



Eastern Hills Senior High School

Bushfire Information

Introduction

This plan is for Eastern Hills Senior High School and has been designed to assist in the event of a total fire ban, catastrophic fire danger rating, or a bushfire.

Bushfire Preparedness

As a part of its Bushfire Plan, the school includes the following actions:

- Liaison and planning with local and state authorities: Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), WA Police, Shire of Mundaring.
- Conducts lessons regarding bushfire safety and awareness for all students.
- Undertakes evacuation drills regularly prior to the bushfire season.
- Provides information to parents/guardians/caregivers and community members.

Fire Danger Ratings

[Bushfire Overview - Department of Fire and Emergency Services \(dfes.wa.gov.au\)](https://dfes.wa.gov.au)

The Bushfire Plan also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency:

- Catastrophic fire danger rating.
- On days of Total Fire Ban.
- When there is a fire in the local district.
- When a bushfire is threatening or impacting the site.

Fire Danger Ratings

Fire danger rating	Fire behaviour index range	High-level messaging	Actions
No rating	Zero to 11	Minimal risk.	
Moderate	12 to 23	Plan and prepare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain normal school operations. • Plan and prepare.
High	24 to 49	Be ready to act.	Maintain normal school operations but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor Emergency WA. • Know the triggers and be ready to act.
Extreme	50 to 99	Take action now to protect life and property.	Maintain normal school operations but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor Emergency WA. • Know the triggers and be ready to act. • Schools listed on the Bushfire zone register as extreme or very high may close on instruction from the Director General. • Action procedures in the school's bushfire plan. • Cancel bus services.
Catastrophic	100+	For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools listed on the Bushfire zone register as extreme or very high may close on instruction from the Director of Education. • Action procedures in school's bushfire plan. • Cancel bus services.

Bushfire Plan

The school's Bushfire Plan helps staff prepare for days when a fire behaviour index of 75 (extreme fire danger rating) or greater is forecast, or there is a bushfire.

Pre-emptive (planned) closure process

If the school has a risk rating of extreme and if a fire behaviour index of 75 or greater is forecast, the school may need to follow the process for pre-emptive (planned) closure.

The Regional Director of Education will notify the school if it should prepare for a pre-emptive (planned) closure.

The decision on whether or not the school will go ahead with the planned closure is made by 4:30 pm the day before the pre-emptive closure. The decision is made by either the:

- Deputy Director General, Schools.
- Manager, Security and Emergency Management.

The school will receive as much notice as possible so that parents/guardians/caregivers, staff and students can be informed.

Notice will be given using SMS alerts, social media, school newsletters and notices displayed at the school.

If the forecast changes after the 4:30 pm deadline, the school will remain closed.

If weather conditions improve between the announcement of pre-emptive closure and 4:30 pm on the eve of closure, pre-emptive closure may be cancelled. If the closure will not go ahead, the Regional Director of Education will advise the school and the school community will be notified that the school will open as usual.

During a Planned Closure

The Principal will stay informed of current Fire Danger Rating (FDR) and any fire activity by monitoring local media (local radio, especially the ABC, and television) and by regularly checking for updates with DFES.

Re-opening School

Parents/guardians/caregivers will be informed when the Catastrophic FDR has been downgraded and that it is therefore safe for staff & students to return to school after a planned closure. A letter will be sent to parents/guardians/caregivers containing advice on how parents/guardians/caregivers can monitor the situation. The school will put communication plans in place, such as placing a notice on the school website and providing a number for parents/guardians/caregivers to call for information about the reopening of the school. Consideration will be given how parents/guardians/caregivers who do not have internet access or who have diverse needs will be provided with the information.





Responding to a sudden bushfire event

Community alerts and warnings for bushfires that threaten lives and property are issued through the Emergency WA website.

The warnings are issued once firefighters have determined the level of threat to the community. The alert level changes to reflect the increasing risk to life and property.

The school will follow its Bushfire Plan when there is a bushfire event.

Emergency services use four bushfire warning alerts as a guide to responding to a bushfire event that may impact a school.

Bushfire warning stages	
ADVICE 	A fire has started, but there is no immediate danger. Stay alert and watch for signs of a fire. Be aware and keep up to date.
WATCH AND ACT 	A fire is approaching and there is a possible threat to lives or homes. Put your plan into action. If your plan is to leave, make sure you leave early. If your plan is to stay, check all your equipment is ready. Only stay and defend if you are mentally and physically prepared.
EMERGENCY 	An out-of-control fire is approaching fast and you need to take immediate action to survive. If you haven't prepared, it is too late. You must seek shelter or leave now if it is safe to do so.
ALL CLEAR 	The danger has passed and the fire is under control but stay alert in case the situation changes.

