

summer news

from the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade

January 2014



the skycrane water-bombs Koos Road fire in Kangaroo Ground

in this newsletter...

Yarra Ranges Fire Restrictions
Do You Have a Fire Plan?
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Local Fires Update

Wait and See is *Not* a Fire Plan!

Does your household know what to do in the event of an emergency? Do you have a fire plan? Do you need to practice it or review it? Did you put it into action during last week's fires?

During last week's heat wave, there were two fires in the local area. Will you know what to do if the fire starts at your back door? It will be too soon for an official warning, and it takes time for fire crews to arrive. Does your fire plan cover this scenario?

Many residents have a fire plan, but wait for a formal warning before they act on it. Others wait and see if the fire will get near to them, and sometimes they wait too long! Re-visit your plan, and know what to do if you don't get any warning, or if the actions you planned can't be carried out. What if you planned to leave, but are not able to? What if the fire starts in your pump shed, or there is a tree across your driveway, or the car battery is flat? Do you have a back-up plan – visit <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/back-up-plans/> for information to help you prepare a workable fire plan.

Fire Restrictions Now In Force

Fire Restrictions for the Shire of **Yarra Ranges** came into force on **Monday 20 January 2014**. Restrictions for Nillumbik Shire have been in force since December.

You cannot burn off without a written permit from the Shire, and there are restrictions which apply to BBQs and campfires. Visit <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/can/> to see the restrictions explained.

On a day of **Total Fire Ban** you can't light any fire in the open, or allow a fire to remain alight. Nor can you use equipment such as welders or angle grinders, without a permit. Visit the website:

<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/can/#sthash.pBAmdgq1.dpuf>

Fire Ready Victoria

The first Fire Ready Victoria meeting held in the Brigade area on January 16th was well attended.

If you missed it, take the opportunity for a fire season update and question time at the **Bushfire Planning Workshop**, run by CFA, on **Wednesday 29 January 2014 at 7pm** Christmas Hills south Station (6 Catani Blvd. Bend of Islands).

Adding to the stress of the heat wave last week, was the thought that Monday 13th January was the anniversary of the 1939 Black Friday Bushfires, and Thursday 16th January was the anniversary of the 1962 fires which burnt out the whole of the local area between Kinglake and beyond the Yarra River to Heathmont



Christmas Hills crew during the 1962 fires, which burnt through the entire Brigade area.



Christmas Hills Fire Brigade

Café Benders Come and join us for coffee and cake at *Café Benders*, held every 3rd Saturday of the month, starting about 10.30am, south Station, 6 Catani Blvd., Bend of Islands.



enjoying the treats of *Chills Lounge*

Chills Lounge is BYO drinks with BBQ meats for sale (or BYO meat). It is run by the Brigade, starting about 6pm every 1st Friday of the month at the north Station 720 Ridge Road, Christmas Hills – come and meet your neighbours & friends – and bring the kids!

Summer News

Summer News is the Brigade's email newsletter. If you would like to receive the newsletters regularly send your email address to robyn.adams@members.cfa.vic.gov.au

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Hot Days But Good Saves!

Heat wave conditions during the week of January 13th – 17th posed a major challenge for Brigade firefighters, with temperatures over 40C each day, and very difficult working conditions.

About 3pm on Tuesday 14th the Brigade turned out to assist Kangaroo Ground at a 12ha fire burning in the Koos Road – Kings Road – Dawson Road area. The fire was first seen by the Fire Tower, and it built rapidly and threatened a number of houses. A quick response from neighbouring Brigades, three water-bombing helicopters, and several Strike Teams managed to prevent the fire from destroying any houses. The fire was actively patrolled until Friday 17th January.

About 6.30pm on the same day, the Brigade received a second call to an explosion and fire in Ironbark Road, Bend of Islands. This is a very difficult location, with limited access, poor Tanker maneuverability, and limited water. On arrival, two sheds were fully involved, and the fire had begun to move into the surrounding bush. Quick crew action brought it under control, and Yarra Glen Brigade crew provided breathing apparatus support due to the very smokey conditions. The house, gazebo and yurt were not damaged – a pretty good outcome!

Yarra Glen
Brigade crew
don their
Breathing
Apparatus.



All that endless training really paid off!!



Crews mop up at Ironbark Road, Bend of Islands

On Thursday 16th, with temperatures over 46C, the Brigade turned out to a call in One Tree Hill Road – thankfully a false alarm. Crews stood-by at the Stations on Friday – forecast to be our worst fire-weather day for the week - but luckily there were no fire calls.

Did you know about this fire-call? Did you implement your fire plan?