Officer will inspect the property and if they deem it a fire hazard, the owner(s) will be served a Fire Prevention Notice.

Our fire prevention inspection program is focused on reducing hazardous fuel loads. If the reported fire hazard is a single tree or is just unsightly, it is unlikely a Fire Prevention Notice will be served.

What about the Crown land/Parks land near my property?

We cannot serve Notices to statutory bodies such as State Government agencies. If you have a concern about potential fire hazards on Crown land, contact the agency that manages the land

What about snakes?

Snakes in the country are a fact of life. They are a protected species and cannot be managed under fire prevention regulations.

If you encounter a snake contact Customer Service on 1300 366 244 who can put you in touch with a local snake catcher.

Where do I find more information?

- Visit Council's 'Fire' webpage www.wellington.vic.gov.au/fire
- Contact the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer on 1300 366 244 for specific advice
- Visit the CFA's 'Prepare your Property' webpage www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property



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The Heart of Gippsland