

Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan 2023-2026

*A Sub-Plan of the Whittlesea Municipal
Emergency Management Plan*

This Fire Management Sub-Plan is a sub-plan of the Whittlesea Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC) V4.1 and is to be read in conjunction with that document. Terms, acronyms, and references that are defined in the MEMPC are not re-defined in this sub-plan.

Version 13

Full revision May 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The Whittlesea Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung people as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea

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1. Introduction and the Sub-Plan



Fires impose significant social, environmental and economic costs on Victoria including injury and loss of life, damage to property, infrastructure and facilities, financial costs, ecosystem and biodiversity loss, and social and cultural losses.

The impact of climate change, the increasing severity and frequency of major fires and changes in population and demographics all increase the need for a coordinated and collaborative approach to fire management planning. Victoria has emergency management arrangements that require and encourage agencies to work collaboratively alongside all levels of government, community and business before, during and after emergencies.

As a growth Council with its mix of residential, industrial, commercial, woodland and rural land, the City of Whittlesea and the agencies that support it must be focussed on adapting to future challenges including fire related challenges.

The Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Sub Plan (sub-plan) commits to support this and achieve a consistent, effective risk-based approach for fire management planning.

The Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan, the sub-plan, has been established as a multi-agency plan by the Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee, the sub-committee, for the City of Whittlesea municipal area.

This sub-plan has incorporated applicable actions from the Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan and focuses on numerous fire risks which include grass and bushfire impacts as identified using the Victorian Fire Risk Register. The sub-committee ensures all agencies have ownership and responsibility for the Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan. All agencies will work together to understand the risks within the community and the strategies required to mitigate or remove them at the local level.

1.1. Sub-Plan aims, objectives and guiding principles

1.1.1. Aim

The principle aim of fire management is the protection of life, property, environmental and cultural values from the impact of fire.

The aim of this sub-plan is to detail the local arrangements for before, during and after fire incidents within the municipal footprint of the City of Whittlesea.

1.1.2. Objectives

The objectives of the sub-plan are to:

- align with and reflect the regional strategic fire management direction,
- inform and communicate community of the fire management objectives and local arrangements for fire risks in the municipality,
- identify the fire risks which may impact the people, property, the environment and/or sites of aboriginal and cultural significance in the municipality,
- detail the multi-agency approach to manage fire incidents that impact the municipality, before, during and after.

1.1.3. Guiding principles

The principles of the Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee are:

- to ensure that all agencies collaborate in a constructive manner to reduce the risks of fire in the community,
- to engage with the community so that they have the opportunity to actively participate in fire management planning and activities,
- to prevent a fire starting in the rural area of the municipality and spreading into established urban areas of the municipality.

1.2. Sub-Plan maintenance, adoption and endorsement

The Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan is administered, prepared and maintained by the Fire Management Sub-Committee and endorsed by the MEMPC.

A major review of this sub-plan will be undertaken every three (3) years by the sub-committee. Each version review of the sub-plan will specifically focus on the urban growth and development and the impact this has on local fire risks in the municipality. The sub-plan may also be reviewed mid-term as required, such as after a significant local incident.

Following the development of each new version, the proposed draft sub-plan will be tabled on the sub-committee agenda for adoption. Following adoption by the sub-committee, the sub-plan is then tabled with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) for endorsement. Records of sub-plan updates and communication of such to MEMPC members is available from council as part of council's executive officer role and record management practices.

Council maintains all records for the sub-plan via the fire.mangement@whittlesea.vic.gov.au mailbox.

It is each committee members' responsibility to ensure that any hardcopy editions of the plan prepared for their agency is updated upon receipt of an amended version. Organisations with responsibilities within this plan are required to notify council of any changes related to the sub-plan, as they occur. Any minor amendments will result in a new sub version which will be tabled with the sub-committee for adoption.

The current version of the sub-plan is available on the City of Whittlesea Council website: [City of Whittlesea's Role in an emergency - Whittlesea Council](#)

Together with the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC), this sub-plan will also be submitted to the North West Metro Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee and a process of self-assurance will be undertaken in October 2023.

The plan will be maintained on an ongoing basis and endorsed by the MEMPC, to ensure it remains current and reflective of legislative, operational and planning changes and/or amendments during the time between audits.

1.3. Document Amendment Register

This Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan will be amended, maintained and distributed by the Fire Management Sub-Committee and endorsed by the MEMPC, with the City of Whittlesea supporting version control and administration.

Amendments listed below have been included in this sub-plan and MEMPC members are advised of updates and version control.

Amendment Number	Date of Amendment	Amendment Entered By	Summary of Amendment
1.0	2 August 2011	Kris Perkovic	Drafting of initial Whittlesea Fire Management Plan using headings derived from Integrated Fire Management Planning guideline document.
2.0	19 August 2011	Kris Perkovic	Standard model plan developed for use in municipal fire management plans.
3.0	24 August 2011	Kris Perkovic, Lisa Barnett	Additional changes to plan headings and text.
4.0	30 August 2011		Minor text changes
5.0	25 October 2011	Kris Perkovic, Lisa Barnett, Pat Carra	More text changes, incorporation of Roadside Management Plan, updating of multi-agency workplan.
6.0	7 November	Lisa Barnett	Multi Agency work plan updated and inserted. Maps inserted.
7.0	14 November 2011	Lisa Barnett	Minor amendments made as requested by Nerilee Kerlake & Patrick Carra.
8.0	9 February 2012	Lisa Barnett	Minor amendments/additions made to Appendix A.1 & B
9.0	11 April 2012	Lisa Barnett, Kris Perkovic	Multi Agency Workplan removed from Plan, minor amendments to wording in Appendix A.1 & B.1
10.0	22 May 2012	Lisa Barnett	New DELWP maps inserted.
11.0	1 January 2016	David Foster	Minor text changes and VBERAP process acknowledged
12.0	28 November 2019	Steve Burgess	Formatting changes. Update dates for referenced Plans. Additional information in Authority of plan, Environmental Scan and Risk Management.
13.0	May 2023	David Foster	Full review and re-write

1.4. Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee

The Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Whittlesea Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee formed under Section 3.2.3 of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan for the management and additional level of planning of fire risks.

1.4.1. Sub-Committee role

The role of the Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee is:

- plan for fire management in a manner that coordinates fire management activities across agencies encompassing before, during and after,
- provide information to and engage with the community on matters related to fire management planning,
- monitor, review and report on fire management issues and the delivery of the Municipal Fire Management Plan,
- advocate to the Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee for municipal fire management needs,
- work with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee to align planning activities,
- provide a municipal level forum to build and sustain organisational partnerships,
- share knowledge and create a common understanding and purpose in fire prevention focused on continuous improvement,
- ensure that the plans of individual agencies complement the work required,
- coordinate fire management activities across agencies and asset owners.

The sub-committee ensures all agencies have ownership and responsibility for the Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan. All agencies will work together to understand the fire risks within the community and the strategies required to mitigate them at the local level.

The sub-committee also receives, guidance, direction and advice from the Northwest Metro Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee (RSFMPSC) and can also escalate issues of concerns for attention or advocacy to the regional or state level via the RSFMPSC.

1.4.2. Sub-Committee membership

The sub-committee has representation from the following organisations:

- City of Whittlesea
 - Municipal Fire prevention Officer (MFPO)
 - Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS)
 - Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO)
 - Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
 - Conservation and Sustainability teams and others as required
- Country Fire Authority
- Parks Victoria
- Fire Rescue Victoria
- Victoria Police
- Department of Transport

2. Local considerations and the municipality



2.1. City of Whittlesea profile

The City of Whittlesea is in Melbourne's north, about 20 kilometres from the central business district. The municipality's southern border is 14.5 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD and the Metropolitan Ring Road provides direct freeway links to airports, docks, and central Melbourne. The municipality is one of the largest in metropolitan Melbourne, covering an area of approximately 489 square kilometres. About 70 percent of the City is rural in area, with the other 30 percent urban.

Whittlesea is among the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria. The municipality's population has grown at a rapid rate during the past 30 years, more than quadrupling from 27,000 in 1969 to approximately 146,000 in 2009. In 2021 it was over 229,000 and is forecast to reach 383,000 people by 2041. Major growth centres are Epping North, Wollert, Donnybrook Mernda and Doreen.

Urban Areas of the Municipality	Rural Areas of the Municipality
Bundoora (split with Darebin and Banyule Councils)	Beveridge (split with Mitchell Shire)
Doreen (split with Nillumbik Shire)	Donnybrook (parts of)
Epping	Eden Park
Donnybrook	Humevale
Epping North	Kinglake West
Lalor	Woodstock
Mernda	Yan Yean (split with Nillumbik Shire)
Mill Park	
South Morang	
Thomastown	
Whittlesea Township	
Wollert	

