

# CFS FACT SHEET - FIRE DANGER DAYS



**Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning, and can travel very fast. It's important that you use triggers to warn you of the potential for danger before a bushfire even starts.**

Three factors determine bushfire ignition and behaviour: weather, fuel and topography. Topography is fixed, but weather varies by the season and even by the day – and this can effect whether fuel burns easily.

Most days during summer are hot enough for fire (bad fires can burn well in 25 °C) and the lack of rain will have dried out the fuel. This is the time when the risk of fire is high, so the CFS declares this period as the Fire Danger Season. Hot, dry days become very dangerous when high wind and low humidity are added into the mixture. These are recognised as fire danger days.

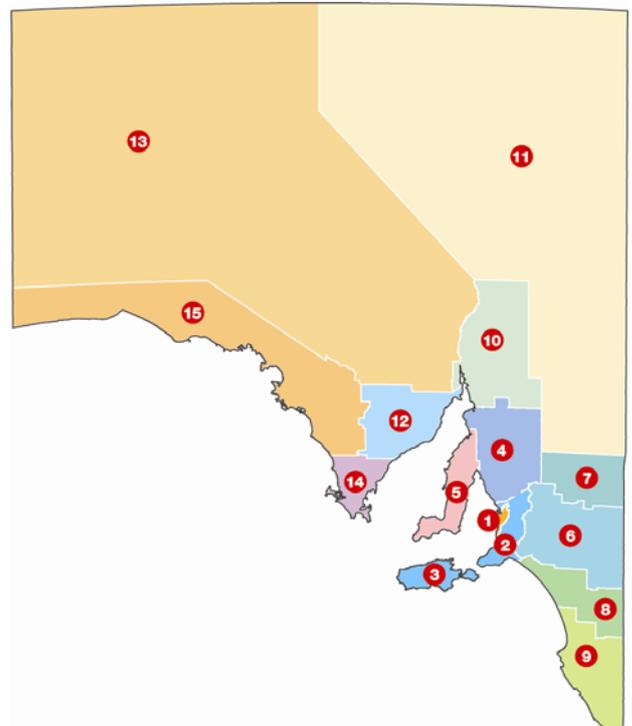
## Fire Danger Season

The Fire Danger Season (FDS) generally runs from November to April, but the exact dates vary according to the dryness of the soil and vegetation, which is monitored by the CFS. During the season restrictions, which are set by law, are placed on lighting fires to reduce the chance of bushfires starting. You must apply for a permit to light fires outdoors at this time, unless it is of a type prescribed in the Fire and Emergency Services Act and Regulations.

## Fire Ban Districts

South Australia is divided into 15 fire ban districts. Each district has its own **fire danger season dates**, so it is important to be aware of which district you live or work in.

Map Ref	Fire Ban District
1	Adelaide Metropolitan Area
2	Mount Lofty Ranges
3	Kangaroo Island
4	Mid North
5	Yorke Peninsula
6	Murraylands
7	Riverland
8	Upper South East
9	Lower South East
10	Flinders
11	North East Pastoral
12	Eastern Eyre Peninsula
13	North West Pastoral
14	Lower Eyre Peninsula
15	West Coast



# Fire Danger Rating

To help you assess your level of bushfire risk and action to take, it is important that you understand the Fire Danger Rating.

The rating is forecast each day during the Fire Danger Season to predict how a fire would behave if one started - including how difficult it would be to put out, and what impacts it might have on the community.

The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the more dangerous the fire conditions.

The Fire Danger Rating table below explains what each rating means, and what actions you should take for each level. Take the time to review and understand the chart.

The Fire Danger Rating is not a predictor of how likely a bushfire is to occur, but how dangerous it could be if it did occur. It should be used as an early indicator to trigger your plans.

The Fire Danger Rating is issued after 4pm daily for the following day and is usually broadcast as part of nightly news weather reports. It is also available from the Bureau of Meteorology: [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au), on the CFS website: [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au); or through our mobile phone app.

