

Parks and Forests Closures on Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days

Many of Victoria's parks and forests are in bushfire prone areas. While they are great places to enjoy, during some weather conditions they are not safe places to be.

You need to read this information carefully, as fires that start under some weather conditions may be fast moving, unpredictable and uncontrollable. You may not receive an official warning of a bushfire and you should not expect a fire truck.

Victoria has adopted the national system of Fire Danger Ratings. On days of forecast Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Parks Victoria will close parks and forests (including state forests and national parks) in the bushfire prone areas of the relevant weather district for public safety.

For more information on the Fire Danger Ratings system and Total Fire Bans visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the VicEmergency Hotline on **1800 226 226**.

Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility and anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions and remain alert to signs of fire such as smoke or emergency vehicles.

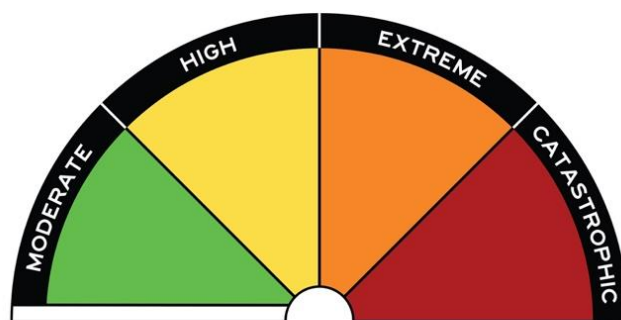
Will a ranger come and tell me to leave?

Due to the sheer size and geographic spread of Victoria's parks and forests, it will not be possible for every visitor to personally receive a warning. It is your responsibility to remain alert and aware of the current weather conditions. DELWP and Parks Victoria need to focus on being prepared for fighting any fires that begin.

When preparing to leave ensure any campfires are properly extinguished – using water, not dirt – so they cannot start a bushfire.

Will all parks and forests be gated or fenced off to stop access on Catastrophic Fire Rating days?

Gated entries will be closed at relevant parks or visitor sites. However, it is not possible to gate or fence off all parks and forests, as these are often vast areas of land, sometimes with roads running through them. People need to act responsibly and safely and stay out of parks and forest areas on these days.



AUSTRALIAN FIRE DANGER RATING

On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days, parks and forests are not safe places to be and they will be closed to the public.

For your own safety, do not enter parks or forests and if you are already there you should leave the night before or early in the morning.

You may not receive a personal warning or see signage that the park or forest is closed.

How do I find out what the forecast Fire Danger Rating is?

Fire Danger Ratings feature in weather forecasts on radio and television and in newspapers. You can also check online at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the VicEmergency Hotline on **1800 226 226**.

What should I do on days of Extreme or Severe Fire Danger Rating?

On days of Extreme and Severe Fire Danger Ratings you should reconsider plans to visit parks and forests, and if you are already within a park or forest the safest option is to leave early in the day.

How do I find out which district I am in?

The Fire Danger Rating forecasts are issued according to weather districts. You can view more detailed maps of the districts online at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the VicEmergency Hotline on **1800 226 226**.

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If I leave the forest or park where should I go?

Visitor Information Centres in regional locations can suggest alternative tourism opportunities.

What if I don't want to leave?

Parks and forests are not safe places to be and you will be putting yourself at risk by remaining in these areas.

If a fire starts on a Catastrophic Fire Rating day, you can expect that it could be unpredictable, uncontrollable and fast moving. You should not expect a fire truck.

It is an offence to knowingly enter parks or forests which are closed, and penalties may apply.

Are there any parks or forests which won't be closed on Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days?

All state forests and forest parks will be closed on Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days.

Some parks or visitor areas which are judged to be at a lower risk of bushfire may remain open, such as those in inner-urban areas or areas which have been recently burnt.

Visit the Parks Victoria website www.parks.vic.gov.au to view a complete list of park closures.

What if I usually access my property through park or forest?

If you access your property through park or state forest, you will be allowed to enter the area for the purpose of entering or leaving your property.

On a Catastrophic Fire Rating day, the safest option if you live in a bushfire prone area is to leave your home the night before or early in the morning.

What if the park or forest I'm in spans more than one Fire Danger Rating district?

Visit www.parks.vic.gov.au or call **13 19 63** for a complete list of park closures.

Where can I go if I need more information about bushfire?

For current bushfire information:

Tune into

ABC Local Radio, commercial radio stations across Victoria and SKY News television.

Call

VicEmergency Hotline on **1800 226 226**

Go online

www.cfa.vic.gov.au, www.emergency.vic.gov.au or download the VicEmergency app. For more information about camping or hiking in Victoria, call Parks Victoria on **13 19 63** or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au

For emergencies dial "000"

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