Table 1: Urban and Rural Areas of the City of Whittlesea

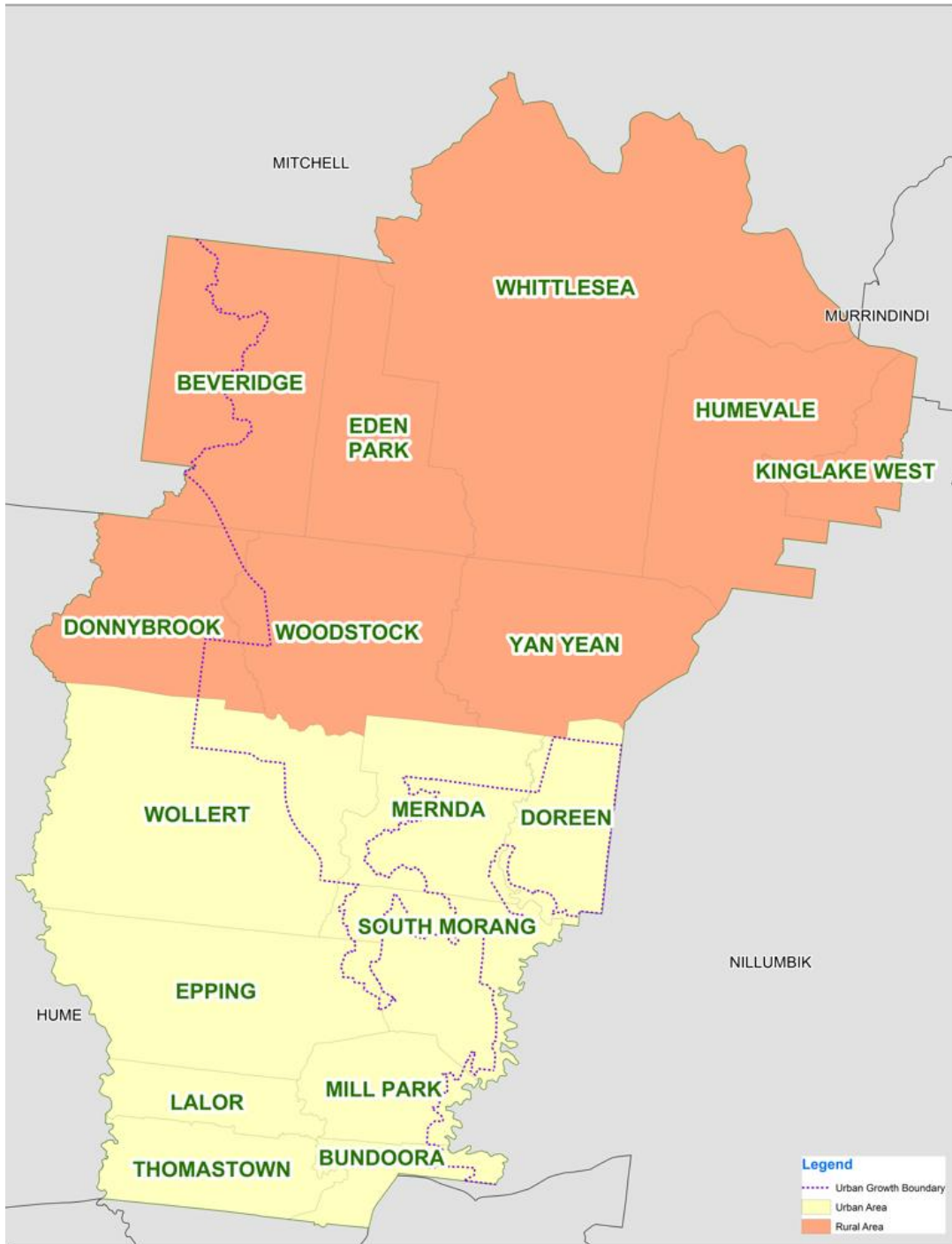


Image 1: Map of the Urban and Rural Areas of the City of Whittlesea

2.1.1. Topography

The municipality has a varied topography from the generally flat urban areas in the south to the rich rural land and bushland in the north and east of the municipality. The Yan Yean and Toorourrong Reservoirs and water supply catchments occupy a substantial portion of the north and east parts of the municipality. The major creeks and streams within the municipality are the Plenty River, Merri and Darebin Creeks.

With 70% of the municipality rural or non-urban, there is a mixture of current uses with stock grazing a predominant industry. There are also large areas of rural-recreation type subdivisions (for example, Wollert and Donnybrook) and extensive areas of National Park (for example Kinglake West, Whittlesea) and Melbourne Water/Parks Victoria land (for example Plenty Gorge that stretches from Mernda, through South Morang and Mill Park and into Bundoora).

2.2. Fire history and future predictions

Whittlesea has a history of significant grass and bushfires. High intensity and fast running grass fires can be expected from January to April, influenced by the steep topography to the north. In forested areas, crowning is likely with heavy spotting.

Fires in Whittlesea occur on days of extreme or catastrophic fire danger, historically the more severe fires travel from northwest to southeast usually under a strong north-westerly wind, however we know that a fire can travel in any direction.

The history of fire in the municipality demonstrates the extent of both the diversity and severity of fire risks within the municipal footprint.

2.2.1. Historical fires of significance

Date	Type	Summary
March 2023	Grassfire	English Street Donnybrook – approximately 5 hectares of grassland were burnt. Cause was grass slashing
February 2023	Grassfire	Plenty Gorge Fire (Northern end) - fire was started in suspicious circumstances and travelled in a southerly direction. Fire was halted at Carome Homestead Mernda. Approximately 12 hectares in size
February 2023	Complex Building Fire	Epping - two stores (Supercheap Auto and Cash Converters) were destroyed by fire. A warning for smoke in the area was issued
February 2023	Grassfire	Beveridge Fire – fire was started by slashing a paddock. Fire then went up hill into trees. No damage to properties. Approximately 12 hectares in size
December 2019	Grassfire	Plenty Gorge Fire (Southern end) - fire was started in suspicious circumstances on the Whittlesea side of the Gorge and travelled in a southerly direction towards University Hill Bundoora. Several fences on residential properties and a Council playground were destroyed. Approximately 62.2 hectares in size
December 2015	Grassfire	Epping Road Fire – fire was started by discarded cigarette butts on Vearings Road Epping. No buildings were damaged. Fire was halted at Cooper Street Epping
November 2015	Industrial and Chemical	Ecotec Woodwaste Hume – large pile of timber and other unidentified materials was believed to be ignited by a lightning strike. Size of the fire was approximately 100 metres wide and 10 metres high. Fire burnt for a number of days. This impacted the Merri Creek and affected Whittlesea natural environment
January 2014	Grassfire	Donnybrook Road Fire – fire started by someone angle grinding on a total fire ban day. Several sheds and outbuildings were destroyed. Fire was halted at Cooper Street Epping
February 2009	Bushfire	Black Saturday Fires on the outskirts of Whittlesea township, in Humevale, Kinglake West. Loss of life, significant loss of property and economic loss. A smaller but still significant fire at Plenty Gorge Park on the same day was contained by the superb efforts of fire crews.
January 1982	Bushfire	Mt Disappointment to Whittlesea Fire on the northern edge of the municipality, spotting in from Mt Disappointment, 100 acres burnt.

Date	Type	Summary
March 1970	Grassfire	Eden Park Grassfire at Eden Park, 100 acres burn out, two houses damaged, stopped at Grants Road.
January/February 1968	Grassfire	Donnybrook/Woodstock Multiple fires in three consecutive weeks at Donnybrook Road, Grants Road and Merriang Road. Merriang Road fire damaged Woodstock Hall and church.
February 1958	Grassfire	Wollert Fire on a southerly wind burnt out 200 acres. Tragic loss of firefighter battling the blaze.
January 1939	Bushfire	Mt Disappointment Large fire in Mt Disappointment threatened the Plenty Valley, saved by thunderstorm.
February 1926	Bushfire	Mt Disappointment to Kinglake Fire originating in Wandong burnt out most of Mt Disappointment and then jumped into Bruce's Creek, Humevale, Strathewen and Kinglake. No lives lost but many houses burnt.
January 1913	Bushfire	Mt Disappointment spotting into Whittlesea Spotting from Mt Disappointment, fires in Whittlesea and Doreen. 100 acres burnt.

Table 2: Historical fires of significance impacting the City of Whittlesea

2.2.2. Community profile and infrastructure forecasts

The City of Whittlesea is growing at a rapid pace with the population forecast to reach 295,000 people by 2031. Major growth centres are Wollert, Donnybrook, South Morang, Epping North, Mernda, Doreen and Kalkallo–Beveridge (those parts within the municipality).

This growth will impact on the provision of infrastructure and services in these localities. New investments will be required in many areas, including public transport, roads, telecommunication services (broadband), health services and more. From a fire service perspective, this growth is being monitored closely and planning is currently being undertaken to ensure residents and businesses in these new areas are receiving adequate fire service coverage now and into the future. For example, a new Fire Rescue Victoria station is planned to be built on Donnybrook Road to cater for the significant increase in buildings in that area.

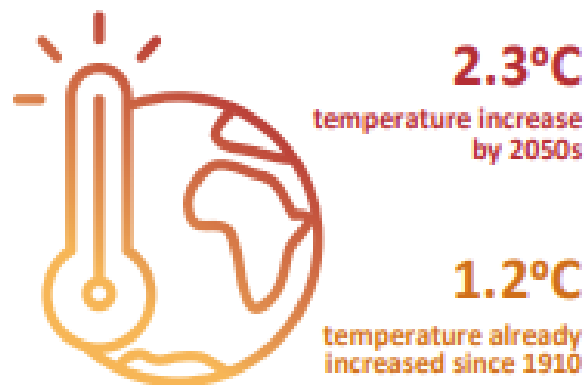
2.2.3. Climate change and predictions

Climate change presents an unprecedented challenge, both globally and locally. The frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as bushfires, floods, storms and droughts are on the rise. As greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities such as burning fossil fuels for generating electricity, transport, and manufacturing, are the dominant cause of climate change, urgent climate action is required to stabilise the changing climate. Council and community must work together to reduce overall emissions, create a climate resilient future and help limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius as outlined in the 2015 Paris Agreement and strengthened in the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact.

2.2.4. Unprecedented bushfires, heatwaves, droughts, and floods

Australia and many other places around the world, have been experiencing more frequent and severe extreme weather events in recent years. Climate change is the major driver. The latest climate science tells us that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities are responsible for approximately 1.2°C of warming since the industrial revolution. Averaged over the next 20 years, global temperature is expected to reach or exceed 1.5°C of warming. These changes are being observed globally across every region and the entire climate system.

In recent decades, the City of Whittlesea has become hotter and drier. While efforts have been made to reduce emissions, this trend is expected to continue. If global greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, in the 2050s, our city's climate future may look like different.



What we can expect:



Image 2: Future climate predictions

3. Management arrangements



3.1. Planning

3.1.1. State Emergency Management priorities

The State Emergency Management Priorities are outlined in the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP).

3.1.2. State Emergency Management Plan Bushfire Sub-Plan

Victoria has a long history of community, government and organisations working together in preventing, preparing and responding to the threat of fire and recovery from the impact of fire. Recent challenges such as population growth in urban-interface areas and the impact of fire events has prompted the need for increased coordination and cooperation to secure fire safety across Victoria.

