



Twenty-six weeks to preparedness A guide to taking action

Prepare. Act. Survive.

(Adapted from British Columbia Emergency Management 2007)

Each week it is suggested that you do at least one thing towards being bushfire ready. By 26 weeks (six months) you will be well on the way. By starting in winter, your plans should be complete by the start of the Bushfire Season. Remember opportunity shops and garage sales can help you save money on some items. The following weekly task list is a suggestion only, and your list will need to be adapted to suit your own personal circumstances.

Weekly Tasks:

WEEK 1: Get a large portable container with a lid to use as your survival kit. A plastic storage bin works well, particularly one with wheels. Choose an accessible location for the container near an exit and label the container. Make sure all family members know what it will be used for and where it is. You may want to pack items into individual wheeled containers to make them easier to carry by individual family members.

WEEK 2: Write down your bushfire survival plan with all the family present. Laminate it and put it near the phone, on the fridge, in your survival kit and take a copy to work.

WEEK 3: Add protective clothing for each family member to your kit. Be sure all items are made of natural fibres such as cotton and wool. Include goggles, face masks, broadbrim hat woollen socks, heavy leather work gloves, sturdy leather shoes and a woollen blanket for each family member.

WEEK 4: Get your emergency phone numbers and family contact lists up to date and keep this and other emergency phone numbers near each telephone. Teach family members these numbers. Consider setting up a telephone tree with your neighbours.

WEEK 5: Add family medications to your kit and a first aid kit.

WEEK 6: Get a portable battery-powered radio and extra batteries for your kit.

WEEK 7: Stock your kit with several varieties of packaged foods, drinks and dried fruit. If needed, include infant supplies including disposable nappies, disposable bottles, formula, etc.

WEEK 8: Identify hazards and vulnerable ember entry areas around your home. Make a to-do list. Allocate specific tasks.

WEEK 9: Create a defensible space. Remove, prune, slash, mow, weed, rake, and sweep in the garden and around the house.

WEEK 10: Practise your bushfire survival plan. Review and amend as necessary. Debrief with the whole family.

WEEK 11: Add personal items such as toilet paper, hand-wipes, soap, detergent, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, sanitary supplies, etc. to your survival kit.

WEEK 12: Add a torch and extra batteries to your kit.

WEEK 13: Add gutter bungs to your survival kit.

WEEK 14: Check your insurance policies and make records of your possessions. Update your insurance cover if necessary.

WEEK 15: Seal ember entry points.

WEEK 16: Maintain timber work by painting or sealing.

WEEK 17: Purchase or update fire fighting equipment.

WEEK 18: Enrol a family member in a first-aid course.

WEEK 19: Assemble important documents like wills, insurance papers, medical records, credit card numbers, inventory of possessions, identification, etc. Make copies and store originals in a fireproof / waterproof container that will be accessible if your home is damaged.

WEEK 20: Move hazardous materials away from the house including wood heaps, fuel, paints and other flammable materials.

WEEK 21: Assemble and check your fire fighting equipment.

WEEK 22: Practise your bushfire survival plan.

WEEK 23: Remove, prune, slash, mow, weed, rake, and sweep around the house.

WEEK 24: Clean out the gutters.

WEEK 25: Add items such as CDs, books, toys and cards as well as a family photo album to your kit.

WEEK 26: Meet with neighbours to discuss emergency preparations and the possibility of sharing items such as generators and fire fighting equipment. Know how to operate each other's equipment. Now you and your family are personally prepared. Once your kit is assembled, your survival plan is in place, and your home is defensible, remember to practise your plan and update it as your family's needs change.

Prepare.Act.Survive.