	Fire Danger Rating	What Does it Mean?	What Should I Do?
 <p><b>Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning</b></p> <p>Watch for signs of fire, especially smoke and flames</p> <p>Know the Fire Danger Rating in your area and be aware of local conditions</p> <p>Have your Bushfire Survival Plan and kit ready</p> <p>Call 000 to report a fire</p> <p>To seek information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen to local radio,</li> <li>go to <a href="http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au">www.cfs.sa.gov.au</a></li> <li>or call the Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)</li> </ul> 	<b>CATASTROPHIC</b> Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire.</li> <li>If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be extremely difficult to control and will take significant fire fighting resources and cooler conditions to bring it under control.</li> <li>Spot fires will start well ahead of the main fire and cause rapid spread of the fire. Embers will come from many directions.</li> <li>Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions.</li> <li>The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>YOU NEED TO ACT NOW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put your survival first and leave bushfire prone areas the night before or early in the day – this is your safest option.</li> <li>Act immediately – do not wait and see</li> <li>Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass;</li> <li>Prepare, know and practise a plan for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you will leave</li> <li>How you will get there</li> <li>What you will do if you cannot leave</li> <li>Where you will go</li> <li>When you will return</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>EXTREME</b> Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are very hot, dry and windy conditions for a bush or grass fire.</li> <li>If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be unpredictable, move very fast and very difficult for fire fighters to bring under control.</li> <li>Spot fires will start and move quickly. Embers may come from many directions.</li> <li>Homes that are prepared to the highest level, have been constructed to bushfire protection levels and are actively defended <b>may</b> provide safety.</li> <li>You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.</li> <li>The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>YOU NEED TO GET READY TO ACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only stay with your property if you are prepared to the highest level. This means your home needs to have been constructed to bushfire protection levels e.g.; enclosed eaves, covers over external air conditioners, metal flyscreens etc.</li> <li>You must be well prepared and able to actively defend your home if a fire starts. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home e.g.; enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc.</li> <li>If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.</li> </ul>
	<b>SEVERE</b> Total Fire Ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are hot, dry and possibly windy conditions for a bush or grass fire.</li> <li>If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be hard for fire fighters to bring under control.</li> <li>Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety.</li> <li>You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>YOU NEED TO BE AWARE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home e.g.; enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc.</li> <li>If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.</li> </ul>
	<b>VERY HIGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a fire starts, it is likely to be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check your Bushfire Survival Plan.</li> </ul>
	<b>HIGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of how fires can start and reduce the risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor conditions.</li> <li>Action may be needed.</li> <li>Leave if necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>LOW - MODERATE</b>			



## Total Fire Bans

During summer, there are many days of high fire risk, when a fire would be hard to control and/or extinguish.

A fire danger rating is determined each day by the Bureau of Meteorology based on a combination of **predicted weather** conditions, which include:

- temperature
- wind speed
- wind direction
- relative humidity
- “curing” (dryness) of the vegetation.

The combination of these conditions is numerically rated from 0 to 100 using a fire danger meter. This rating indicates the degree of difficulty of suppressing a fire under the predicted weather conditions.

A Total Fire Ban is declared on days where the fire danger index is 50 or greater by the CFS Chief Officer.

A Total Fire Ban day can be declared at any time of year and for any fire ban district. The ban stays in place for 24 hours. The CFS releases the information to the media the evening before the Total Fire Ban day to coincide with nightly news broadcasts.

By imposing the ban, the CFS is able to restrict risky activities. Penalties of fines up to \$10,000 and two years’ jail can be imposed if you break the law. On-the-spot fines of up to \$315 may also apply. On a Total Fire Ban day, fires cannot be lit in the open, apart from a very few exceptions.

**The first community warning of bushfire danger may be the declaration of a Total Fire Ban.**

You can make our own judgements about which fire danger conditions. The weather forecast will provide advice about fire weather, such as high temperatures, strong winds and low humidity. You can also sense it when you go outside and feel the heat and dryness in our throats, and see the trees blowing wildly. On these days you should be on high alert and start the actions and processes in your **Bushfire Survival Plans**.

### If you want to know:

- which Fire Ban District you live in,
- what your district’s Fire Season Dates are
- what today’s Fire Danger Rating is
- if today is a Total Fire Ban Day
- what you can and can’t do during the Fire Danger Season or on a Total Fire Ban Day

You can:

- visit the CFS website ([www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)),
- call the Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)
- or download our new mobile phone app