The State Emergency Management Plan Bushfire Sub-Plan outlines the current arrangements for the management of bushfires in Victoria. It supports a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach and reflects a shared responsibility for bushfire management. The Plan outlines the current arrangements, roles and responsibilities for bushfire mitigation, planning, preparedness, response (including relief) and recovery.

3.1.3. Roles and responsibilities

City of Whittlesea

The City of Whittlesea is responsible for all council-owned properties as well as ensuring that private landowners have taken responsibility for their land. Council undertakes an annual fire hazard inspection program to assess each one for the risk of fire. If properties are found to be a risk, the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer will issue Fire Prevention Notices in accordance with the CFA Act 1958 and FRV Act 1958.

The City of Whittlesea has the following responsibilities:

- provide the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer, Municipal Recovery Manager and Municipal Emergency Management Officer.
- undertake fire management on Council-owned properties – development of fire management plans, fuel management and liaison with neighbours.
- undertake management of roadside vegetation.
- ensure private properties are prepared to reduce fire risk through an annual fire hazard inspection process.
- provide community education and awareness programs.

The City of Whittlesea has setup an internal Fire Management Working Group. The purpose of this group is for relevant internal City of Whittlesea stakeholders to collaborate and share ideas, knowledge and plans for the strategic management of fire in the municipality.

The objectives of the City of Whittlesea Fire Management Working Group are:

- prepare City of Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Strategy and Works Plan which summarises the range of activities and strategies undertaken by responsible service units across council.
- advocate and report on municipal fire risk issues in the municipality to the Whittlesea Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee.
- inform and support councils Resilience and Emergency Management Team to maintain the Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan.

Country Fire Authority (CFA)

CFA is a community-based fire and emergency services organisation, whose mission is to protect life and property. The City of Whittlesea Council is serviced by CFA District 12 and District 14.

CFA provides state-wide fire and related emergency coordination for:

- bushfire and grassfire suppression,
- structural fire suppression,
- transport related fire suppression,
- road rescue,
- technical rescue, such as high angle, trench and mine operations,
- hazardous material transportation and storage incidents,
- other emergency activities including flood assistance.

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)

Incorporating Parks Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria

DEECA entities are accountable to their responsible ministers for the functions they perform on behalf of the Victorian Government in managing, regulating, consulting and/or advising in relation to public land, water, energy, environmental resources and planning, and local infrastructure. Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) is made up of skilled staff from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water and VicForests.

FFMVic works with Country Fire Authority (CFA), Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV), other emergency services and communities across Victoria to deliver the best local approaches to public land management in Victoria. FFMVic is recognised as a world leader in bushfire risk management.

Our core purpose is to protect people, property and the environment. FFMVic do this by managing bushfires and bushfire risk in Victoria's parks, forests and other public land, and by minimising the impact of fire on communities, and the environment This management includes:

- risk-based bushfire management,
- fire prevention and preparedness,
- fuel management programs (including planned burning),
- emergency response and recovery.

FFMVic has moved from a hectare target for planned burns to a risk reduction target for bushfire management. This means a more integrated approach across public and private land.

As part of managing Victoria's parks and reserves, Parks Victoria supports the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) as part of Forest Fire Management Victoria to prepare for, fight and recover from bushfires on public land including planned burning for ecological and risk management objectives.

Parks Victoria have permanent staff devoted to reducing the risk of fire, containing outbreaks and managing fire ecology in parks, reserves, forests and other public land. Seasonal Project Fire Fighters are also recruited each year to support fire preparation and suppression efforts.

ESV's line clearance assurance team enables ESV to meet its objectives set out in the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 this is applied to electrical distribution companies, any company or organisation that owns or operates an electric line has the responsibility for maintaining and creating the required clearance space around that electric line.

Environment Protection Authority

EPA is an organisation that is responsible for keeping Victoria informed about the state of the Environment. They also investigate and inspect land, industrial precincts and can charge for environmental offences:

- after fire clean up,
- investigations and inspections,
- strategic plans,
- enforcement, reports and notifications.

Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV)

FRV is an organisation facilitates Victoria's fire and rescue services have delivered for the community for more than a century. FRV personnel are highly trained and ready to respond to emergencies.

FRV's purpose is to keep Victorian communities safe:

- bushfire and grassfire suppression,
- structural fire suppression,
- transport related fire suppression,
- road rescue,
- technical rescue, such as high angle, trench and mine operations,
- hazardous material transportation and storage incidents.

Victoria Police

Victoria Police are responsible for the coordinated response to all emergencies pursuant to the Emergency Management Act 2013 and the State Emergency Management Plan. Their role is to:

- notify the essential service or public utilities involved,
- perform whenever possible, the functions of any essential agency that has not reached the scene,
- perform those functions that are specifically the responsibility of the police, including:
 - protection of life and property
 - crowd and traffic control
 - investigation of criminal offences
 - preparation of casualty lists and notification of relatives
 - work on behalf of the coroner
 - manage the effective evacuation of affected persons who volunteer to evacuate
- if required, assume the role of Emergency Response Co-ordinator and in this capacity support and facilitate the efforts of the essential services, public utilities and volunteer bodies concerned,
- facilitate Operation Dalmation in the prevention and detection of arson offences.

Within the City of Whittlesea, Victoria Police have appointed a Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC). This Co-ordinator, who is a Senior Sergeant of the Mernda Police Station, is responsible for ensuring a coordinated response to an emergency and the effective interface between response and recovery agencies.

The role of Police at Traffic Management Points is to facilitate access for those with a valid reason to enter the area affected by fire. The access level of a particular Traffic Management Point will be specified by the

Incident Controller (or delegate). Traffic Management Points change depending on the movement and direction of the fire.

People may be evacuated to a safer location as a means of mitigating the effects of an emergency or disaster on a community. The process of evacuation is usually considered to include and return of the affected community. Evacuation is a scalable activity – it may be applied to individuals, a house, a street, a large facility (i.e. school or hospital), a suburb, a town or a large area of the State.

Primary responsibilities for evacuation are held by the control agency and Victoria Police. In Victoria, evacuation is largely voluntary. The Incident Controller makes a recommendation to evacuate, and it is the choice of individuals as to how they respond to this recommendation. Victoria Police will appoint an Evacuation Manager who will, under the present circumstances, operate from the Police Incident Police Operations Centre (IPOC).

3.1.4. Exercising the Sub-Plan

Arrangements for exercising this sub-plan will be at the discretion of the MEMPC. This sub-plan should be regularly exercised, preferably on an annual basis and reviewed following a significant event.

3.1.5. Community resilience, information and education

To help inform and prepare community, throughout the year, The City of Whittlesea will publish through various channels, scheduled information on key preparation activities that residents can undertake to help minimise the impacts of Fire events. The published posts will support what is published on the City of Whittlesea website under “Resilience and Emergency Management.”

In addition, if there is fire within the municipality that will impact residents, timely and up-to-date information, directing residents to appropriate channels will be shared via all communication channels.

CFA and FRV with the support of the City of Whittlesea & Plenty Valley FM, will coordinate community information for fire related events within the municipality, which includes raising awareness about the projected impacts of fire related events and what actions can be taken to prepare for and help minimise these impacts.

3.2. Preparedness and mitigation

In the review and development of this Sub-Plan the Sub-Committee established an internal council working group to support the advancement of this Sub-Plan. In developing this Sub-Plan the Sub-Committee and the working group has reviewed and sought to align with existing legislation, frameworks and complementary plans including the:

- City of Whittlesea – Fire Management Strategy
- Plenty Gorge Precinct Advisory Group (document suite)
- CFA - Victorian Fire Risk Register (VFRR-B)
- City of Whittlesea - AF Walker Reserve Neighbourhood Safer Place
- City of Whittlesea - Electric Line Clearance Management Plan
- City of Whittlesea – Eden Park Bushfire Erosion Mitigation Plan
- CFA – Urban Fringe Grassfire Risk Project
- North West Metropolitan Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan
- SEMP Bushfire Sub-Plan

3.2.1. Risk assessment process

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee used a risk assessment process consistent with ISO31000. This process was facilitated by the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) and is known as the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA).

The CERA approach aims to understand the likely impacts of a range of emergency scenarios upon community assets, values and functions.

The CERA process for the Whittlesea fire hazard risks was undertaken in May 2022

History of fire

The group undertook an exercise to explore and discuss significant fire events that have occurred not only within the Municipality but also within the Region and Victoria

Environmental scan

The environmental scan explored factors impacting fire management in its current and future states through four areas:

- people, society and culture,
- built and essential infrastructure,
- environment,
- economy and political arrangements.

The risk assessment identified that:

- the residual risk for grassfire/bushfire was high, and
- the residual risk for transport accidents and fires in commercial / industrial / high rise was medium.

The committee and any working groups will undertake a continual process to identify and address fire risks within the municipality.

3.2.2. Victorian Fire Risk Register (VFRR)

The Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VRFRR-B) is a register which maps assets at risk from bushfire and assesses the level of that risk to the assets. This is a process which is carried out by representatives from local government, utilities, public land managers, fire services and community groups. Assets may include residential areas, hospitals, aged care facilities, children's services, areas of cultural significance, infrastructure such as transmission lines or communication towers, commercial industry and tourism events. Agency representatives will record any treatments used to mitigate the risk to the asset such as fire prevention, community education and hazard reduction.

The VFRR process for the City of Whittlesea was undertaken in August 2022 and the next assessment will be scheduled for August 2023

Under VFRR, assets are grouped into four broad categories: Human Settlement, Economic, Environmental and Cultural Heritage. Within each asset category are the following sub-categories:

Asset Category	Asset Sub-Category
Human settlement	Residential, special fire protection, other
Economic	Agriculture, commercial, infrastructure, tourist and recreational, mines, commercial forests, drinking water catchments
Environmental	Locally important, endangered, vulnerable
Cultural Heritage	Aboriginal significance, non-indigenous, other

Table 3: VFRR asset categories and sub-categories

Under each category, locations and assets are identified and their level of risk assessed based on a range of inputs including proximity to flammable vegetation; vegetation type; slope, frequency of fires; and the probability of a fire igniting on an extreme fire danger days with a fire danger rating, this is marked with the following categories: moderate, high, extreme and catastrophic.

