








# CAN I OR CAN'T I?

Victoria is one of the most bushfire-prone regions in the world, so we all need to be careful with fire, and things that can start fires, during the warmer months. This brochure details what you can and can't do during declared Fire Danger Periods and on days of Total Fire Ban. Fires in the open air are legally restricted when a Fire Danger Period is declared in a municipality by CFA. These restrictions are in place until 1 May unless revoked earlier. Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) fire restrictions are in force all year in State forests and National, State and Regional parks. Contact local DSE and Parks Victoria offices for advice on campfire restrictions. Total Fire Bans are declared by CFA on days when fires are likely to spread rapidly and be difficult to control. People who are found to have recklessly caused a fire may be exposed to prosecution.



Can I or can't I?	Fire Danger Period	Total Fire Ban Days
<p>Can I have a barbecue, light a campfire or light a fire for warmth or comfort?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The wind is not more than 10kph</li> <li>✓ The fire is lit in a <b>properly constructed fireplace</b> or trench at least 30cm deep</li> <li>✓ The fire is not within 7.5 metres of a log or stump</li> <li>✓ The ground and air space within 3 metres are clear of flammable material</li> <li>✓ The fire and fuel used are the minimum necessary for the purpose and do not occupy an area of more than 1 sq metre</li> <li>✓ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul> <p>Note that in accordance with the CFA Act, a "properly constructed fireplace" means a fireplace that is constructed of stone, metal, concrete or any other non-flammable material so as to contain the perimeter of the fire. A commercially produced barbecue would be considered a properly constructed fireplace.</p>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>Barbecues that are fixed appliances, fired by gas or electricity, and built into permanent structures of brick, stone or concrete, provided that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The area 3 metres around the barbecue is cleared of flammable material</li> <li>✓ You have either a hose connected to a water supply or a vessel with at least 10 litres of water</li> <li>✓ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul> <p><b>YES</b> <b>Gas or electric-fired portable barbecues, provided that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The barbecue is located within 20 metres of your dwelling (portable places of residence such as mobile homes, caravans or tents are not dwellings in accordance with the CFA Act)</li> <li>✓ The area 3 metres around the barbecue is cleared of flammable material</li> <li>✓ You have either a hose connected to a water supply or a vessel with at least 10 litres of water</li> <li>✓ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul> <p><b>NO</b> <b>Campfires, fires for warmth or personal comfort, and solid and liquid-fuel barbecues and ovens are banned during TFB days.</b></p>
<p>I am a caterer. Can I set up and light a fire to operate a barbecue or a spit at outdoor functions?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The wind is not more than 10kph</li> <li>✓ The fire is lit in a <b>properly constructed fireplace</b> or trench at least 30cm deep</li> <li>✓ The fire is not within 7.5 metres of a log or stump</li> <li>✓ The ground and air space within 3 metres are clear of flammable material</li> <li>✓ The fire and fuel used are the minimum required for the purpose and do not occupy an area of more than 1 sq metre</li> <li>✓ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul> <p>(A commercially produced barbecue or spit would be considered a properly constructed fireplace.)</p>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if you have a written permit issued by CFA or MFB and you comply with the conditions of that permit.</b></p> <p>Municipal Fire Prevention Officers cannot issue these permits.</p> <p>Persons or community charitable organisations may apply for permission to light a fire to prepare meals for other people in the course of a business. These permits are issued by - and at the discretion of - local CFA Regional offices or MFB Zone offices.</p>
<p>Can I light a fire in the open air for burning off grass, stubble, weeds, undergrowth or other vegetation?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ You have a written permit issued by the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer or by the CFA Regional office</li> <li>✓ You comply with the conditions of that permit</li> <li>✓ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul> <p>Many councils ban burning off on smog alert days.</p>	<p><b>NO</b> Fires in the open air for burning off grass, scrub, stubble or rubbish are banned during TFB days.</p> <p>Any permits issued by Municipal Fire Prevention Officers are suspended for the duration of any TFB day.</p>
<p>Can I drive a vehicle in places where the vehicle will be in contact with crops, grass, stubble, weeds, undergrowth or other vegetation?</p>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if the vehicle is fitted with an efficient silencing device that takes all of the exhaust from the engine through the silencing device.</b></p> <p>You should avoid driving vehicles through dry vegetation in hot and dry conditions, even if it is not a TFB day, due to the risk posed by the hot exhaust system.</p>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if the vehicle is fitted with an efficient silencing device that takes all of the exhaust from the engine through the silencing device.</b></p> <p>This should be avoided wherever possible, due to the extreme fire danger posed by dry vegetation and very hot exhaust systems.</p>

