



Buloke Shire Council Summer Preparedness Guide 2025 -2026

for Council Operations and Facilities



Preparing for the High Risk Weather Season

The Buloke Shire Council services may be limited or cancelled when the National Fire Danger Rating System reaches a certain level. This is a summary of the services that will or will not be provided during these times.

Council Services

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Swimming pool services	Refer to the Council website and social media for more information	Normal service	Refer to the Council website and social media for more information	Refer to the Council website and social media for more information
Community engagement	Normal service	Normal service	In-person community engagement may be rescheduled	In-person community engagement postponed
Animal management	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service	Restricted service

Council Facilities

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Customer Service located in the Wycheproof Shire Office	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service • Access may be restricted
Council Depots	Restricted or essential services	Normal service	Restricted or essential services	Restricted or essential services
Libraries in Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake, and Wycheproof	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service • Restricted service in high-risk area	Restricted or essential services (subject to staff availability)
Mobile library	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service • Restricted service in high-risk area	Restricted or essential services (subject to staff availability)
Saleyards	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service	Contact your selling agent for information on the status of the scheduled sales
Council-owned and managed property	Normal service • After hours (24/7) building related response service available • Contractor response dependent on level of risk associated with property request	Normal service • After hours (24/7) building related response service available • Contractor response dependent on level of risk associated with property request	Normal service • After hours (24/7) building related response service may be restricted • Contractor response dependent on level of risk associated with property request	Restricted or essential services • After hours (24/7) building related response service may be restricted • Contractor response dependent on level of risk associated with property request

Early Years and Youth

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Kindergarten services and long day care	Normal service	Normal service	Subject to Department of Education and service providers advice on closures	CLOSED
Maternal and child health services, including First Time Parent Groups (FTPG)	Normal service <ul style="list-style-type: none">No service in high-risk areaAll appointments will be rescheduled, wellbeing checks may be made via phone	Normal service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Home visits rescheduled to mornings or cooler daysAppointments for infants rescheduled to cooler daysFTPG scheduled for morning or rescheduled to another day	No service provided <ul style="list-style-type: none">All appointments will be rescheduled, wellbeing checks may be made via phone
Immunisation services	Normal service <ul style="list-style-type: none">No service in high-risk areasAll appointments will be rescheduled	Normal service	Normal service <ul style="list-style-type: none">No service in high-risk areas	No service provided <ul style="list-style-type: none">All appointments will be rescheduled
School crossings	Normal service	Normal service	Subject to Department of Education's advice on school closures	CLOSED

Events

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Events	If an Extreme, Catastrophic or Total Fire Ban Day is declared, check with event organisers whether event is going ahead. Event Organisers should refer to their risk assessment/emergency plan for Extreme, Catastrophic, and Total Fire Ban cancellation arrangements. Strong recommendation to cancel/postpone if event is outdoors or if there is a sizable gathering/movement of people. Advice may be sought from the CFA.			

Landfill, Transfer Stations and Bin Collections

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Landfill	Refer to relevant Fire Behaviour Index Category	Normal service	Closed to public	CLOSED
Transfer stations	Refer to relevant Fire Behaviour Index Category	Normal service	Closed to public	CLOSED
General waste, recycling and organics collections	Normal service	Normal service	Services may be affected	Services may be affected

Parks and Open Space

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Reserves	Normal service	Normal service	Normal service	Restricted or essential services
Grass maintenance	No service (non-irrigated sites)			

Works and Projects

SERVICE PROVISION	TOTAL FIRE BAN	HIGH Be ready to act	EXTREME Take action now	CATASTROPHIC Leave bush fire risk areas
Capital works	Normal service with extra precautions that may restrict service provision	Normal service	Normal service with extra precautions that may restrict service provision	Restricted or essential services
General Council works	Normal service with extra precautions that may restrict service provision	Normal service	Normal service with extra precautions that may restrict service provision	Restricted or essential services

UNDERSTAND YOUR WARNINGS

Australian Warning System

Do not rely on an official warning to leave. Emergencies can start quickly and threaten you within minutes.