The primary output of the VFRR is a Bushfire Risk Register table. This contains the risk assessments for a specific location/asset with risk descriptors of low, medium, high, very high and extreme. The Register also assigns a priority risk rating to each asset to assist in prioritising risk treatments. The highest priority risk is given 1A rating, the lowest a rating of NA (Need for action is unlikely).

VFRR also provides a list of treatment/mitigation actions per each asset location (along with the responsible agency). Treatments may include prevention works such as fuel reduction burning, roadside vegetation management, grass slashing and property inspections or fire preparedness initiatives—such as development of personal bushfire plans, and provision of fire safety information through the media and the fire agencies during the summer fire season.

It is then the role of the Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee to review the VFRR outputs and determine if the risk ratings are appropriate or if new assets need to be identified and placed on the Register. It also considers the VFRR treatment/mitigation works to determine if they are suitable or if additional works need to be undertaken.

Complementing this work, VFRR output maps are available to inform and provide a spatial overview of localities with an identified bushfire risk.

Both the Risk Register and accompanying Multi-agency Workplan are 'live' documents, subject to review by the Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee as new risks are identified, and existing risks and treatments updated.

The Multi-agency Workplan is summarised in Section 3.2.5 of this sub-plan.

Structure and hazmat

The City of Whittlesea has a varied structural environment – and associated risks – including large residential neighbourhoods, commercial and industrial precincts, hospitals, nursing homes and supported residential care facilities.

With industry and transport, there is always the potential for a hazardous material incident. Fire stations are strategically located, fire fighters are trained, and procedures are in place to combat hazardous material incidents with the City of Whittlesea.

Asset specific

The Municipal Fire Management Sub-Committee has identified and rated specific assets within the municipality that are at risk from the impact of fire.

VFRR strategies and treatment options

The following table summarises the various treatment options of the VFRR strategy.

VFRR Strategy	Treatment options
Community Education	AFDRS – CFA Fire Safety Essentials – CFA Bushfire Planning – CFA Property Advice Visits Service PAVS – CFA Urban Fringe Grassfire Risk – CFA Neighbourhood Connect – CFA Early Fire Safe – CFA Home Fire Safety – CFA Smoke Alarm Installation – CFA Retirement Village Fire Safety CFA Council Signage – LGA VMS signs – LGA & Department of Transport
Hazard Reduction	Prescribed Burns – LGA, Parks Vic & CFA Slashing – LGA and Parks Vic Roadside Maintenance – LGA & Department of Transport Rail Line Maintenance – VicTrack Fuel Breaks – DEECA & Parks Vic Weed Control – LGA & Parks Vic
Ignition Management	High Fire Danger Day Patrols – Parks Vic Operation Dalmation – VicPol
Preparedness	Fire Access Track Maintenance – LGA & Parks Vic Emergency Management Plans – LGA Water Tank Inspection – LGA

VFRR Strategy	Treatment options
Property Planning	Bushfire Management Overlays – CFA Property Advice Visit Services PAVS – CFA
Others	Neighbourhood Safer Place -LGA & CFA Traffic Diversions – VicPol Prosecution of Offenders – VicPol Code Catastrophic School Closures – Department of Education and Training

Table 4: VFRR strategic treatment options

3.2.3. Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA)

Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

Bushfire Management Overlay is a planning control that applies to bushfire prone areas with very high and extreme bushfire hazards. This trigger planning permit requirements including mandatory bushfire protection measures such as defensible space, water supply, access and ongoing vegetation management requirements. Areas where a BMO applies are also by default Bushfire Prone Areas.

Currently the City of Whittlesea has 909 liveable dwellings within a Bushfire Management Overlay area.

See Section 4.1 of this sub-plan for a map that outlines the boundary of the Bushfire Management Overlay area.

Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA)

Bushfire Prone Areas are areas where the bushfire hazard has been identified and mapped under the building system. These areas are subject to or likely to be subject to bushfires. This triggers building permit requirements where new buildings are required to build to a national bushfire construction standard. This is known as a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)

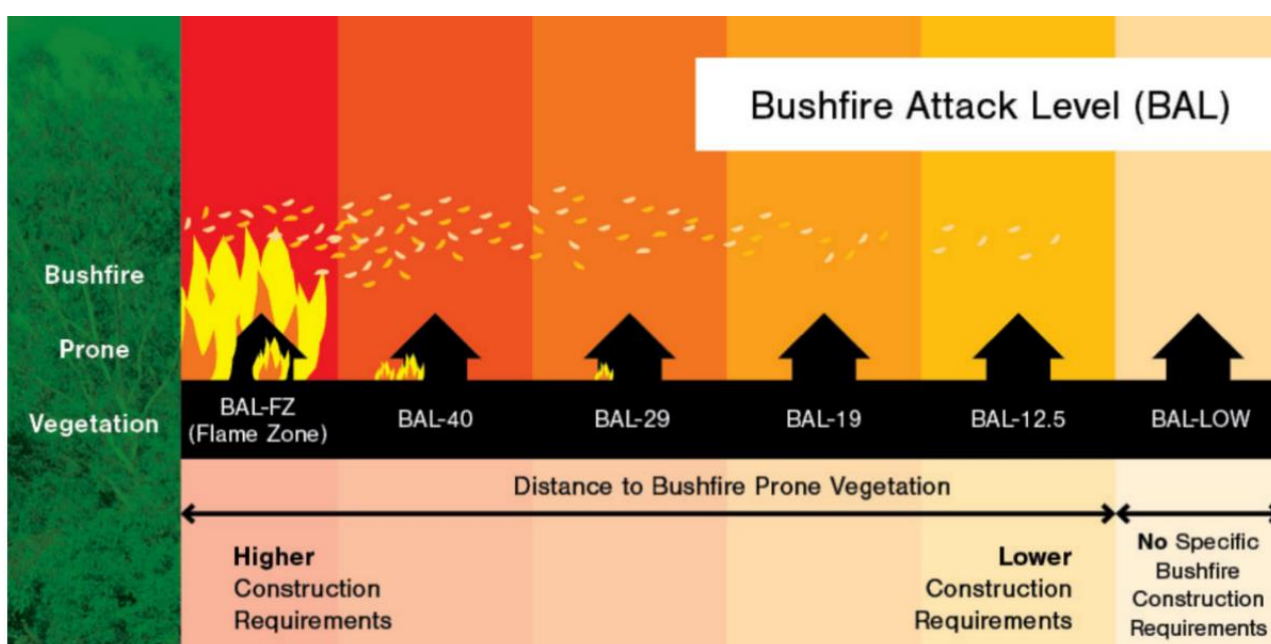


Image 3: Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)

3.2.4. Risk mitigation

The below table lists activities that reduce the overall grassfire and bushfire risk within the municipality. They are undertaken as part of normal business and are not linked to specific assets. They include:

Strategy	Actions and responsible agency
<p>Planning and Building</p> <p>CFA and the City of Whittlesea have regulatory and referral obligations under various acts and building codes to ensure that fire protection is considered and incorporated into the design of all new developments</p>	<p>Bushfire Prone Areas Land Use Planning – Subdivisions - CFA Bushfire Management Overlays – CFA Water Supply – CFA Defendable Space Regulations – CFA 10/30 rule & 10/50 rule – LGA Building Permits - LGA</p>
<p>Permits</p> <p>These permits allow burning during the declared Fire Danger Period</p>	<p>Schedule 13 permits – LGA Schedule 14 permits – CFA Section 40 permits – CFA</p>
<p>Fuel Management</p> <p>Land managers and fire agencies reduce grassfire and bushfire risk by managing fuel loads in high risk areas</p>	<p>Prescribed Burns – Parks Vic & CFA Slashing – Parks Vic and LGA Roadside Maintenance – LGA & Department of Transport Rail Line Maintenance – VicTrack Fuel Breaks – DEECA & Parks Vic Weed Control – DEECA, Parks Vic & LGA</p>
<p>Fire Prevention</p> <p>Activities that aim to reduce the occurrence and impact of fire</p>	<p>Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan – LGA Land Management Plans – DEECA & Parks Vic Hazardous Trees – LGA & Utilities Fire Hazard Inspections – LGA Fire Prevention Notices – LGA Fire Prevention Complaints – LGA Operation Dalmatian – VicPol</p>
<p>Fire Suppression</p> <p>Responding to fire is a planned activity for all emergency services</p>	<p>Bushfire Response Plans – CFA Bushfire Response Plans – VicPol Operation Plans – CFA Fire Management Plans – Parks Vic</p>

Table 5: Strategic action list to mitigate risk

3.2.5. Multi Agency Workplan

The Multi-Agency Work Plan lists the treatment/fire mitigation works for each location and asset identified to be at risk. In this iteration of the Whittlesea Fire Management Sub-Plan, only the bush and grass fire risk environments are being considered, with future editions to also include the structural and hazmat risk environments.

