



# Horses and Bushfires

## Planning Template

Not everyone thinks clearly in an emergency.

A written and well practiced plan will help you remember what needs to be done during a crisis. Although you may not live in a high risk area, you may agist your horse in an area of high bushfire risk.

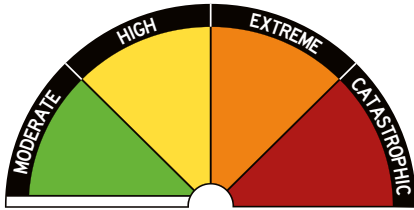
Whether your horses are located at home or on an agistment property, you must plan and prepare for their safety.

There are steps that you can take to reduce the impact of bushfire on your horses.



## Your trigger to act

- Know the Fire Danger Rating at your location
- The Fire Danger Rating is your 'trigger' to act
- The higher the rating, the more dangerous the situation if a fire starts



## Where to find warnings and information



Listen to ABC Local Radio, commercial and designated community radio stations and watch Sky News TV.



CFA website:  
[cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au)  
VicEmergency website:  
[emergency.vic.gov.au](http://emergency.vic.gov.au)



Social media:  
**Twitter @CFA\_Updates**  
and  
**facebook.com/cfavic**



**1800 226 266**  
VicEmergency Hotline  
is a freecall.



**1800 555 677**  
Callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment can contact the VicEmergency Hotline via the National Relay Service on this number.



**131 450**  
If you do not speak English, call the Translating and Interpreting Service for translated information from the VicEmergency Hotline. If you know someone who can't speak English, provide them with this number.

### IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES



You may receive an SMS to your mobile.



You may receive a call to your landline phone.

## Planning for bushfire

You and your family should already have a personal bushfire survival plan and it's important to remember that your own safety is paramount. In order to make well thought out decisions, you need to consider and plan for your horses whether or not you have them at home or agisted elsewhere.

### Your plan may include:

- Preparing your property
- Preparing your horse
- What to do on hot, dry and windy days
- After the fire

### PREPARING YOURSELF AND YOUR PROPERTY

YOUR ACTIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	DONE
Download the VicEmergency App to your smart phone		<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand the Fire Danger Ratings and identify your trigger to act		<input type="checkbox"/>

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	WHO WILL DO THIS?	DONE
Reduce vegetation around fencing (manually or spraying)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain a safe area for your horse ie. grazed paddock or sand arena		<input type="checkbox"/>
Open internal gates where possible (do not allow access to the road) on hot, dry and windy days		<input type="checkbox"/>

You may choose to leave your horse on the current property or relocate to a safer location. A number of considerations should be taken into account when making this decision.

Late evacuation or moving of horses can be very dangerous. Horses are flight animals and may not want to be caught or loaded onto floats if they sense danger. There will also be a lot of traffic on the road (including fire trucks) and visibility could be limited due to smoke.

STAY OR RELOCATE?		
Does your current property have an area that enables the horses to get away from the radiant heat? ie. large grazed paddock, sand arena, stock yards?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Where would you relocate your horse to?		
Do you have access to a float/truck?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
When would you relocate your horse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Night before	<input type="checkbox"/> Early in morning
Your trigger to relocate is what prompts you to act. You should use the Fire Danger Rating to determine your trigger. On <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days you should not be in a fire risk area.	Your trigger to leave is: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Extreme</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Catastrophic</b>	

PREPARING YOUR HORSE		
ACTIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	DONE
Microchip your horse and ensure details are current		<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop an emergency kit for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocation of horse; and</li> <li>First-aid treatment</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove halters, rugs and fly veils to reduce chance of burns		<input type="checkbox"/>

AFTER THE FIRE		
ACTIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	DONE
If possible, get horses off the burnt ground (heat in ground can cause burns and laminitis)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Check any damage to fencing (keep in mind that power outages may affect electric fencing)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Check water supply (power outages may also affect automatic feeders)		<input type="checkbox"/>

# Agistment Properties, Trail Ride Centres and Riding Schools

With running an equestrian business, brings the added complexity of people visiting your property, sometimes very ad hoc, and also the expectations of ensuring the safety of horses in your care.

If you operate such a business you should have

a bushfire survival plan incorporated into your business plan to reduce the risk to clients and staff (if applicable). Depending on your level of bushfire risk and number of clients the details in this will vary, however here are some points to consider for your property.

## AGISTMENT PROPERTIES

Do you have a written plan that is communicated to agistees? Agistees should also communicate their plan to you to ensure there are no conflicts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
What is the trigger for your bushfire plan to be enacted? You should use the Fire Danger Rating to determine your trigger. On <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days you should not be in a high fire risk area.	Your trigger to leave is: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Extreme</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Catastrophic</b>	
Who is responsible for removing rugs, halters and fly veils on bushfire risk days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Owners	<input type="checkbox"/> Us
Will you communicate to agisters leading up to trigger days ie. SMS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Will you restrict access on certain days, such as on <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riding activities must cease prior to 10am</li> <li>• People under the age 18 must have an adult with them on the property</li> <li>• Parts of the property may be closed</li> <li>• Only emergency appointments for farrier, vet, dentist, etc</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If you open up your facilities to external riders, such as arena hire, will this be restricted on certain days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

## TRAIL RIDE PROPERTIES/RIDING CENTRES

Do you have a trigger to cancel/postpone rides? You should use the Fire Danger Rating to determine your trigger. On <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days you should not be in a high fire risk area.	Your trigger to leave is: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Extreme</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Catastrophic</b>	
Do you need to alter the route/location of your rides on <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a cancellation clause in your booking system for <b>Extreme</b> or <b>Catastrophic</b> days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
How do you communicate cancellations/changes to bookings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

### USEFUL LINKS

Agriculture Victoria – <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au>  
 Bushfire Preparedness for Small Landholders Video – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqCF\\_QFCp0k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqCF_QFCp0k)