

Know your fire weather districts

Fire Danger Ratings and Total Fire Bans are determined for each of these nine districts in Victoria:



Key tourism destinations in fire weather districts

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Central | Dandenong Ranges, Southern Goldfields, Mornington Peninsula, Phillip Island, Yarra Valley, Great Ocean Road (East) |
| East Gippsland | Gippsland Lakes, Lakes Entrance |
| Mallee | The Murray (North) |
| North Central | Yarra Valley, Central Goldfields |
| Northern Country | Northern Goldfields, The Murray (Central) |
| North East | Great Alpine Road (West), Alpine Resorts |
| South West | Great Ocean Road (West), Twelve Apostles, The Otways, Southern Grampians |
| West & South Gippsland | Gippsland Lakes, Wilsons Promontory |
| Wimmera | Northern Grampians |

Fire Danger Ratings

The Fire Danger Ratings predict how bad a fire would be if one started.

During the warmer months, check the Fire Danger Rating for the area you are visiting every day so that you know when the local conditions are dangerous. The Fire Danger Rating will feature in weather forecasts and be broadcast on radio and TV and appear in some newspapers. It can also be found at cfa.vic.gov.au, on the FireReady smartphone app or by calling the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.



| | What does it mean? |
|---------------------|---|
| Code Red | These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. Parks and forests are not safe places to be and they will be closed to the public. Do not enter closed parks or forests and if you are already there, the safest option is to leave the night before or early in the morning. Visit parks.vic.gov.au or call 13 19 63 for a list of park closures. |
| Extreme | Expect hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. |
| Severe | Reconsider plans to visit parks and forests. If you are already within a park or forest the safest option is to leave early in the day. |
| Very High | If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions. |
| High | Check if any fire restrictions are in force. Be aware of how fires can start and minimise the risk. |
| Low Moderate | Plan your activities carefully on hot, dry and windy days. |

Fire warnings and further information

- **Call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.** Callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment can call the National Relay Service on 1800 555 677
- **Visit cfa.vic.gov.au**
- **Tune in to the emergency broadcasters:** ABC Local Radio, commercial radio and designated community radio stations
- **Download the FireReady smartphone app**
- **Watch Sky News on television**
- **Visit an accredited Visitor Information Centre**

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For park and forest closures and information, go to parks.vic.gov.au or call 13 19 63

For road closures and traffic information, go to vicroads.vic.gov.au

In an emergency

CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) TO CONTACT POLICE, FIRE OR AMBULANCE (TTY 106). CALLS ARE FREE.

You should only call 000 in life threatening or time critical situations when an urgent response is needed from police, fire or ambulance.

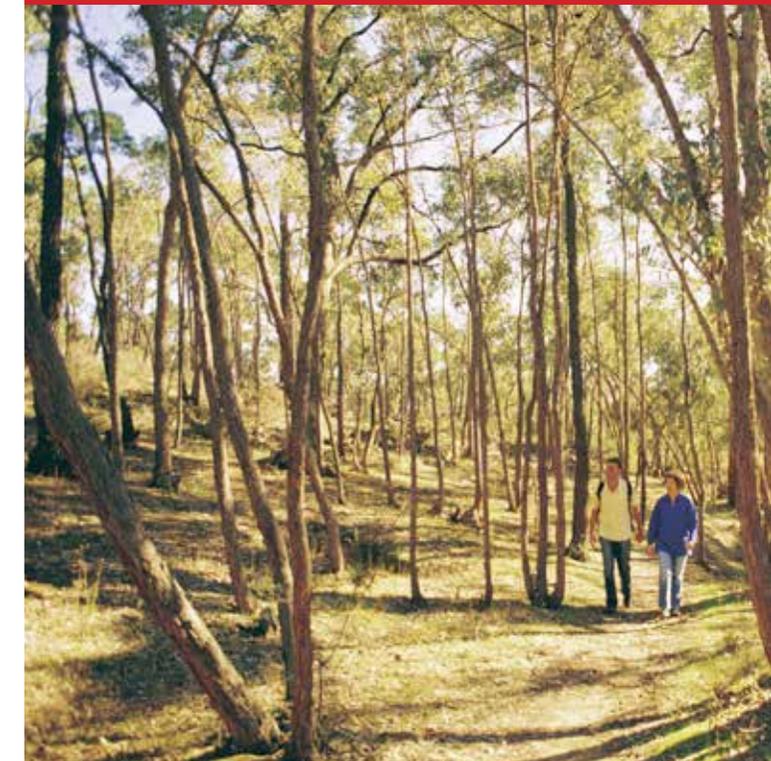
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Images courtesy of Parks Victoria.