Human Settlement - Residential		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Plenty Gorge South, Blossom Park, Bundoora and South Morang	Very High	2C
Epping	High	3A
Whittlesea Township	High	3D
Plenty Gorge North, South Morang	High	3D
Doreen	Medium	4
Mernda	Medium	4
South Morang	Medium	4
Human Settlement - Other		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Humevale North	Extreme	1A
Eden Park Woodlands	Extreme	1A
Glenvale	Extreme	1A
Coombs RD, Kinglake West Humevale	Extreme	1B
Humevale South	Extreme	1C
Eden Park East	Very High	2C
Wildwood RD, West of Toorourrong Reservoir	High	3A
Beveridge	Medium	4
Yan Yean	Low	NA
Human Settlement - Special Fire Protection		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Bruces Creek Scout Camp, 340 Bruces Creek RD, Glenvale	Extreme	1B
Scout Camp, 105 Bruces Creek RD, Glenvale	Extreme	1B
Yan Yean Work Centre, Yan Yean	Very High	2A
San Carlo Nursing Home, 970 Plenty RD, South Morang	High	3A
Al Siraitt College, 45 Harvest Home RD, Epping	High	3A
Toorourrong Reservoir, Jacks Creek RD, Toorourrong	High	3A
Plenty SRS, Janefield DR, Bundoora	High	3A
Riverside Kindergarten, 8 Doreen Rogan WAY, South Morang	High	3A

Human Settlement - Special Fire Protection <i>continued</i>		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Acadia College P12, 370 Bridge Inn RD, Mernda	High	3A
RMIT Student Accommodation, Bundoora	Medium	4
Funfields, 2365 Plenty RD, Whittlesea	Low	NA
South Morang PS, 77 George RD, South Morang	Low	NA
Whittlesea Showground, Yea RD, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Whittlesea Lodge, 30 Fir ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
ABC Learning Centre, Corella DR, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Whittlesea Kindergarden, 92 Church ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Sunlight Nursing Home, 43 Laurel ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Ivanhoe Grammar School, 730 Bridge Inn RD, Mernda	Low	NA
Mernda PS, Mernda	Low	NA
Whittlesea PS, 2435 Plenty RD, Whittlesea	Low	NA
St Mary's PS, Fir ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Whittlesea SC, Laurel ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Whittlesea Community Activity Centre, 56-61 Laurel ST, Whittlesea	Low	NA
Economic - Agricultural		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Mernda Mushrooms Exchange, 45 Cookes RD, Mernda	Low	NA
Economic - Commercial		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, Cooper ST, Epping	Medium	4
Hanson Landfill Services, Bridge Inn RD, Wollert	Medium	4
Dysons Bus Services, 121 McKimmies RD, Bundoora	Low	NA
Trawalla AVE Industrial Estate, Trawalla AVE, Thomastown	Low	NA
Austral Bricks Summerhill Plant, Craigieburn RD East, Wollert	Low	NA

Economic - Infrastructure		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Australbricks Plant Gas Reticulation Centre, Summerhill RD, Wollert	Extreme	1C
Whittlesea Yea RD, Whittlesea Shire	Very High	2C
Aurora STP, Wollert	Very High	2C
Whittlesea STP	Very High	2C
DDTS-SMTS 300KV Transmission Line 2	Very High	2C
EPS-TTS 220KV Transmission Line	Very High	2C
DDTS-SMTS 300KV Transmission Line 1	Very High	2C
HWTS-SMTS 500KV Transmission Line 1	Very High	2C
HWTS-SMTS 500KV Transmission Line 2	Very High	2C
ROTS-SMTS 500KV Transmission Line 3	Very High	2C
ROTS-TTS 220KV Transmission Line	Very High	2C
TTS-KTS 220KV Transmission Line 2	High	3A
SMTS-SYTS 500KV Transmission Line 1	High	3A
TTS-KTS 220KV Transmission Line 1	High	3A
SMTS-SYTS 500KV Transmission Line 2	High	3A
Yan Yean WTP	High	3A
Mernda WPS 129	High	3D
Epping North - Quarry Hills WPS 615	High	3D
Yan Yean WPS 151	High	3D
Doreen WPS 613	High	3D
Doreen Zone Substation	High	3D
Methan Gas Reticulation Bulk Collection, Epping	Medium	4
TSTS-TTS 220KV Transmission Line	Low	NA
SMTS-TTS 220KV Transmission Line 2	Low	NA
SMTS-TTS 220KV Transmission Line 1	Low	NA
Economic - Drinking Water Catchment		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Yan Yean Water Catchment, East Whittlesea	High	3A
Wallaby Creek Water Catchment, North Whittlesea	High	3A

Cultural - Non Indigenous		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
Bear's Castle, Cades RD, Yan Yean	Very High	2A
Cultural - Non Other		
Location / Asset	VFRR Risk Rating	VFRR Priority Risk Rating
The Farm Vigano, South Morang	Extreme	2A
Carome Homestead, Mernda	Very High	2C
Yan Yean Caretakers Cottage, Yan Yean	Very High	NA

Table 6: Multi Agency Workplan for at risk assets or locations

3.3. Readiness

3.3.1. Warnings

Warnings across Victoria are issued by the fire services (as Control Agency) and are in alignment with the Australian Warning System – which is a national approach to information and warnings during emergencies. More information can be obtained here: [Australian Warning System](#)



Image 4: Bushfire signage of the Australian Warning System

3.3.2. Fire Danger Period (FDP) and Total Fire Ban (TFB)

Fire Danger Periods are declared by CFA for municipalities during periods of increased fire risk.

Total Fire Bans are declared by CFA's Chief Officer on days where fires are likely to spread rapidly and be difficult to control. During both FDP's and TFB's, fires in the open air are largely restricted, alongside other activities such as barbecuing and burning off. A full list of restrictions can be found on the CFA website.



Image 5: Total Fire Ban signage

3.3.3. Fire Danger Ratings and the Australian Fire Danger Rating System

Daily Fire Danger Ratings can be found on the CFA website as well as on signage. Ratings and local conditions can also be monitored on the VicEmergency website app and should be checked before travelling.

Fire Danger Ratings predict and describe the potential level of danger, and the consequences of a fire if one was to start. The higher the danger, the more dangerous the conditions and the more serious the impact of fire will be.

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System uses four rating levels, each with a corresponding message to take action to protect yourself and others from bushfire.

- The fire danger rating levels are:
- Moderate: Plan and prepare
- High: Prepare to act
- Extreme: Take action now to protect your life and property
- Catastrophic: For your survival, leave bush fire risk areas

3.3.4. Media communications

Responsibility for public information, including media briefings, rests with the fire services as the control agency. Council will assist to warn the community where practicable including warning and alerts when issued. The Incident Controller through the Public Information Section established at the Incident Control Centre will manage media communication and use VicEmergency if appropriate. If the Incident Control Centre is not established, the Incident Controller on scene will manage all media communication. City of Whittlesea will assist with the dissemination of public information and warnings to ensure consistent and timely messaging occurs.

3.4. Response

3.4.1. Activation of response

The fire services will appoint an Incident Controller who will activate support agencies as required and documented in the SEMP and Bushfire Sub-Plan.

3.4.2. Escalation

Most fire incidents are of local concern and an appropriate response can usually be coordinated using local resources. However, when these resources are exhausted, regional arrangements provide for further resources to be made available, firstly from our own North West Metro Region and then on a state-wide basis.

Resourcing and event escalation arrangements are described in the SEMP.

3.4.3. Preservation of life

One of the State control priorities is the protection and preservation of life and the relief of suffering is paramount.

3.4.4. Essential infrastructure and property protection

Essential infrastructure and property (e.g. hospitals, essential businesses, roads, utilities and telecommunications etc.) may be affected in the event of a significant fire.

Authorities will ensure that owners of essential infrastructure are kept advised of the situation. Essential infrastructure providers must keep the IC informed of their status and ongoing ability to provide services.

3.4.5. Evacuation warnings and messaging (see also 3.3.1)

Evacuation warning messages will be developed and issued by the fire services (Control Agency) and may be prepared in consultation with Victoria Police, MEMO and MRM especially where an Emergency Relief Centre is required. They may include a warning to prepare to evacuate and a warning to evacuate immediately.

3.4.6. Evacuation

In Victoria evacuation is largely voluntary, however in particular circumstances, legislation provides some emergency services with authority to remove people from areas or prohibit their entry.

If evacuation is determined as appropriate, the MEMO and MRM should be notified as soon as possible. It is the choice of individuals as to how they respond to this recommendation.

Once the decision is made, Victoria Police is responsible for the management of the evacuation process and security of the evacuated areas. The fire services as the control agency may provide advice regarding the most appropriate evacuation routes and locations for at-risk communities to evacuate to. The fire services (as the Control Agency) is also responsible for the development and communication of evacuation warnings when activated

Refer to details within the MEMP for further guidance on evacuations for emergencies.

Decision to evacuate

The Incident Controller may make the decision to evacuate an at-risk community under the following circumstances:

- properties are likely to directly impacted by flame,
- properties are likely to be impacted by ember attack,
- properties likely to be impacted by smoke,
- public health is at threat because of fire and evacuation may be considered the most effective risk treatment,
- essential services have been damaged and are not available to a community and evacuation is considered the most effective risk treatment.

Return

The Incident Controller in consultation with Victoria Police will determine when it is safe for evacuees to return to their properties and will arrange for the notification of the community.

Victoria Police will manage the return of evacuated people with the assistance of other agencies as required.

Considerations for deciding whether to return include:

- current fire situation,
- size and location of the community,
- access and egress routes available and their status,
- resources required to coordinate the return,
- special needs groups,
- forecast weather,
- transportation; particularly for people without access to transport.

3.4.7. Vulnerable persons register

Vulnerable people living in the community will be identified through funded agencies, community service organisations or other community networks. Such people will be assessed against the definition of a vulnerable person and may qualify for registration on the Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR).

A list of facilities where vulnerable people may be located is also kept by council. These may be funded facilities including education, health and childcare, Commonwealth regulated aged care facilities and other locally identified facilities. Further information on vulnerable people in emergencies can be obtained from the MRM.

3.4.8. Impact assessment

Impact Assessment (IA) can be conducted in accordance with State doctrine and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to assess and record the extent and nature of damage caused by the fire. This information may then be used to provide the basis for further needs assessment (SIA, Secondary Impact Assessment) and recovery planning by the City of Whittlesea, DFFH, ERV and other recovery agencies.

The control agency is responsible for coordinating the collection, collation and dissemination of Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) information on a whole of government basis during the emergency response.

The purpose, function and conduct of IIA are outlined in the SEMP Bushfire Sub-Plan. All IIAs should be conducted in accordance with current State impact assessment doctrine and SOPs.

The City of Whittlesea is responsible for the coordination and conduct of Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) across the impacted community and will be triaged based on IIA intelligence. All asset owners will be responsible for asset inspections including public roads and infrastructure and make safe or rectification works as required.

The City of Whittlesea will share community SIA data to ERV via the state portal.

3.5. Relief

The range and type of emergency relief services to be provided in response to a significant fire incident will be dependent upon the size, impact, and scale of the fire. Suitable relief facilities identified for use during fires as with the associated relief arrangements are detailed in Whittlesea MEMP and the City of Whittlesea Emergency Relief (complementary) Plan.

