NSW RFS BUSH FIRE
HOUSEHOLD ASSESSMENT TOOL

Are you Prepared?

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Why rebuilt the household assessment tool

- Original tool built in response to Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission

- Feedback from the existing tool
  - Many residents find it difficult to interpret risk
  - Some questions were difficult to understand

- Provide one model suitable for all NSW RFS bush fire exposure calculations
Existing advice

- Difficult to adapt to specific circumstances
- Not all considerations adequately covered
- In particular, mental aspects poorly understood
- Perception that partial adoption is OK
Considerations for the resident

- The probability of house survival is increased if the residents stay and defend

- Defending a home risks the life of the resident

- Existing literature verifies increased preparedness decreases risk to life and property
The new model

- House construction standard
- Exposure
- Capacity to defend
- Safe to shelter in place
- Prepared to exposure
- Safe to stay and defend
Why are so many questions needed?
There are many elements to being prepared
Welcome to the NSW RFS Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool. This tool is designed to help you make an informed decision regarding your plan to 'Leave Early or Stay and Defend' for this bush fire season.

Please enter your address and contact details. This information will be used to evaluate your bush fire risk and send you the details of this assessment. It will not be used by NSW Rural Fire Service for any other purpose.

House Address:

55 Winchester Avenue, Lindfield NSW 2070  
[Show on Map]

Email Address: 

[Enter Email Address]
Where is the greatest risk?
Bush Fire Danger Assessment

The results below have been calculated to assess the fire danger for your location based on mapped information. Are they correct? You can modify any answers that are incorrect to show the relationship between your house and the bush fire hazard that poses the greatest risk. Remember that your greatest risk may not be the vegetation closest to your house, it may be the slope behind your house.

What is your council area?
- Ku-ring-gai

What type of bush/grass poses the greatest risk to your home?
- Forest

Where is the bush/grass in relation to your house?
- Downslope
- Flat
- Upslope

How steep is the land between your house and the bush/grass?
- 8 degrees

What is the distance between your house and the bush/grass?
- 25 meters

Continue
Bush Fire Danger Assessment

The results below have been calculated to assess the fire danger for your location based on mapped information. Are they correct? You can modify any answers that are incorrect to show the relationship between your house and the bush fire hazard that poses the greatest risk. Remember that your greatest risk may not be the vegetation closest to your house, it may be the slope behind your house.

What is your council area?
Ku-ring-gai

What type of bush/grass poses the greatest risk to your home?
Forest

Where is the bush/grass in relation to your house?
- Downslope
- Flat
- Upslope

What is the distance between your house and the bush/grass?
25 meters
Bush Fire Danger Assessment

The results below have been calculated to assess the fire danger for your location based on mapped information. Are they correct? You can modify any answers that are incorrect to show the relationship between your house and the bush fire hazard that poses the greatest risk. Remember that your greatest risk may not be the vegetation closest to your house, it may be the slope behind your house.

What is your council area?

Ku-ring-gai

What type of bush/grass poses the greatest risk to your home?

Forest

Where is the bush/grass in relation to your house?

- Downslope
- Flat
- Upslope

What is the distance between your house and the bush/grass?

25 meters
Bush Fire Danger Assessment

The results below have been calculated to assess the fire danger for your location based on mapped information. Are they correct? You can modify any answers that are incorrect to show the relationship between your house and the bush fire hazard that poses the greatest risk. Remember that your greatest risk may not be the vegetation closest to your house, it may be the slope behind your house.

What is your council area?

- Ku-ring-gai

What type of bush/grass poses the greatest risk to your home?

- Woodland

Where is the bush/grass in relation to your house?

- Downslope
- Flat
- Upslope

What is the distance between your house and the bush/grass?

- 25 meters

Continue
Shelter in place

- House construction standard
- Exposure
  - Radiant Heat
  - Direct Flame Contact
  - Ember Impact
- Safe to shelter in place
Stay or Leave Advice: LEAVE EARLY

Based on the information you have provided, the potential fire exposure is too high for you to be able to safely stay and defend your property. Your only option is to leave early.

For more information, please read the following links:

Leaving Early factsheet
Bush Fire and your Home
Household Construction

If you are unsure, continue the assessment using a low level of bush fire specific protection measures. Check with your local Council if you want to know if bush fire specific measures were required when your house was built.

What year was your house constructed?

- [ ] Before 2002
Household Construction

If you are unsure, continue the assessment using a low level of bush fire specific protection measures. Check with your local Council if you want to know if bush fire specific measures were required when your house was built.

What year was your house constructed?
- After 2010

To what level?
- BAL-29
Household Construction

If you are unsure, continue the assessment using a low level of bush fire specific protection measures. Check with your local Council if you want to know if bush fire specific measures were required when your house was built.

What year was your house constructed?
- After 2010
- [ ]

To what level?
- BAL-12.5
- [ ]

Based on your selection, your house does not conform to a satisfactory construction standard for bush fire protection. Your property cannot provide adequate protection for you to safely stay and defend your property. Your only option is to leave early. You can continue to explore this tool to identify ways to better prepare your property in the case of a bush fire or get your final report now.
Expert Workshop

- Online survey results: inconclusive
- Initial workshop aim: to elicit definitions and probabilities
- Revised objective: what it means to be prepared for different exposure to wildfire
Elements of Preparedness

- Personal Capacity
- Available equipment
- Conditions of the ground

Capacity to defend
Personal Capacity

The following questions will help determine whether you are capable of staying and defending your house.