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Hiking and camping in parks and forests

Bushfire safety tips for visitors



For fire updates call 1800 240 667 or visit cfa.vic.gov.au

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.
FireReady

Your bushfire safety

The warmer months are the perfect time to experience regional Victoria. However, Victoria is fire-prone. If you are hiking or camping between November to April in an area that is heavily forested, has thick bush or long, dry grass, or coastal areas with lots of plant life – you are at risk of fire. Follow these bushfire safety tips to ensure that your experience is safe and enjoyable.

Before you go

- **Monitor weather forecasts** for the area you plan to visit and pack a portable AM/FM radio to monitor local weather broadcasts during your visit.
- **Know the fire weather district** that you plan to visit so that you can remain aware of the Fire Danger Rating for that area and if there are any fire restrictions. A map of Victoria's fire weather districts is in this brochure.
- **Check the Fire Danger Rating and if there are fire restrictions** at cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.
- **Pack clothing** that can help protect you if you are caught in a fire. Natural fibre long pants, a light long-sleeved wool jumper or close weave cotton shirt offer the best protection.
- **Pack a mobile phone** programmed with numbers for the Victorian Bushfire Information Line and local park or Department of Sustainability and Environment offices.
- **Download the FireReady smartphone app** to access fire danger information and receive alerts and warnings.
- **Carry hard copy maps.** GPS or mobile phones can be affected by smoke and may lack coverage in remote areas.
- **Leave your itinerary and mobile phone numbers** with someone in case of an emergency.
- **Check if any access roads, parks or forests are closed** by visiting parks.vic.gov.au. For your own safety, do not enter closed parks or forests.

While you are in a forest or a park

- **Check for fire warnings or alerts** in areas you will be hiking or camping by visiting cfa.vic.gov.au, calling 1800 240 667 or listening to ABC Local Radio or other emergency broadcasters.
- **Be prepared to change your plans on hot, dry and windy days.** Parks and forests may be closed in these conditions and it may be safer to visit regional cities. The nearest accredited Visitor Information Centre may be able to suggest alternative holiday activities on high-risk days.
- **Identify suitable places along your hiking route** such as a hut, large body of water or cleared area that could provide shelter if you cannot leave the area and there is a fire. These are last resort options only and do not guarantee your survival.
- **Be prepared for Code Red days.** If you are in a park or forest and a Code Red day is forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early the next day and return only when it is clearly safe to do so. Never travel into a high risk area (areas that are heavily forested, have thick bush or long, dry grass, or coastal areas with lots of plant life) on a Code Red day.

Do NOT expect an official bushfire warning. Due to the sheer size and geographic spread of Victoria's parks and forests, it is not possible for every visitor to personally receive a warning. It is your responsibility to remain alert and aware of the current weather and fire conditions.

Where can I check the Fire Danger Rating and if there is a Total Fire Ban?

- cfa.vic.gov.au or 1800 240 667
- **Weather forecasts**
- **Radio, television and some newspapers**
- **Accredited Visitor Information Centres**

Total Fire Bans

A Total Fire Ban sets legal restrictions on certain activities that may start a fire, including restrictions around barbecues and campfires.

On days of Total Fire Ban:

- Campfires and open flame barbecues are not permitted. This includes the use of kettle/Weber style barbecues and camp ovens.
- Solid fuel barbecues (e.g. wood, charcoal and briquettes) are not permitted.
- Liquid fuel barbecues or appliances are not permitted to be used in the open, or in a tent, annexe or tent-like trailer.
- Gas and electric barbecues are permitted, provided that:
 - The area three metres around the barbecue is cleared of flammable material.
 - You have a hose connected to a water supply or vessel with at least 10 litres of water.
 - An adult who has the capacity and means to extinguish the fire is present at all times.
 - The fire is completely extinguished before the adult leaves.

Find out more about Total Fire Bans at cfa.vic.gov.au.

Campfires

Campfires are part of the outdoor experience, but don't let your campfire go bush! Approximately 10 per cent of fires in Victoria's parks and forests are started by campfire escapes. Before you light a fire, check local fire restrictions and if a Total Fire Ban is in force by visiting cfa.vic.gov.au.

Things to remember:

- Don't light a campfire, or keep one alight, on dry, windy days.
- Clear the ground and air space of flammable material (eg. leaves, twigs, tree stumps) within three metres of your campfire.
- Campfires must be lit in a 30 centimetre deep hole and cannot exceed one square metre in size.
- An adult must be present at all times.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Extinguish your campfire with water, not soil.
- When it's cool to touch, it's safe to leave.