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<p><b>Can I</b> use an incinerator?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>Provided that</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ You check with council about the local laws that might prescribe conditions, restrict or prohibit incinerator use (eg. bans on smog alert days, certain areas)</li> <li>✔ The fire is effectively restricted within the incinerator</li> <li>✔ The air movement is 10kph or less</li> <li>✔ The area 3 metres around the incinerator is cleared of flammable material</li> <li>✔ A supply of water sufficient to extinguish the fire is available when the fire is burning</li> <li>✔ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.</li> </ul>	<p><b>NO</b> Incinerator use is banned during TFB days.</p>
<p><b>Can I</b> carry out welding, grinding, soldering or gas cutting in the open air?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ A fire-resistant shield or guard is in place to stop sparks, etc</li> <li>✔ An area at least 1.5 metres is cleared of flammable material or wetted down sufficiently to prevent the spread of fire</li> <li>✔ You have a water supply or water spray knapsack containing at least 9 litres of water</li> <li>✔ An adult is there at all times when the fire is alight</li> <li>✔ All cut-offs and hot materials are placed in fire-proof receptacle.</li> </ul>	<p><b>NO</b> Activities such as welding, gas-cutting, soldering, grinding, charring, extracting honey and heating bitumen produce fire and heat and are prohibited during TFB days.</p> <p><b>YES</b> In some circumstances, CFA or MFB will issue a permit to community charitable organisations, statutory corporations, councils, industrial or trade operations or for public entertainment purposes to authorise such activities during TFB days. These permits must come from CFA Regional offices or MFB Zone offices, and may not be issued by Municipal Fire Prevention Officers.</p>
<p><b>Can I</b> use machinery with an internal combustion or heat engine, such as tractors, slashers, excavating or road-making equipment within 9 metres of any crops, grass, stubble, weeds, undergrowth or other vegetation?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>But only if machinery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Is free from faults and mechanical defects that could cause an outbreak of fire</li> <li>✔ Is fitted with an approved spark arrester in working order</li> <li>✔ Carries fire suppression equipment comprising:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a knapsack spray pump, in working order, fully charged with water, with a capacity of not less than 9 litres; or</li> <li>- a water fire extinguisher, in working order, fully charged with water, with a capacity of not less than 9 litres.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Note that tractors fitted with a turbocharger or an exhaust aspirated air cleaner do not require a spark arrester.</p>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>As for the Fire Danger Period.</b> However, if possible, postpone this work, as the risk of starting fires is extremely high.</p>
<p><b>Can I</b> use a chainsaw, plant or grass trimmer or lawn mower?</p> 	<p><b>YES</b> <b>Chainsaws, plant or grass trimmers, or lawn mowers can be used in green vegetation without prescribed conditions.</b></p> <p>Chainsaws, plant or grass trimmers or lawn mowers used in vegetation that is <b>not green</b>, must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Free from faults and mechanical defects that could cause an outbreak of fire</li> <li>✔ Fitted with an efficient spark arrester</li> <li>✔ Have an area of at least 3 metres around the machine cleared of flammable material</li> <li>✔ The operator of the machine must carry the following fire suppression equipment:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a knapsack spray pump, in working order, fully charged with water, with a capacity of not less than 9 litres; or</li> <li>- a water fire extinguisher, in working order, fully charged with water, with a capacity of not less than 9 litres.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>YES</b> <b>As for the Fire Danger Period.</b> However, if possible, postpone this work, as the risk of starting fires is extremely high. Follow the precautions outlined for the Fire Danger Period and use extreme caution.</p>