The decision to recommend the opening of an emergency relief centre rests with the Incident Controller in accordance with the SEMP relief arrangements. The IC is responsible for ensuring that relief arrangements have been considered and implemented where required. The MRM will facilitate access to emergency relief facilities as required.

The IC should ensure that the MERC, MRM and Regional Recovery Coordinator are kept informed of the relief arrangements.

3.5.1. Animal shelter

The need for animal shelter compounds will be determined based on the location and size of the event. The Whittlesea MEMP and City of Whittlesea Emergency Recovery (complementary) Plan provide details for animal shelter arrangements.

3.6. Recovery

3.6.1. Transition from response to recovery

The fire services as the Control Agency are responsible for ensuring an effective transition from response to recovery. This transition will be conducted in consultation with emergency management teams and the determined tier for transfer (local, regional or state). This will include the IMT and the MRM, Regional Recovery Coordinator and/or the State Recovery Coordinator. Further information about the transition can be found in the SEMP and Whittlesea MEMP.

3.6.2. After Action Review (AAR)

As the control agency, CFA, FRV or FFMVic will coordinate the AAR arrangements of fire incidents and operations as soon as practical following an event.

All agencies involved in response to the fire incident should be represented at the AAR.

4. Major fire risks within the municipality



4.1. Bushfire

4.1.1. Description

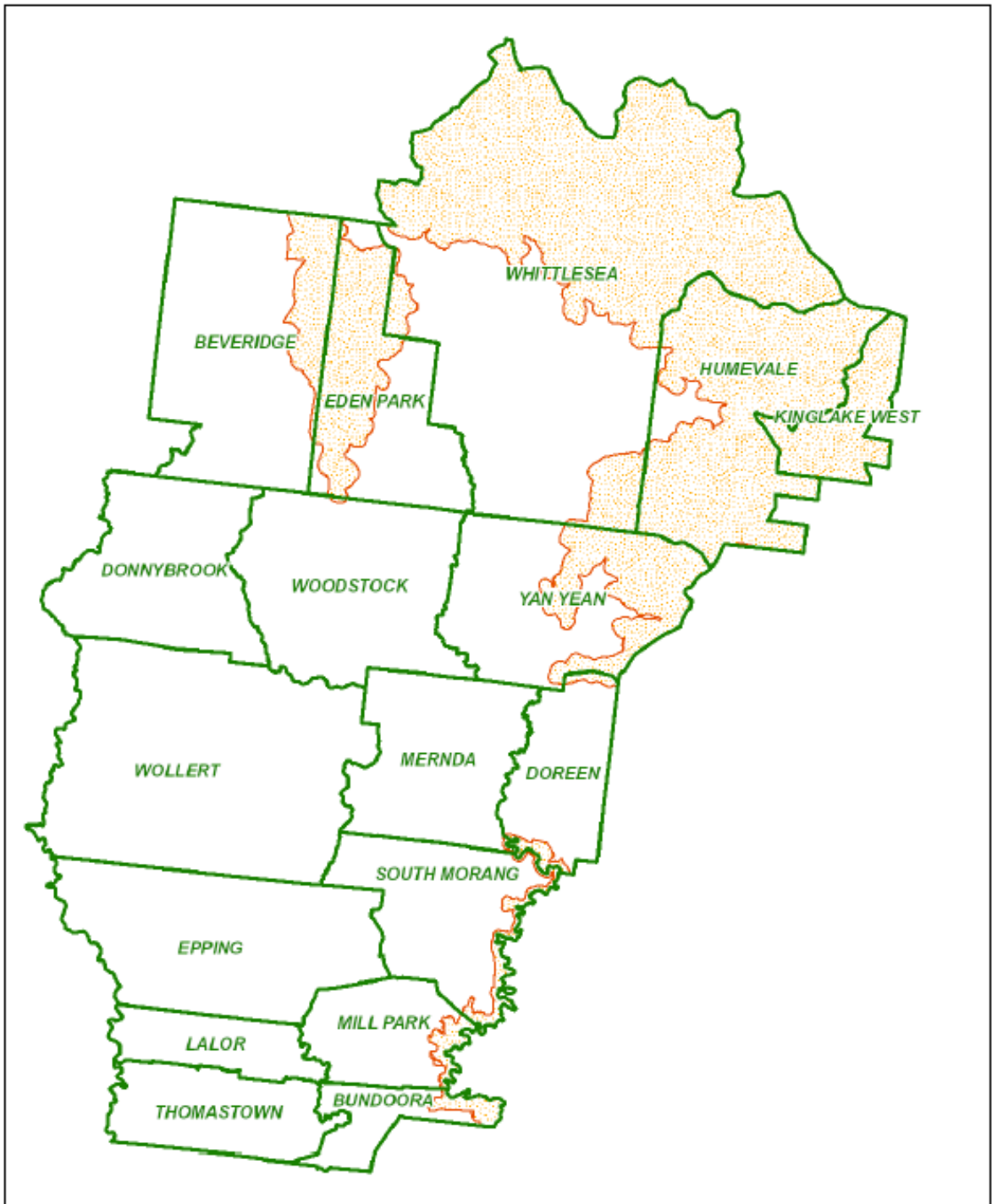
Bushfires are fires that burn through areas of bushland predominately using grass, twigs, shrubs, logs and trees to fuel the fire. Bushfires are a type of wildfire that are usually difficult to control and unpredictable. Bushland fires can happen all year round. Bushfires can start in many ways, some of these including lightning; machines and equipment; arson; electrical lines; and accidents such as camping or burning off. In the City of Whittlesea, bushfires are more common to the north and north-west. Some examples are Kinglake West, Humevale, Whittlesea and Eden Park. Bushfires are assessed as a state significant risk. A big part of fire mitigation in the bushfire prone areas is electrical line clearance work, which involves pruning back vegetation to make sure it is clear of the electrical lines to prevent a fire.

See Image 6 Bushfire Management Overlay overleaf.

4.1.2. Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Built form (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties possibly including infrastructure, rural and residential).
- Environmental damage and impact (Loss of grasslands and biodiversity including air pollution, Erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby and roadblocks).

Bushfire Management Overlay



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Map Scale: 1 : 160000
Date: 17/04/2023
Produced By: lae

Image 6: City of Whittlesea Bushfire Management Overlay

4.1.3. Before a bushfire

- FRV and CFA conduct education programs - including fire safety for adults, fire ed for special ed and bushfire safety for schools.
- FRV and CFA hold community events – fire station visits, Christmas drive around, attendance of community events promoting community safety.
- FRV and CFA have indicator signs – roadside signage is installed and maintained showing fire danger ratings level of risk for the day.
- Relevant agency and council website information for planning, preparing and educating on all types of fires, including total fire ban days, fire risks, ratings plans and safety, links to BOM and the VicEmergency application.
- FFM Vic website information including locations, bushfire risk management and smoke.
- FFM Vic planned burns including locations, date and times provided to authorities.
- FRV, CFA and FFM Vic will conduct training.
- CFA and FFM Vic to commence fire prevention program e.g., slashing, fuel reduction burns, mechanical works.
- FFM Vic will commence their fire prevention program.
- FFM Vic will recruit seasonal firefighters.
- Vic Police conduct fire prevention patrols.

4.1.4. During a bushfire

- CFA, FRV and Vic Police have alerts and warnings including signs.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- CFA, FRV and FFM Vic will conduct size-ups and develop strategies and tactics to stop the spread of the fire.
- CFA and FRV may issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA and FRV may request air support.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol may request the MERC/MEMO.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.
- Website information including a community evacuation sheet.
- Emergency services conduct emergency warning signals broadcast through radio, TV's or public areas.

4.1.5. After a bushfire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the area safe.
- Reports on damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV and Council review process for fire safety and fire prevention.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol investigate the affected areas to see how the fire started.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- CFA, FRV and FFM Vic will conduct a debrief and have an AAR.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.

4.1.6. What community members can do in the event of bushfires

A well thought out bushfire survival plan can help if you live or holiday in high-risk bushfire areas of Victoria.

Further information on how to prepare for bushfires can be found at the CFA website.

You don't have to live near bush to be at risk of fire, as grassfire can be just as dangerous as bushfire. See further CFA information on what to do if you live close to grass in a rural area or where the suburbs meet grasslands.

Another option for the community to prepare is through the Community Fireguard program run by the CFA. This is available for residents in high-risk bush or grass fire areas, and is designed to help you:

- plan for a range of scenarios,
- make informed decisions when it counts,
- maintain a fire smart building and garden,
- work together with your community to reduce everyone's bushfire risk.

4.2. Grassfire

4.2.1. Description

Grassfires are fires that burn through grassland predominately fuelled by grass, twigs, bark and leaves. They can travel and burn faster than bushfires. Grassfires tend to be less intense than forest and bushfires but can still produce massive amounts of radiant heat. Grassfires can start in many ways, some of these include lightning, machines and equipment, arson, vehicles, infrastructure such as power lines and railway transport. In the City of Whittlesea grassfires can start in urban areas or bushland areas and travel into grassland areas, which can have major impacts on residents that reside on the urban interface of the municipality. For example, grassfires can start in Eden Park and travel south to Donnybrook, Epping north and Wollert.

4.2.2. Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts)
- Built form (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties possibly including infrastructure, rural and residential)
- Environmental damage and impact (loss of grasslands, erosion and biodiversity including air pollution)

4.2.3. Before a grassfire

- FRV and CFA conduct education programs - including fire safety for adults, fire ed for special ed and Bushfire safety for schools.
- FRV and CFA hold community events – fire station visits, Christmas drive around, attendance of community events promoting community safety.
- FRV and CFA have indicator signs – roadside signage is installed and maintained showing fire danger ratings level of risk for the day.
- CFA and FRV have website information for planning, preparing and educating on all types of fires, including fire risks, fire ratings and total fire ban days.
- Victorian Fire Risk Register.
- Relevant agency and council website information for planning, preparing and educating on all types of fires, including total fire ban days, fire risks, ratings plans and safety, links to BOM and the VicEmergency application.
- FFM Vic website information including locations, bushfire risk management and smoke.
- FFM Vic planned burns including locations, date and times provided to authorities.
- FFM Vic have assessment of bushfire risk including values to be protected from bushfires.
- FFM Vic will commence their fire prevention program.
- FFM Vic will recruit seasonal firefighters.
- Consultation between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, FFM, VIC POL, COUNCIL).
- CFA, FRV and Vic Police have website information including fire plans, fire safety and warnings, links to BOM, CFA, FRV websites and the VicEmergency application.
- Vic Police conduct fire prevention patrols.

