

Know your fire weather districts

Fire Danger Ratings and Total Fire Bans are determined for each of these nine districts in Victoria:



Key tourism destinations in fire weather districts

Central	Dandenong Ranges, Southern Goldfields, Mornington Peninsula, Phillip Island, Yarra Valley, Daylesford, Great Ocean Road (East)
East Gippsland	Gippsland Lakes, Lakes Entrance
Mallee	The Murray (North)
North Central	Yarra Valley, Central Goldfields
Northern Country	Northern Goldfields, The Murray (Central)
North East	Great Alpine Road (West), Alpine Resorts
South West	Great Ocean Road (West), Twelve Apostles, The Otways, Southern Grampians
West & South Gippsland	Gippsland Lakes, Wilsons Promontory
Wimmera	Northern Grampians

Fire Danger Ratings

Fire Danger Ratings predict how a fire would behave if one started, including how difficult it would be to put out. The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the higher the risk.

Fire Danger Ratings are issued daily for each of Victoria's fire weather districts. You need to be aware of the daily Fire Danger Rating in the district you are visiting because for every Fire Danger Rating there is clear advice on what you should do.



Code Red	These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. Parks and forests are not safe places to be and they will be closed to the public. Do not enter closed parks or forests and if you are already there, the safest option is to leave the night before or early in the morning. Visit parks.vic.gov.au or call 13 19 63 for a list of park closures.
Extreme or Severe	Expect hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Reconsider plans to visit parks and forests. If you are already within a park or forest the safest option is to leave early in the day.
Very High, High or Low Moderate	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions. Check if any fire conditions are in force. Be aware of how fires can start and minimise the risk. Plan your activities carefully on hot, dry and windy days.

Emergency information and warnings

For current fire warnings and updates

Call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 (National Relay Service 1800 555 677)

Visit cfa.vic.gov.au

Listen to the emergency broadcasters: ABC Local Radio, commercial radio and designated community stations

Watch SKY NEWS television

Follow @CFA_Updates on Twitter and the CFA (Country Fire Authority) Facebook page

Download the CFA FireReady smartphone app

For park and forest closures and information

Call 13 19 63

Visit parks.vic.gov.au

For road closures and traffic information

Call 13 11 70

Visit vicroads.vic.gov.au

In an Emergency - Fire, Police, Ambulance

- Call** Triple Zero 000 (TTY 106):
 - If you see smoke, flames or embers
 - If fire is seriously threatening you
 - If you are or another person is injured and needs an ambulance

Do not call Triple Zero for information on bushfires. Only call Triple Zero if you are in urgent need of emergency assistance from police, fire or ambulance.

Images courtesy of Parks Victoria.

Tourism Victoria acknowledges the assistance and advice of Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment in the preparation of this publication. The Victorian Government and its agencies does not accept any liability to any person for the information or advice (or the use of such information or advice) which is provided in this publication or incorporated into it by reference and disclaims any liability for any errors or for any loss or other consequence, which may arise from any person relying on any information or advice.

You should seek further assistance if assessing the relevance and accuracy of its content in your particular area or require details as to any current restrictions or bans on the lighting of fire that might apply.

Hiking and camping in parks and forests

Bushfire safety tips for visitors



For fire updates call 1800 240 667 or visit cfa.vic.gov.au

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.
FireReady

Your bushfire safety

The warmer months are the perfect time to experience regional Victoria. However, Victoria is fire-prone. If you are hiking or camping between November to April in an area that is heavily forested, has thick bush or long, dry grass, or coastal areas with lots of plant life – you are at risk of fire. Follow these bushfire safety tips to ensure that your experience is safe and enjoyable.

Before you go

- **Monitor weather forecasts** for the area you plan to visit and pack a **portable AM/FM radio** to monitor local weather broadcasts during your visit.
- **Know the fire weather district** that you plan to visit so that you can remain aware of the Fire Danger Rating for that area and if there are any fire restrictions. A map of Victoria's fire weather districts is in this brochure.
- **Check the Fire Danger Rating and if there are fire restrictions** at cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.
- **Pack clothing** that can help protect you if you are caught in a fire. Natural fibre long pants, a light long-sleeved wool jumper or close weave cotton shirt offer the best protection.
- **Pack a mobile phone** programmed with numbers for the Victorian Bushfire Information Line and local park or Department of Sustainability and Environment offices.
- **Download the CFA FireReady smartphone app** to access fire danger information and receive alerts and warnings.
- **Carry hard copy maps.** GPS or mobile phones can be affected by smoke and may lack coverage in remote areas.
- **Leave your itinerary and mobile phone numbers** with someone in case of an emergency.
- **Check if any access roads, parks or forests are closed** by visiting parks.vic.gov.au. For your own safety, do not enter closed parks or forests.

While you are in a forest or a park

- **Check for fire warnings or alerts** in areas you will be hiking or camping by visiting cfa.vic.gov.au, calling 1800 240 667 or listening to an emergency services broadcaster on a radio.
- **Be prepared to change your plans on hot, dry and windy days.** Parks and forests may be closed in these conditions and it may be safer to visit regional cities. The nearest accredited Visitor Information Centre may be able to suggest alternative holiday activities on high-risk days.
- **Identify suitable places along your hiking route** such as a hut, large body of water or cleared area that could provide shelter if you cannot leave the area and there is a fire. These are last resort options only and do not guarantee your survival.
- **Be prepared for Code Red days.** If you are in a park or forest and a Code Red day is forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early the next day and return only when it is clearly safe to do so. Never travel into a high risk area (areas that are heavily forested, have thick bush or long, dry grass, or coastal areas with lots of plant life) on a Code Red day.

Do NOT expect an official bushfire warning. Due to the sheer size and geographic spread of Victoria's parks and forests, it is not possible for every visitor to personally receive a warning. It is your responsibility to remain alert and aware of the current weather and fire conditions.

Where can I check the Fire Danger Rating and if there is a Total Fire Ban?

- cfa.vic.gov.au or 1800 240 667
- Weather forecasts
- Radio, television and some newspapers
- Accredited Visitor Information Centres

Total Fire Bans

A Total Fire Ban sets legal restrictions on which activities can or cannot occur in a particular district for that day, including restrictions around barbecues and campfires. A Total Fire Ban aims to reduce the activities that may start a fire.

On days of Total Fire Ban:

- Campfires and open flame barbecues are not permitted. This includes kettle/Weber style barbecues and solid fuel camp ovens.
- Liquid fuel or gas appliances are not permitted to be used in the open, or in a tent, annexe or tent-like trailer.
- Some locations provide built in electric or gas barbecues. These can be used if there is a water supply within 10 metres and if there is no flammable material within three metres of the barbecue and an adult is present at all times.

Campfires

Campfires are part of the outdoor experience, but don't let your campfire go bush! Approximately 10 per cent of fires in Victoria's parks and forests are started by campfire escapes. Before you light a fire, check local fire restrictions and if a Total Fire Ban is in force by visiting cfa.vic.gov.au.

Things to remember:

- Don't light a campfire, or keep one alight, on dry, windy days.
- Clear the ground and air space of flammable material (eg. leaves, twigs, tree stumps) within three metres of your campfire.
- Campfires must be lit in a 30 centimetre deep hole and cannot exceed one square metre in size.
- An adult must be present at all times.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Extinguish your campfire with water, not soil.
- When it's cool to touch, it's safe to leave.