Total Fire Ban Days

In the event of a Total Fire Ban, activities that may start a fire must not be undertaken. The school will review activities for the day and respond accordingly to minimise the risk of fire.

For information on activities that can or cannot be carried out during a Total Fire Ban visit the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) website.

If the information you want is not available from the website, telephone the Total Fire Ban Information Line 1800 709 355.

This information is also available by visiting www.dfes.wa.gov.au

During days of Total Fire Ban, the school will monitor DFES advice for any information relevant to school activities.

Bushfire in the Local District

Bushfire- Watch community

During a bushfire, Emergency Services provide as much information as possible through a number of different channels. There are three levels of warning, **ADVICE**, **WATCH AND ACT** and **EMERGENCY WARNING**. These change to reflect the increasing risk to life and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire. A bushfire in the district but not directly threatening the school would be an **ADVICE** and information would be monitored accordingly.

Bushfire is Threatening or Impacting on the School Site

Watch and Act

A **WATCH AND ACT** message tells you the fire conditions are changing and there is a possible threat to lives and the school. The Principal or delegate will contact the controlling agency to seek instruction as to whether to move students, staff and visitors to their pre-determined Safer Location on the site or evacuate.

The direction to evacuate by the Emergency Services Incident Controller will consider the location of the bushfire, the ability to travel safely to the selected evacuation point and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances it may not be safe to evacuate.

Emergency Warning

An **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level of warning and tells of **immediate** danger. In some circumstances it may start with a siren sound called the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) to get your attention as the fire is about to arrive. SEWS is a distinctive sound that is broadcast immediately prior to major emergency announcements on radio, television and other communication systems. SEWS tells people 'you need to listen- there is an emergency in your area and you need to take action now'. It is used like a siren and is strictly controlled for use by an authorised hazard management agency only.

The Principal or delegate will contact the controlling agency to seek instruction as to whether to move students, staff and visitors to their pre-determined Safer Location on site or evacuate.

The direction to evacuate by the Emergency Services Incident Controller will consider the location of fire and ability to travel safely to the selected evacuation point and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances it may not be safe to evacuate.

All Clear

An **ALL CLEAR** is issued when the threat has passed and the fire is under control. Fire-fighters will still be working to put out the fire making the area safe, so it is important to remain vigilant in case the situation changes. It may still not be safe to leave the school or return home. Emergency services will advise when you can go home.

Bushfire- Act

Response when a bushfire starts and the school is open

The school's Bushfire Plan is used to prepare for the incident. The school may be evacuated off-site on advice from DFES. This will be approved if the evacuation to the off-site safer location is safe and how long will it take to get there.

Parent Access

Parents/guardians/caregivers will be informed when and where to pick up students upon advice from the school or through DFES or Incident Controller.

If DFES declares it safe for parents/guardians/caregivers to pick up students, the school will assist parents/guardians/caregivers but will require parents/guardians/caregivers to "Sign Out" students so that all people on-site can be accounted for.

If DFES advise road closures which may affect parents/guardians/caregivers whilst they are in attendance, this advice will be passed on.

Safer Location

Due to the location of Eastern Hills Senior High School, evacuation to an alternate safer location off-site during a bushfire emergency may be difficult. The large number of people on-site to be moved requires a significant number of buses which may not be available within a reasonable time for the evacuation to occur in a timely manner.

Due to the issues of evacuating the site, a strategy of **SAFER LOCATION** is employed as a first response. Any subsequent evacuation would occur from this safer location. In a safer location strategy, buildings are nominated as **Safer Location** buildings for this school, which have been identified for a bushfire emergency and will safely accommodate all persons normally at the school. The buildings are chosen according to the criteria recommended by DFES in their guide "Prepare, Act, Survive. (This guide is available at the DFES website www.dfes.wa.gov.au)

Communication in the Event of a Bushfire

In the event of bushfire affecting the school normal communication may become compromised. Whilst every effort will be made to maintain normal communications this cannot be guaranteed. The following list of information sources may be useful:

School Communication

School Phone: 95730300

This number will be available whilst staff are on-site as long as lines to the school are not compromised.

Text Bulletins

These will be issued from the school as network access permits.

Email Contact

These may be issued from the school as network access permits.

School Facebook Page

Regular updates will be posted on this page as long as access is available.

School Website www.ehshs.wa.edu.au

Information will be posted to the School Website as network access permits

Outside Agency Communication

Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)

Website www.dfes.wa.gov.au

Telephone 13DFES (13 33 37)

- **Emergency WA**

Website: <https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/>

Radio

ABC Local Radio 720, Radio 6PR 882

Community warnings may also be issued via text to mobile accounts in the affected areas.

WA Department of Education

Education Department website www.education.wa.edu.au

North Metropolitan Regional Education Office **92853600** (8:15am – 5:00pm)