4.2.4. During a grassfire

- CFA, FRV and Vic Police have alerts and warnings including signs.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- FFM Vic will have crews on standby in case of a fire.
- FFM Vic will conduct patrols around their land.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.
- Website information including a community evacuation sheet.
- Emergency services conduct emergency warning signals broadcast through radio, TV's or public areas.

4.2.5. After a grassfire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make area safe.
- CFA and FRV reports on damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV and Council review process for fire safety and fire prevention.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol investigate the affected areas to see how the fire started.
- CFA, FRV will hand over the site to the appropriate agency or owner once it is made safe.
- CFA, FRV may conduct a fire investigation to find out what started the fire.
- CFA, FRV and FFM Vic to conduct a debrief and AAR.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.

4.2.6. What community members can do in the event of grassfires

Bush or grassfires can happen in urban areas. These fires are dangerous and can travel very fast. Many Victorians live next to parks, reserves, open grasslands, paddocks or bush, even in urban areas.

It is important you understand your grassfire risk and prepare your property. You also need to know what to do if a grassfire starts:

- monitor conditions outside. Make sure you're connected to all emergency sources
- follow all directions from emergency services
- act early, even if you haven't received a warning. Plan to leave early to avoid getting caught in a grass fire

If a grassfire starts and you are at home:

- if you live next to grassland and a grassfire starts, walk at least two streets back from the fire
- if you live two streets or more from grassland and a grassfire starts, stay where you are and follow all directions from emergency services
- keep all windows and doors closed and place towels or blankets around window sills and door gaps - do not use your air conditioner.

Further information on how to prepare for a grass fire is at the [VicEmergency website](#)

4.3. Fire impacting critical infrastructure

4.3.1. Description

Critical Infrastructure fires are fires that burn buildings, facilities, plants, and structures of high importance that keep an area functioning, these can have important needs such as food, water, and energy. These fires are predominately fuelled by the materials the facilities and structures are made of or supplying.

These fires are extremely dangerous as some infrastructure provides a resource that is highly flammable making the fire difficult to control and extinguish. These types of fires are also dangerous because they can cut off some critical resources that an area needs to survive or operate.

Some examples of critical infrastructure in the City of Whittlesea include the Yan Yean Reservoir, South Morang Power Station and Victorian Transmission System VTS (Gas Pipeline Network). A future example would be the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal and Camerons Lane Interchange.

4.3.2. Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (air pollution, waterways poisoned).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction or interruption of the business, supply chain disruption, erosion).

4.3.3. Before a fire impacting critical infrastructure

- CFA and FRV will ensure that firefighters are familiar with the facility and conduct training exercises for such an event.
- CFA and FRV will have JSOP's.
- AusNet Services are responsible for the maintenance of the South Morang Power Station.
- APA are responsible for the maintenance of the gas pipes which make up the VTS

4.3.4. During a fire impacting critical Infrastructure

- CFA and FRV will conduct risk assessment, do a size up and develop strategies and tactics to extinguish the fire.
- APA and AusNet Services would respond to an event at their facilities.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- CFA and FRV may establish an EMT / IMT.
- CFA and FRV will issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA and FRV may request the MERC / MEMO.
- Communication and planning between FRV, CFA and VIC POL to effectively assist where needed.

4.3.5. After a fire impacting critical infrastructure

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the area safe.
- Reports on damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will work to handover the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend to determine what happened.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol investigate the affected areas to see how the fire started.
- CFA and FRV to conduct a debrief and AAR.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arrange disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.3.6. What community members can do in the event of fires impacting critical infrastructure

The best way to protect yourself and others from harmful chemicals or smoke in the air is to go indoors immediately. This is called shelter-in-place. Emergency officials may tell you to shelter-in-place during an emergency instead of evacuating.

- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from emergency services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact Emergency Services.
- Listen to emergency services including any broadcasts.
- If you can avoid the area if an incident occurs.

How to shelter-in-place

- Shelter – go inside immediately. Take your family and pets with you.
- Shut – close the doors and windows. Seal gaps with blankets and duct tape.
- Listen –listen to the radio for further information and additional instructions or visit cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

4.4. Industrial and chemical fire

4.4.1. Description

Industrial and chemical fires are fires that burn in industrial areas and buildings, these fires are predominately fuelled by chemicals and buildings materials. These types of fires have the potential to be catastrophic, depending on the types of chemicals and materials that are stored on site. These sites can also have large batteries, causing an intense and prolonged burn which can be difficult to extinguish. Industrial and chemical fires can start in many ways, including lightning, cigarettes, arson, batteries and spontaneous combustion. The areas of concern for industrial and chemical fires in the City of Whittlesea are Thomastown and Epping due to some large industrial areas located in these suburbs.

4.4.2. Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (Air pollution, waterways poisoned, erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction, or interruption of the business).

4.4.3. Before an industrial and chemical fire

- CFA and FRV conduct education programs - including fire safety for adults.
- CFA and FRV conduct community events – fire station visits, Christmas drive around, and attendance of community events promoting community safety.
- CFA and FRV have website information for planning, preparing, and educating on all types of fires, including fire risks, fire ratings and total fire ban days.
- FRV and CFA are working with the MBS on essential safety measure inspections and when buildings come to the attention of the MBS, stakeholders are informed.

4.4.4. During an industrial and chemical fire

- CFA, FRV and Vic Police have alerts and warnings including signs.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.
- Website information including a community evacuation sheet.
- Emergency services conduct emergency warning signals broadcast through radio, TV's or public areas.

4.4.5. After an industrial and chemical fire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area.
- Reports on damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV and Council review process for fire safety and fire prevention.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol investigate the affected areas to see how the fire started.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arrange disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.4.6. What community members can do in the event of an industrial and chemical fire

The best way to protect yourself and others from harmful chemicals or smoke in the air is to go indoors immediately. This is called shelter-in-place. Emergency officials may tell you to shelter-in-place during an emergency instead of evacuating.

- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from emergency services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact Emergency Services.

How to shelter-in-place

- Shelter – go inside immediately. Take your family and pets with you.
- Shut – close the doors and windows. Seal gaps with blankets and duct tape.
- Listen – listen to the radio for further information and additional instructions or visit cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

Community members can report any buildings of concern to FRV, CFA, EPA or their local Council.

4.5. Transport Fire

4.5.1. Description

Transport fires are fires that happen during transport which can include roads, railways and aviation. These fires involve burning vehicles such as trains, trucks, cars, buses, and planes. They are fuelled by the vehicles involved in the accident and any materials carried on board. These fires are easier to contain than most fires if they are attended by the appropriate authorities in time; but they have the potential to be extremely dangerous if authorities can't access the site of the incident and the type of materials on carried on board are chemical or explosive. Another factor making these fires dangerous is electrical vehicles. In the future these vehicles could become a concern as they could become more common and are harder to extinguish due to the battery providing fuel for an intense and prolonged burn. Fires within our municipality can also have an impact on flight paths due to smoke and can even cause flight delays. The areas of concern for transport fires in the City of Whittlesea are main roads and railways such as the Metropolitan Ring Road, the Hume Freeway, Plenty Road, and the Mernda railway and Epping rail lines as these are crucial points of travel through the municipality. These examples can have major impacts on the community.

4.5.2. Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (air pollution, waterways poisoned, erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction or interruption of the business, including disruption of supply chains).

4.5.3. Before a transport fire

- CFA and FRV conduct training exercises in the event of a transport fire.
- CFA and FRV will have JSOP's in place.
- CFA and FRV have website information for planning, preparing, and educating on all types of fires, including fire risks, fire ratings and total fire ban days.

4.5.4 During a Transport fire

- CFA and FRV will conduct a size-up on arrival and determine what strategies and tactics will be used.
- CFA and FRV will establish an EMT/ IMT for the event if required.
- CFA and FRV may issue community warnings.
- CFA and FRV may contact the MERC/MEMO for assistance.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- CFA and FRV can use thermal cameras depending on severity and accessibility
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.

- Website information including a community evacuation sheet.
- Emergency services conduct emergency warning signals broadcast through radio, TV's or public areas.

4.5.5 After a transport fire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and vehicles involved and make the scene safe.
- Reports on damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will work to handover the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol investigate the affected areas to see how the fire started.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a debrief, AAR and this will lead to a de-escalation of the event.
- Recovery phase of the event occurs.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arrange disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.5.6 What community members can do in the event of a transport fire

We all use the roads in different ways. We must work together to ensure road safety for everyone. The Transport Accident Commission provide information for all types of road users on how to be safe and to try and prevent accidents.

- Use maps or the VicTraffic app for traffic alerts including accidents.
- Report any road hazards or dangerous driving to the Police on 000 (depending on severity) or report it to the Department of Transport.
- Listen to Emergency Services including any broadcasts.
- If you can avoid the area if an incident occurs.
- The best way to protect yourself and others from harmful chemicals or smoke in the air is to go indoors immediately.
- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from Emergency Services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact emergency services.
- The community can report smoky vehicles under 4.5 tones to the EPA or for large trucks and busses over 4.5 tone head to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

4.6 Recyclable and waste storage, processing and disposal fire

4.6.1 Description

Recyclable and waste storage fires are fires that burn recycling and waste. These fires are predominately fuelled by recycling materials and waste including industrial and organic materials. These fires can be dangerous as recycling and waste are usually stored in big stockpiles giving the fire plenty of fuel to burn. Recyclable and waste storage fires can start in many ways, including lightning, cigarettes, arson and spontaneous combustion. The areas of concern for recyclable and waste storage fires in the City of Whittlesea are Wollert land fill and Repurposelt in Epping.

