

Fire Prevention Notices

What is a Fire Prevention Notice?

Under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* and the *Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958*, Council has a legal obligation to ensure the community's risk associated with bushfire is reduced.

Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer has the authority to inspect properties for fire hazards and issue a land owner with a Fire Prevention Notice, detailing hazard reduction works which the land owner must undertake to reduce the property's fire risk.

Council also has the legal right to do anything to remove a fire hazard on private land and recoup the costs from the owner.

What do I need to do?

If you receive a Notice, it is important you read it carefully to ensure you understand all the work required. The type of hazard reduction work you may be required to undertake can include the removal of fine fuels such as twigs, leaves and long grass across your entire property and may also include additional work such as clearing a fire break, pruning trees or removing green waste.

Please note, the Notice does not authorise you to undertake works other than what is prescribed in the Notice. For further information on removing vegetation, contact Council.



When do I need to complete the work?

Municipal Fire Prevention Officers conduct inspections prior to the Fire Danger Period. Hazard

reduction works must be completed before the due date on the Notice and maintained throughout the Fire Danger Period.

Follow-up inspections are carried out on properties that have received a Fire Prevention Notice. If the works required have not been carried out to the satisfaction of the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer by the due date, you may receive an Infringement Notice and Council may engage a contractor to undertake the works, before recouping the costs from the land owner.

Can I have an extension?

Any requests to extend the due date of your Notice must be submitted in writing to the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer before the due date on your Notice. You must have a valid reason to explain why additional days are needed.

When is the Fire Danger Period?



The Country Fire Authority (CFA) introduces Fire Restrictions (Fire Danger Period) for all private land in Latrobe City Council over the summer period each year. During this period residents are required to obtain a permit to burn in the open air. Start and end dates vary from year to year and once declared can be found on the CFA (www.cfa.vic.gov.au) and Council (www.latrobe.vic.gov.au) websites.

What if I disagree with my assessment?

You can submit an appeal in writing to the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer before the due date on your Notice. The procedures to follow are outlined on the reverse of the Fire Prevention Notice.

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What if I have stock on my land or plan to cut it for hay?

If you intend to cut your paddock for hay, put stock on your paddock or carry out other works, contact the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer and inform them of your intentions before the completion date on your Notice. You may still be required to cut a fire break or complete other works as directed.



What if I think my neighbour's land is a fire hazard?

Every landowner has the responsibility to manage their land. If you believe that the land adjoining you is a fire hazard, make contact with the landowner or Council to have this rectified.

What about the Crown land/Parks land near my property?

Council cannot serve Notices to statutory bodies such as State Government agencies. If you have a concern about potential fire hazards on Crown land, contact the agency that manages the land. Key contacts for land managers in your area are:

- DELWP – 136 186, <https://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/>
- Parks Vic – 131 963, <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/>
- HVP Plantations – 9289 1400, <https://www.hvp.com.au/>
- Latrobe City Council – 1300 367 700, <https://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au>
- Regional Roads Victoria – 133 778, <https://regionalroads.vic.gov.au/>
- Vline – 1800 800 007, <https://www.vline.com.au/>
- Ausnet Services – 1300 360 795, <https://www.ausnetservices.com.au/>

The CFA may assist land managers with undertaking fuel management works on their land.

Council's fire hazard inspection program focuses on protecting your house and outbuildings by providing a fuel reduced area around these assets as per CFA guidelines.

Vegetation on roadsides is managed in the lead up to the fire season.

Road managers undertake bushfire prevention activities prior to and during summer. Country Fire Authority assist road managers in identifying and undertaking bushfire prevention works.

Council may serve Notices to land managers. If you have a concern about potential fire hazards, contact the land manager responsible for the property. You can also contact the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer at Council or CFA.

Why don't you make the person with all the native grasses cut their block?

Native grasses generate only about 10% of the fuel load of introduced pasture grasses such as Phalaris and Wild Oats – this is why we encourage the retention and regeneration of native grasses. This can only be achieved if we allow them time to re-seed, and not doing so encourages introduced grasses which create a much greater fire risk.

Where do I find more information about preparing my property for fire?

The Country Fire Authority has some excellent resources available to assist residents in preparing their homes for fire. Check out their website (www.cfa.vic.gov.au) or contact the CFA Community Education Coordinator at your local CFA Regional Office.

Contacting Council

If you require any further information, contact the Latrobe City Council Municipal Fire Prevention Officer:

1300 367 700,
<https://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Community/Emergencies/Fire>

See Latrobe City Council Information Sheets:

Vegetation Management - 10/30 and 10/50 Rules Explained
Landowner Bushfire Prevention Obligations
Roadside Vegetation Management & Firewood Collection
Bushfires & Designing Your Garden