Residents who attempt to defend their property must be aware of the physical and mental demands that the fire will place on them and how this may affect their decision-making processes. The environment in which you will defend your property can be dangerous, with heavy smoke resulting in low visibility, strong winds carrying flying debris, high temperatures and loud noise from the fire.

How would you rate your physical health?
- Good
- Poor

How would you rate your physical stamina to defend your property from a bush fire for several hours, i.e. work in extreme heat and smoke?
- Good
- Poor

How would you rate your mobility?
- Good
- Poor

How would you rate your mental capacity to endure the conditions of a fire?
- Good
- Poor

How would you rate your ability to make decisions under the stress of defending your property from a bush fire for several hours?
- Good
- Poor
How many residents will be defending the property in the event of a bush fire?
- One  
- Two or more

Will the resident responsible for defending the property also have responsibility for any human dependents, i.e. young, elderly or disabled?
- Yes  
- No

Can you include a leave early option in your Bush Fire Survival Plan for residents that are not capable of defending the property i.e. young, elderly or disabled?
- Yes  
- No

Will the resident responsible for defending the property also have responsibility for any animal dependents, i.e. commercial stock, horses, domestic pets?
- Yes  
- No

Can the animal dependents be moved away from areas of bush fire risk?
- Yes  
- No

Do you have a bush fire survival plan?
- Yes  
- No

Does the resident with the primary responsibility for defending the property have experience or detailed knowledge of defending property during a bushfire?
Bush Fire Household Assessment Tool

Personal Details

Bush Fire Danger

Household Assessment

Report

1. Is your property protected?
   - Yes  
   - No

2. Does the property have multiple points where water can be accessed?
   - Yes  
   - No

3. Does the property have spare hoses kept indoors?
   - Yes  
   - No

4. Does the property expect to have reliable mains water during the course of a bushfire?
   - Yes  
   - No

5. What type of enclosed water pump does the household have?
   - None  
   - Electric  
   - Petrol  
   - Diesel

6. Does the property have an independent water supply of more than 10,000L?
   - Yes  
   - No

7. Do the structures have gutters?
   - Yes  
   - No

8. Is there 10L of drinking water per person defending the property?
   - Yes  
   - No
**Grounds Condition**

The following questions will help determine if your property is adequately prepared for you to be able to stay and defend your property.

Your garden landscaping can have a significant influence on whether your home will survive in a bush fire. Selecting appropriate elements can not only reduce the risk of a fire starting on your property, but can also improve your ability to safely attempt to defend your property from a bush fire.

This preparation is important to your house surviving whether you decide to stay and defend or leave early.

Are dry lawns present within 1m of the house?
- Yes
- No

Are there any wooden sleepers in gardens within 1m of the house?
- Yes
- No

Is there leaf or bark mulch in gardens within 2m of the house?
- Yes
- No

Are there shrubs near to or touching wooden or glass features of the house?
- No
- Adjacent Brick
- Adjacent Timber or Glass

Are there any brushwood fences within a distance of 3 x the height of the...
Are all questions equal?
**Prepared to exposure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal ability</th>
<th>Flame Zone</th>
<th>RH Zone</th>
<th>Ember Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good physical health to work in a fire environment, see section 3.1</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility to move capably around the property unassisted</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical ability to work in an environment with heavy smoke from wildfires</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental ability to endure dangerous conditions</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical stamina to work for at least 6 hours</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stay or Leave Advice: **Safe to Stay and Defend**

Based on the information you have provided about your bush fire risk, you are prepared and have the tools to safely stay and defend your property.

During the assessment you agreed to take additional actions to prepare your house for a bush fire. Please review and print the to do list. If you do not undertake all of these actions you will need to reconsider your ability to stay and defend your property.

**To Do List**

Please read the following information to ensure you have considered what is required to safely stay and defend your property:

**Staying and Defending factsheet**

**Bush Fire and your Home**
TO DO LIST

- Include a leave early option in your Bush Fire Survival Plan for residents that are not capable of defending the property i.e. young, elderly or disabled.
- Include plans for your animals in your Bush Fire Survival Plan.
- Ensure your lawns are watered and mown on high fire danger days.
- Replace wooden sleepers with non-combustible materials such as brick or stone within 1m of the house.
- Remove leaf or bark mulch from gardens within 2m of the house.
- Remove shrubs near or touching the house.
- Replace brushwood fencing with a non-combustible fence material within 6m of the house.
- Move doormat inside house.
- Move outdoor furniture away from the house or deck.
- Store gas bottle in the garage.
- Make sure the pressure relief valve on LPG cylinders face outwards (so a flame wouldn't be directed towards the house).
- Move flammable to structures that are more than 6m from the house.
- Clean leaves and twigs from underfloor or underdeck areas.
- Cut back any overhanging trees or shrubs and dispose of cuttings appropriately.
- Clean leaves from the roof, gutters and downpipes.
What next?

- Final testing and feedback
- Rollout as part of new public website
- Let the community know

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