



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



MEDIA RELEASE

Official start to Bush Fire Season brought forward

20 August 2018

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) advises the statutory Bush Fire Danger Period has been brought forward and will commence on 1st September 2018, one month ahead of the usual commencement date.

Inspector Rolf Poole, Acting District Manager said, “The early start to the Bush Fire Danger Period is a result of the current drought conditions and elevated fire risk being experienced across the state and in the local government areas.”

“This action to bring forward the official Bush Fire Danger Period is being taken to better manage the fires being lit in the open, for legitimate reasons, and to mitigate potential fire escapes.”

The Bush Fire Danger Period will run from 1st September 2018 to 31st March 2019 and fire safety permits are required for open burning activities including pile burning, hazard reduction burning activities, during this period.

A Fire Safety Permit can be obtained free of charge by contacting the local Fire Brigade or Fire Control Centre and is an additional requirement to environmental approvals that are required all year round.

“Significant penalties apply to those who light fires in the open without a permit, without providing the mandatory notice or for allowing a fire to escape your property”, Inspector Poole said.

Offences under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* include fines in excess of \$1,100 for failing to notify authorities prior to lighting, or lighting fires that are dangerous to buildings. Unlawfully leaving a fire unattended before being extinguished, attracts a fine of \$2,200.

“Whilst this is not the first time the Bush Fire Danger Period has been brought forward due to the current conditions, it is a bit of a wake-up call for authorities and the greater community to be cautious and prepared during the bush fire season.”

Further information regarding Fire Permits can be obtained from www.rfs.nsw.gov.au