

EAST KURRAJONG
VOLUNTEER
BUSH FIRE BRIGADE

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Are you prepared for Summer?
- October 2008 Door Knock
- When you can burn
- Stay or go when a bushfire threatens?
- Prepare your home.

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East Kurrajong Volunteer

Bush Fire Brigade



WWW.EKRFS.COM.AU

OCTOBER 2008

We have been busy preparing for Summer. Have you?

It has been some time since we have experienced major bush fires in our local area and we all need to be prepared for what could be a hot and dry summer.

There are a few things in this newsletter that you are able to do to help protect your house from the threat of bushfires and at the same time, help us - the local volunteers.

Have you considered what you should do if fire is approaching? See the articles on "A Well Prepared Property" and "Do I Stay or Go".

We as a brigade have been busy getting ourselves ready for the summer. Due to the weather conditions this year we have not yet been able to carry out any of the local hazard reduction burns that we had planned. Hopefully we will be able to

complete some of the hazard reductions before summer.

We have however used the time to train for the various situations that we may come across such as grass fires, bushfires, motor vehicle accidents, and structural fires. We have



2006 Bell Fires

also trained for emergency turnover procedures should we get caught off guard in a bushfire.

Our Fire Shed extensions are just about to start. We are adding a storage room at the back of the shed to store fire-

fighting equipment. The construction work will be carried out by our volunteer members. These extensions are paid for by our brigade and this has only been made possible by your generous donations. We sincerely thank you for your continued support.

As always, we are on call for any fire-related emergency 24 hours a day. Since January, we have had 13 emergency callouts including motor vehicle accidents, grass fires and house fires.

We are looking for new members, so if you think you might like to join the brigade and help out your local community, please phone or just drop into the shed.

East Kurrajong Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

CAPTAIN: Ray Griffiths
SENIOR DEPUTY CAPTAIN: Lindsay Brown
PRESIDENT: David Donnelly

FIRE CONTROL CENTRE: Macquarie St Wilberforce Phone: (02) 4560-6400

We are looking for New members. Drop into the East Kurrajong Fire Station on a Saturday from 3pm to 5pm or phone (02) 4576-3442 during these hours.

You can also come along to our monthly meetings held on the 2nd Friday of each month at 8pm at the fire shed.

2006 Members



Hawkesbury High School Visit

In March this year we sent a crew with our larger truck (EK1) to Hawkesbury High School to help them celebrate their 25th Anniversary.

It was a day of fun for all with students getting to have a look over the truck and they were able to "squirt a fire hose" as well.



"..ultimately the protection of your property comes down to you."

A Well Prepared Property

While a variety of factors come together to increase the risk of bush fire in your area, ultimately the protection of your property comes down to you.

A well-planned garden that is regularly maintained and does not contribute to the spread of bush fires around your home is vitally important. Part of your responsibility for protecting your property may be the establishment of an Asset Protection Zone (APZ), an area surrounding your house where fuel has been reduced to a level that will no longer support bush fires.

You should take steps to protect your house and garden well in advance of bush fire season, and keep up the maintenance work all year round.

Remove excess fuel such as:

- * Clear gutters of leaf litter
- * Mow long and/or dry grass
- * Prune low tree branches 2m from the ground
- * Tidy the woodpile, leaves, bark and branches
- * Sweep/rake up all plant material
- * Recycle paper, cardboard and unused chemicals
- * Clean area under house

Apply safety measures such as:

- * Firmly fix roofing so hot embers cannot enter roof
 - * Install screens or shutters to windows, and enclose underfloor areas
 - * Direct relief valve on LPG tank away from house
 - * Position portable pump near large water source
 - * Install gate valve to water tanks (38mm Storz coupling)
 - * Prepare firebreaks
- Perhaps now is the time to review your house and contents insurance?

We're now on the web

Did you know we are now online? We have managed to set up a new website.

On it you will load of information about our brigade and the people we have in it as well as safety information and links to other useful sites such as the NSW RFS site. Please take the time to have a look. You will find this newsletter, past newsletters and a lot more on the site.

Our website is www.ekrfs.com.au.



Can I burn that pile?



The statutory Bush Fire Danger Period runs from 1st October to 31st March. If you are planning to light a fire in the open during this time, you will need a permit. If in doubt, call Hawkesbury Fire Control on 4560-6400.

Depending on the type of fire, a permit may be required all year round or only during the Bush Fire Danger Period. For example, a Fire Permit is required at all times if a fire is likely to be dangerous to a building.

How do I obtain a fire permit?

To obtain a fire permit contact Hawkesbury Fire Control or the council. If required, your local fire authority will arrange an inspection by a Permit Issuing Officer. If environmental approval is required, you must have this approval prior to requesting a fire permit. This will ensure that conditions on the fire permit are consistent with the conditions of the environmental approval.

When is my fire permit not valid?