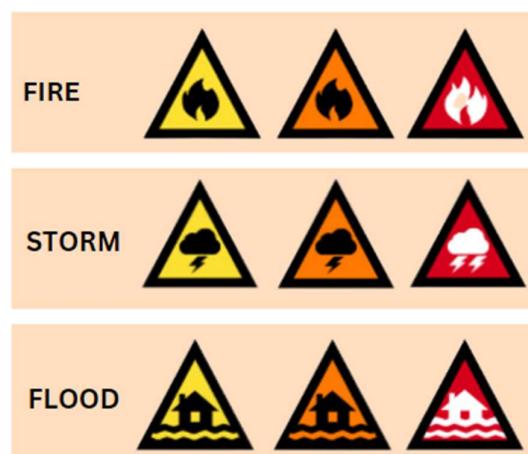
The Australian Government's Australian Warning System represents fire, flood and storm using the following symbols:

- **Advice (yellow)** – An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes
- **Watch and Act (orange)** – There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to act now to protect you and your family
- **Emergency Warning (red)** – An Emergency Warning is the highest level of warning. You may be in danger and need to act immediately

What to do if there is a warning?

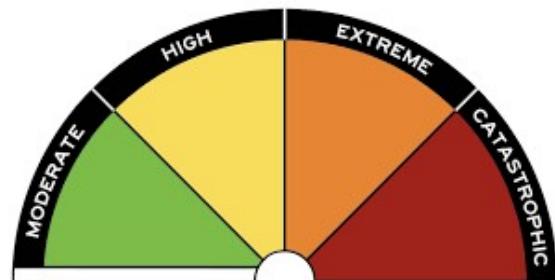
- Stay calm. Stop what you are doing and pay attention
- If you don't understand the warning, get someone to explain by asking neighbours or friends
- Follow the advice of warnings immediately. People may die or be put in danger if they do not respond in the right way
- Keep in contact with family members. Make sure they know what is happening and what you plan to do
- Stay informed. Keep listening to the radio for more information in case the situation changes

National Hazard Icons



Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System describes the potential level of danger, should a bushfire start. It provides people with information so they can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires.



Category	Community messaging
NO RATING	No proactive community action required
MODERATE	Plan and prepare
HIGH	Be ready to act
EXTREME	Take action now to protect life and property
CATASTROPHIC	For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

Further information

- **CFA** - <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/fire-bans-ratings-and-restrictions/about-fire-danger-ratings>
- **Heat Health** - <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/survive-the-heat>
- **Heat Wave Help** - www.heatwavehelp.com.au
- **VicEmergency** - <https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/>
- **Bureau of Meteorology** - <https://www.bom.gov.au/>
- **Vic Traffic** - <https://traffic.transport.vic.gov.au/>



VicEmergency app - www.emergency.vic.gov.au/prepare/#where-do-i-get-information-in-an-emergency

Heatwave Warning Service

The Heatwave Warning service provides a nationally consistent, impact-based warning that allows the public to take steps to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of heatwaves. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) issues Heatwave warnings when ten per cent or more of a weather district is in a severe or extreme heatwave. It is based on three days of unusually high maximum and minimum temperatures for that location. They use three heatwave categories based on intensity:

LEVEL	FREQUENCY	MESSAGING	HEALTH IMPACT
LOW-INTENSITY HEATWAVE	Mostly common EHF $> 0 < 1$	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible heat health warning from Department of Health• Monitor local conditions	Most people can cope during these heatwaves
SEVERE HEATWAVE	Less frequent EHF $\geq 1 < 3$	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BOM Heatwave Warning issued• Monitor local conditions• Prepare and respond according to heatwave plans	Can impact those most at risk such as those over the age of 65 years, particularly those with medical conditions, and the very young.
EXTREME HEATWAVE	Rarest EHF ≥ 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BOM Heatwave Warning issued• Monitor local conditions• Prepare and respond according to heatwave plans	Causing widespread health issues to all population cohorts. This can impact infrastructure such as power and transport.

(EHF = Excess Heat Factor)

We use the excess heat factor (EHF) in Australian heatwave monitoring and forecasting. Using this index, we classify heatwaves by intensity. The EHF combines: a comparison of the average temperatures for a 3-day period with what would be considered hot at that location.

The warning includes a description of the expected maximum and minimum temperatures, the timing of when the heatwave will peak and/or ease and affected towns and communities within the warning area.
www.bom.gov.au/australia/heatwave

The Chief Health Officer may also issue a Heat Health warning when they consider forecast temperatures pose a health risk for example a single day of extremely high temperatures.

Resources



CFA -
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/fire-bans-ratings-and-restrictions/about-fire-danger-ratings>



Heat Health –
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/survive-the-heat>



Heat Wave Help –
www.heatwavehelp.com.au



VicEmergency –
<https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/>



Bureau of Meteorology –
<https://www.bom.gov.au/>



Vic Traffic –
<https://traffic.transport.vic.gov.au/>