

Bushfire Risk

Bushfires are a natural part of the Australian landscape and are likely to happen every summer. Here in Western Australia significant bush fires have resulted in loss and damage in areas such as Yarloop, Parkerville, Margaret River, Northcliffe and Roleystone. Unfortunately, bush fires can start suddenly and without warning. Whether you live on a rural or urban property in the City of Cockburn, the impact of a bushfire is often in your hands. What matters is how you prepare yourself, your family and your property. Properties most at risk are a lot like this home, where bush land or vegetation is within 20 metres of the building. Vegetation from parks, median strips or reserves in the vicinity of your home, also creates a high risk for flames. Most homes destroyed in a bush fire are from an ember attack. Burning embers carried by strong winds land on materials that can easily burn. Like vegetation or leaf litter close to the house. When the vegetation catches fire, it causes direct flame and radiant heat reducing a building survivability from a bushfire. If your plan is to stay and defend your home from the flames there are some simple precautions you can take by creating a 20 meter circle of safety around your home. This is done by cutting long grass, raking up leaf litter under trees and pruning lower tree branches. Also make sure you prune trees that are not overhanging your house or within 2 metres of external walls. You can also create a firebreak by clearing a 3 meter wide strip of vegetation along the boundary of your property. And make sure you keep your roof gutter clear of leaves and install ember screening on evaporative air conditioners and block any gaps including underfloor spaces, in the roof space, under eaves and skylights. For more information on defending your home a go to www.cockburn.wa.gov.au You can also visit the DFES website.