

News From the West Gidge Brigade June 2010

Restricted Burning Season ends 31st May unless extended. Permits are required until then.

Be reminded that not requiring a permit in no way exonerates you from the responsibility to safely manage any burning. You are still liable for any consequences of loss of control of a fire. You should always have a secure perimeter firebreak, an effective means of extinguishment, notify neighbours of all but the smallest burns, and don't leave fires unattended unless completely safe to do so.

Verge Burning

Please be reminded that verge burning by residents is not allowed and may result in prosecution. If you are concerned regarding the risk posed by verge vegetation you should contact City of Swan on swan@swan.wa.gov.au or 92679267 with your concerns. The council officers will decide whether any action is required and organise it accordingly. Do not contact the Brigades directly on this matter.

Hazard Reduction winter program

Autumn and Winter are great times to carry out significant hazard reduction measures. This includes measures such as trimming shrubs and branches and clearing unwanted regrowth which might present a threat to infrastructure. Doing it early gives opportunity for the debris to dry properly so it can be safely burnt during the spring Restricted Burning Season. Preparing your property for bushfire takes a concerted year round effort, last minute action is usually far less effective

Burning in Winter

Fine spells during winter allow easily managed hazard reduction burning. FESA conduct winter burning seminars, details can be found at www.fesa.wa.gov.au

In particular heavy dry skirt accumulations of grass trees can be burnt off, in some areas this represents up to 70% of the dry fuel available to bushfires Brigades will also offer advice.

Planning for Bushfires

A revised policy document has been released by WAPC. Future developments and construction will have to be planned with this in mind. It will not apply retrospectively but some of the principles should be considered seriously when considering improvements to existing infrastructure. You can view this on the WAPC website www.planning.wa.gov.au

The policy includes

- methods for assessing bushfire risk
- siting of development
- hazard reduction measures
- building construction standards
- access for emergency vehicles
- escape routes
- built in firefighting measures

Water Point Register

A common problem for Brigades in the Gidge area is accessing water supplies. Some landholders have been proactive in allowing us to identify and signpost these. West Gidge Brigade would like to improve the information on these to allow more efficient firefighting operations.

What we are looking for in particular are

- a. Dams which can easily be accessed by 2WD water tankers (7000 lt and 12000 lt) for drafting. These are often used to ferry water to nearer the fireground to refill 4WD units.
- b. Dams which can be accessed only by 4WD fire fighting units.
- c. Dams which may not be directly accessible to firefighting units but are suitable for Brigades to set up a ground pump and hoses. Fire units would still need to be able to get within 30 metres or so.
- d. Private standpipes which are suitable for refilling fire units

Such information would be available to senior Brigade personnel. With the approval of the landholder small reflective signs would be placed to guide fire crews who may be unfamiliar with the area.

Please help us to help you, your neighbours and community in an emergency by being involved in this project. West Gidge residents should contact the West Gidge Captain on 0427770003 or john.mangini@bigpond.com to arrange an inspection and discussion re the suitability of such water supplies.