

Backyard Burning Fact Sheet

Under Council's Urban Backyard Burning of Vegetation Policy, burning dead and dry vegetation from routine property maintenance is permitted in certain areas and under certain conditions.

The Bush Fire Danger Period runs from **1 October to 31 March**, however it can be extended by the fire authorities depending on seasonal conditions.

What alternatives are there to burning?

Burning causes fine particles of air pollution and impacts respiratory health. Most residents now have alternative ways to dispose of unwanted garden vegetation, including using a green waste bin, composting, mulching or taking the waste to the Resource Recovery Centre for mulching.

Where is burning allowed?

Across the shire, properties that are 4000 square metres and above are able to burn, provided that the property is not zoned medium density (R3).

The Backyard Burning Map available at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au shows which properties are allowed to burn.

What can be burnt?

Only dead and dry vegetation that comes from the property on which the burn occurs can be burnt. For example, dead leaves, sticks and dry prunings can be burnt. Logs over 15 centimetres in diameter should not be burnt.

Applying for a permit

Under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, permits are required at different times of year depending on whether the fire is in the Rural Fire Service (RFS) zone or the Fire and Rescue zone.


A permit to light a fire must be obtained from RFS or Fire and Rescue.

For fires in Fire and Rescue zones a permit is required all year round. For fires in RFS zones a permit is required during the Bush Fire Danger Period or where a fire is likely to be dangerous to a building.

Contact your local brigade or check the Backyard Burning Map on Council's website to find out which zone you are in.

Before you burn

1. At least 24 hours verbal or written notice must be given to adjoining neighbours and the relevant fire authority for your property. For properties in RFS zones an online form is available at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.
2. Alternatives to burning vegetation and the impact of smoke on neighbours and traffic must be taken in to consideration. This includes considering the wind, weather and how long the fire will burn.
3. Burning is not allowed during a Total Fire Ban or on No Burn Days.
4. A fire permit must be obtained if required from Fire and Rescue or RFS depending on the location of the property.
5. The Rural Fire Services Standard for Pile Burning must be followed. This include information on burning safely such as pile sizes and location of the fire. The Standard can be found at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.
6. An adult must stay with the fire until it is fully extinguished and have enough firefighting resources on hand to safely maintain the fire.



What are the penalties for not following the approval conditions?

Failure to comply with the approval conditions may result in an on-the-spot fine of \$500 for an individual or \$1000 for a corporation. In the event of prosecution, the maximum penalty is \$5500 for an individual and \$11,000 for a corporation.

BBQs and campfires

Having a BBQ or campfire for recreational purposes is exempt from needing Council approval, provided that only dry seasoned wood, liquid petroleum gas (LPG), natural gas or proprietary barbecue fuel is used.

A permit to light a fire is not required for recreational fires that meet the conditions for when a permit is not required found at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au including being in a permanently constructed fireplace, begin two meters clear of combustible materials, completely extinguishing the fire before leaving.

Contact your fire authority for any questions on other types of recreational burning as a permit to light a fire may be required.

Wood heaters

Indoor wood heaters are covered by different standards. Wood heaters are required not to produce excessive smoke. More information on wood heaters can be found at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au.

Agriculture Burning

Burning as part of agricultural activities is exempt from needing Council approval. This includes burning stubble, orchard pruning, diseased crops, weeds or pest animal habitats on farms, pasture for regenerative purposes, or for agricultural clearing other than construction.

However, a permit to light a fire is required all year round for agricultural burning in a Fire and

Rescue zone and during the Bush Fire Danger Period in the Rural Fire Service zone. Steps must also be taken to minimise and prevent air pollution from the fire.

Domestic waste

For properties where no domestic waste service is available, domestic waste is allowed to be burnt.

What situations are not covered by this approval to burn?

Different approvals are required for:

- Burning from land clearing under the 10/50 clearing code. For more information see the RFS website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.
- Burning native vegetation for bush fire hazard reduction or ecological burns. A hazard reduction certificate is required from RFS at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au. NSW Rural Fire Service undertakes an assessment and approval under the *Rural Fires Act*.
- Burning from land clearance. Development consent is required for the clearing of native vegetation which can be obtained from Council at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au.
- Burning from clearing for commercial development or building construction. Development consent must be obtained from Council at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au

More information

Visit Council's website for more information or contact Council on (02) 4868 0888.