



NATIONAL RURAL
FIRE
AUTHORITY
Te mana ahi manaha o te motu

Firewise tips for residents

When a fire starts in a rural area it is often hard to control. Strong summer winds, dry vegetation, distances from fire stations and shortage of water combine to make rural fires dangerous and unpredictable.



The Canterbury Region Rural Fire Committee urges everyone to help reduce our fire risk this summer.

Protecting your home and family

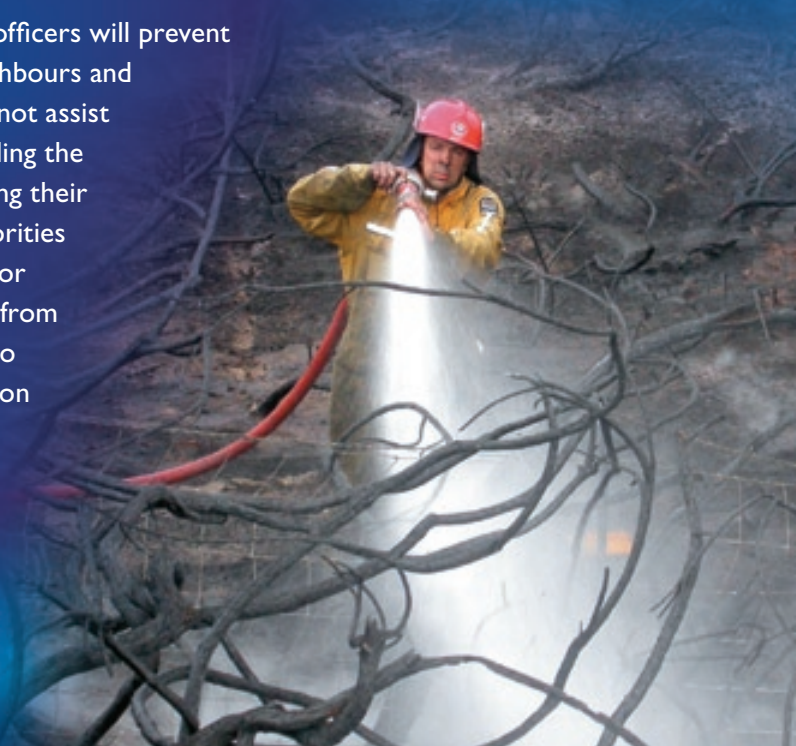
To reduce your risk, prepare your home and family today. Take the following steps to protect your home in the event of a grass, forest or scrub fire.

- Avoid all outdoor activities that generate heat or sparks, including open fires, open-flame cutting, arc welding, grinding, or operation of machinery with worn bearings or unguarded exhausts.
- Remove dead plants, debris and waste materials from sections: recycle, compost or mulch whenever possible – do not burn.
- Clear burnable materials around your home, livestock buildings, storage and implement sheds.
- Plant drought-resistant and less flammable native plants, trees and ornamental shrubs.
- Cut lawns and paddocks during safe periods (early morning after a cool night is best), and water where permitted so they stay green.
- Clean leaves and other debris from rain gutters and drain pipes.
- If appropriate, maintain a reserve water supply – preferably rainwater or recovered grey water – for firefighting.
- Connect a garden hose for immediate use.
- Prepare a home inventory and keep important documents in a safe place.
- Install smoke alarms. Make and practise a home escape plan. Designate a family meeting place.
- Signpost your property with your RAPID or street number and family name for easy identification.
- Maintain clear access routes for firefighting appliances to approach water supplies and significant buildings on your property.

Instructions on Evacuation

If a vegetation fire occurs in your area, you may need to evacuate. Fire managers prefer to avoid evacuating residents from well-protected homes who can help firefighters protect their properties. However, evacuations are sometimes necessary.

- Be prepared to evacuate as soon as instructed to do so. This is not the time to be gathering important documents or looking for items at the last minute. You must leave immediately.
- You may need to make your own decision to evacuate. If you cannot protect yourself or your property, leave without delay. Go to a place well outside the fire area.
- People with medical conditions may need to make the call to evacuate earlier than other residents.
- Fire and police officers will prevent spectators, neighbours and others who cannot assist them in controlling the fire from entering their cordons. Authorities may also direct or remove anyone from the fire area who is not in a position to protect themselves and their property.



Canterbury Region Rural Fire Committee

The Canterbury Region Rural Fire Committee consists of members from each Canterbury territorial authority (district and city councils), the Department of Conservation, New Zealand Defence Force, South Canterbury Rural Fire District, Ashley Rural Fire District and representatives from Environment Canterbury, NZ Forest Owners' Association, Federated Farmers, Forest Research, the National Rural Fire Authority and the New Zealand Fire Service.



For updates on the rural fire situation in Canterbury, visit www.ruralfire.org.nz



*"C'mon guys, get firewise"
E hoa mā... kia mataara ki te ahī!*

**Report all fires
immediately – Dial 111**