Even if you have a fire permit, burning may not be allowed at certain times. Fire permits will be suspended or cancelled:

- on days of 'Very High Fire Danger' or 'Extreme Danger';
- when conditions on the fire permit cannot be met e.g. on a declared No Burn Day;
- when directed by an authorised officer; or
- during a Total Ban.

Farewell to Austin

On a sad note, one of our life members Austin Buttsworth passed away last year. He was a dedicated member and was awarded life membership in November 1984.

Austin was in the brigade for many years and was Captain in the 70's and 80's.

Life Members

Our brigade has this year awarded two of our existing volunteers (Lindsay Brown and Alan Bates) "Life Membership" of our brigade. We now have a total of 8 life members.

Lindsay Brown joined the brigade as a teenager with his dad. He has been in the brigade for over 30 years and is currently the Senior Deputy Captain.

Alan Bates joined the brigade in 1979 and just after joining was sent to major fires at Mt Wilson. Alan is still an active and highly regarded member of the brigade.

We congratulate and thank these two for their help in the community.



Summer is just around the corner

With summer of course comes thoughts of swimming and fun in the pool or dam, or nearby river, or even the beach. Are you prepared "just in case"?

The quicker your reaction, the better a child has of surviving a near drowning.

Managing a Near Drowning

1. Assess the scene – make sure it's safe for you to go in.
2. Lift casualty out of the water.
3. Carry casualty with the head LOWER than the chest.
4. Follow the steps of **DRABC**
5. Call an ambulance or take the casualty to hospital even if they've recovered (you never know what's in the water).
6. Remove any wet clothing and cover the casualty with a dry towel or blanket.
7. Monitor condition and be ready to treat for shock. It may happen after a little time.
8. Reassure and place the casualty in a comfortable position laying down

Don't forget Santa

Each Year on the Saturday before Christmas, Santa jumps on the back our East Kurrajong Fire trucks and delivers lolly bags to all the good children. Keep an ear out on the 20th December for the fire truck

Poisons Information Centre

Telephone 13 11 26

Local Police

Richmond 4578-1444
Windsor 4560 -6999

First Aid Courses

Accidental 1300 130 385
Australian Red Cross 13 14 45
St John Ambulance 1300 360 455
Survival 1800 815 928

East Kurrajong Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

1088 East Kurrajong Road

East Kurrajong NSW 2758

Phone: 4576-3442

E-mail: secretary@ekrfs.com.au

Web: www.ekrfs.com.au



Do I Stay or Go?

Research indicates that a well-prepared home is often the best place to shelter from a fire-front. Most people who die in bush fires die as a result of unplanned last-minute relocations or evacuations.

Bush fires can be chaotic, noisy and frightening experiences. You and your family should carefully weigh up the decision to stay and defend your property against fire, or leave early and relocate to safety. It is vital for each family to make this decision based on their own personal circumstances. Whatever you decide plan for it before the bush fire danger period begins.

Being with your property can often make all the difference because spot fires can be extinguished before they take hold and cause serious damage. However only those who have properly prepared their property and are capable of working quickly before, during and after a fire front has passed should stay behind to protect a property.

Call 000 in an Emergency

Knowing how to call Triple Zero (000) for a fire emergency can be the difference between life and death, or a building or other property being saved or destroyed.

The triple zero (000) service is the quickest way to get the right help from emergency services and should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life threatening or time critical situations.

Calls to '000' are free and can be made from mobile phones, home or work phones or payphones.

The simple steps in making a Triple Zero (000) call to report a fire:

* Stay calm and call Triple Zero '000' from a safe location

* Telstra operator will ask you if you need Police, Fire or Ambulance. Say 'Fire'. If you are calling from a mobile or satellite phone the operator will ask you for other location information

* You will be connected to an Emergency Services Operator to provide more details

* Stay on the line, speak clearly and answer the Operator's questions

* Give them details of where you are including:
Street number, Street name, Nearest cross street Locality

* In rural areas it is important to give the full address and distances from landmarks and roads.

* If travelling on a Motorway or on a rural road, know the direction you are travelling and last exit or town you passed through to assist services to correctly locate the incident.

* Do not hang up until the Operator has all the information they need

* If possible wait outside a pre-arranged meeting point or prominent location for Fire Services to arrive to assist them in locating the fire

Other things everyone should know in an emergency:

If a person is unable to speak English, if they call Triple Zero (000), say "fire" and leave the phone off the hook the call will be recorded and traced and a fire engine will be sent to that address.

Record the Triple Zero (000) emergency number beside the telephone at home and work.

Take time to teach children and overseas visitors how to make an emergency call.

Callers with hearing or speech impairments can call the one zero six (106) text-based emergency call service using a textphone.



Door Knock

On the weekend of the 25th and 26th October our brigade will be conducting our bi-annual door knock appeal. This is one of the only ways we are able to raise money to allow us to purchase much needed equipment and allow us to build the much needed fire shed extensions.

If you are able to help with by donating generously, it would be very much appreciated.

Please note that all donations over \$2 are tax deductible and a tax receipt will be issued to you if you ask.