A full list of sites can be located here: [Waste and recycling facilities - Whittlesea Council](#)

4.6.2 Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (air pollution, waterways poisoned, erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction or interruption of the business).

4.6.3 Before a fire at a recyclable and waste storage, processing and disposal site

- CFA and FRV will identify and familiarise themselves with these facilities.
- CFA and FRV conduct training drills in the event of a fire occurring at these facilities.
- CFA and FRV will have JSOP's in place.
- FRV and CFA are working with the MBS on essential safety measure inspections and when buildings come to the attention of the MBS, stakeholders are informed.

4.6.4 During a fire at a recyclable and waste storage, processing and disposal site

- CFA and FRV respond and conduct a size up and develop strategies and tactics to tackle the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a risk assessment.
- CFA and FRV may establish an EMT / IMT.
- CFA and FRV may issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol may request the MERC / MEMO.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between FRV, CFA and VIC POL to effectively assist where needed.

4.6.5 After a fire at a recyclable and waste storage, processing and disposal site

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the scene safe.
- CFA and FRV will hand over the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend to determine what happened
- Reports on the damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a debrief and AAR and this will lead to a de-escalation of the event.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arrange disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.6.6 What community members can do in the event of a fire at a recyclable and waste storage, processing and disposal site

The best way to protect yourself and others from harmful chemicals or smoke in the air is to go indoors immediately. This is called shelter-in-place. Emergency officials may tell you to shelter-in-place during an emergency instead of evacuating.

- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from emergency services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact Emergency services.

How to shelter-in-place

- Shelter – go inside immediately. Take your family and pets with you.
- Shut – close the doors and windows. Seal gaps with blankets and duct tape.
- Listen – listen to the radio for further information and additional instructions or visit cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

Community members are encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour or illegal dumping of waste. It is illegal to dump waste. It can damage our environment, start fires, impact our health and threaten wildlife. The public can report to their local Council or to the EPA hotline 1300 372 842.

If you are undertaking home renovations, ensure that your subcontractors are disposing of waste to a facility licenced to accept this waste. More information can be found on the EPA website.

4.7 Illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site fire

4.7.1 Description

Illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site fires are fires that occur on sites that have material, rubbish and waste dumped illegally. These fires are often dangerous because the appropriate authorities are not aware of the site and the site would not be monitored, this gives the fire more time to spread, making it difficult to put out.

4.7.2 Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (air pollution, waterways poisoned, erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction or interruption of the business).

4.7.3 Before a fire at an Illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site

- CFA and FRV may identify these facilities accidentally by conducting patrols or been told by members of the public.

4.7.4 During a fire at an illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site

- CFA and FRV will respond and conduct a size up and develop strategies and tactics to tackle the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a risk assessment.
- CFA and FRV may establish an EMT / IMT.
- CFA and FRV may issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol may request the MERC / MEMO.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.

4.7.5 After a fire at an Illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the scene safe.
- CFA and FRV will hand over the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend to determine what happened.
- Reports on the damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a debrief and AAR and this will lead to a de-escalation of the event.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arrange disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.7.6 What community members can do in the event of a fire at an illegal waste, dumping and material stock piling site

The best way to protect yourself and others from harmful chemicals or smoke in the air is to go indoors immediately. This is called shelter-in-place. Emergency officials may tell you to shelter-in-place during an emergency instead of evacuating.

- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from emergency services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact Emergency services.

How to shelter-in-place

- Shelter – go inside immediately. Take your family and pets with you
- Shut – close the doors and windows. Seal gaps with blankets and duct tape
- Listen – listen to the radio for further information and additional instructions or visit cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

Community members are encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour or illegal dumping of waste. It is illegal to dump waste. It can damage our environment, start fires, impact our health and threaten wildlife. The public can report to their local Council or to the EPA hotline 1300 372 842.

If you are undertaking home renovations, ensure that your subcontractors are disposing of waste to a facility licenced to accept this waste. More information can be found on the EPA website.

4.8 Complex building fire

4.8.1 Description

Complex building fires are fires that happen in places of mass gathering, multi-story accommodation, care facilities and multi-use buildings. Some of these include shopping centres, apartments, hospitals, places of worship and aged care facilities. These fires are predominately fuelled by building products and soft furnishings depending on what the building is used for and may be at higher risk if medical gases are also on the premises.

These fires are usually considered dangerous due to the number of people occupying the facility - potentially with complex health or mobility issues; the amount or types of possible fuel for the fire; the size or layout of the building; and the emergency services resources required to evacuate and protect life, attack and extinguish the fire.

Key precincts for complex building fires in the City of Whittlesea may include Pacific Epping Plaza and the Northern Hospital site, Westfield Plenty Valley, RMIT University, University Hill Precinct and Bundoora Retirement Village

4.8.2 Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Infrastructure (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties).
- Environmental damage and impact (air pollution, waterways poisoned, erosion).
- Social Disruption (impact on activities inside the building or nearby).
- Economic (damage, destruction or interruption of the business).

4.8.3 Before a complex building fire

- CFA and FRV will identify and familiarise themselves with these facilities.
- CFA and FRV conduct training drills in the event of a fire occurring at these facilities.
- CFA and FRV will have JSOP's in place.

4.8.4 During a complex building fire

- CFA and FRV respond and conduct a size up and develop strategies and tactics to tackle the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a risk assessment.
- CFA and FRV may establish an EMT / IMT.
- CFA and FRV may issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol may request the MERC / MEMO.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.

4.8.5 After a complex building fire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the scene safe.
- CFA and FRV will hand over the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend to determine what happened
- Reports on the damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a debrief and AAR and this will lead to a de-escalation of the event.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.
- Professional clean-up of the site possibly including stakeholders (EPA, Fire Rescue Victoria, CFA, WorkSafe Victoria, Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water).
- EPA and emergency services provide alerts on air quality.
- EPA arranges disposal of waste to appropriately licensed facilities.

4.8.6 What community members can do in the event of a complex building fire

All occupiers are to ensure that all exits and paths of travel to exits are kept readily accessible, functional and clear of obstructions. The added dangers associated with evacuating a multi-story building means it is critical to plan for and know how to respond quickly and safely if there is a fire or other emergency. It is also vital to prevent a fire occurring in the first place.

- Use the VicEmergency app, emergency websites and tune in to emergency broadcasts.
- Follow directions from emergency services.
- If you feel you're in immediate danger, contact emergency services.

Actively practice building evacuation drills and assist building managers by monitoring any damage to building safety equipment.

It is also essential to have appropriate storage of combustible materials, to practice safe practices with cigarette butts and to maintain appliances. More information on safety in apartments can be found at cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

4.9 Residential (house) fire

4.9.1 Description

Houses fires are fires that burn through residential housing. These fires are predominately fuelled by common living items such as furniture, electricals and materials used to build the house. Most of these fires happen between 9pm and 6am. The most common reasons for a housefire includes unattended cooking, leaving cooking items on surfaces that are flammable, overloading power boards and leaving candles, cigarettes and incense unattended. These fires are a high risk to the City of Whittlesea as it's the fourth biggest municipality in Victoria in population density, with an estimate of 83,000 houses in 2021. An area of concern for house fires in the City of Whittlesea is Epping, due to a high population of around 34,000 in 2021.

4.9.2 Consequences

- Human (loss of life, serious injuries, respiratory impacts).
- Built form (damage or destruction of property and adjacent properties possibly including infrastructure, rural and residential).
- Environmental damage and impact (loss of neighbouring grasslands if applicable, biodiversity including air pollution and erosion and fire water runoff into storm water drains).
- Economic (significant impact to individuals, families or household members especially where insurance [home and/or contents] is inadequate or not in place).

4.9.3 Before a residential (house) fire

- CFA and FRV compile a list of known hoarding properties and can escalate a response if something occurs at these properties.
- Council to notify CFA and FRV of known hoarding properties.
- CFA and FRV conduct training drills in the event of a fire occurring at these properties.
- CFA and FRV will have JSOP's in place.

4.9.4 During a residential (house) fire

- CFA and FRV will respond and conduct a size up and develop strategies and tactics to tackle the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a risk assessment.
- CFA and FRV may establish an EMT / IMT.
- CFA and FRV may issue public warnings and advice.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol may request the MERC / MEMO.
- CFA and FRV actively attempt to rescue anyone in danger.
- CFA and FRV work to prevent the fire from spreading, actively protect life and property and work to extinguish the fire.
- Vic Police conduct traffic management, making sure no one can enter a dangerous area and helping evacuate people.
- Communication and planning between stakeholders (FRV, CFA, VIC POL) to effectively assist where needed.

4.9.5 After a residential (house) fire

- CFA and FRV wet down the fire damaged area and make the scene safe.
- CFA and FRV will hand over the scene to the appropriate agency or owner.
- CFA and FRV may request a fire investigator to attend to determine what happened
- Reports on the damage done by the fire.
- CFA and FRV will conduct a debrief and AAR and this will lead to a de-escalation of the event.
- CFA, FRV and Vic Pol search the areas for anyone who has been impacted.

4.9.6 What community members can do in the event of a residential (house) fire

A fire in your home can be devastating, even fatal. Once a fire starts it can spread rapidly putting you and your loved ones at risk. While the dangers are real, there is a lot you can do to protect yourself, your family and your home:

- have a working smoke alarm and test it regularly.
- look out for fire hazards in the home.
- have a home fire escape plan and practice it regularly.
- if a fire occurs in your home, get out, stay out and call Triple Zero (000).
- don't deadlock doors when you are at home. If you must deadlock the door when you are home leave the key in the door.
- report residential hoarding to your local Council.
- know and support your neighbours.
- clean up around the property and ensure equipment including barbeques are in good working order.
- ensure children are educated on fire safety.

For more information visit cfa.vic.gov.au or frv.vic.gov.au

**Whittlesea Municipal Fire
Management Sub-Plan
2023-2026**

