NSW Department of Education

Education and care service site bushfire/grassfire readiness review checklist

This checklist lists actions and considerations to prepare your service’s buildings, equipment and surrounds for any bushfire or grassfire. The actions and considerations relate to fire and safety equipment, vegetation management, emergency communications, evacuation/relocation, site access and surrounds, shelter-in-place, flammable substances/materials, and site rubbish.

This checklist can be used as part of your service’s annual bushfire and grassfire preparation. You can use this checklist to assess the readiness of your service’s buildings, equipment and surrounds, and identify any further required action to be taken.

Ensuring your service’s buildings, safety and communications equipment, and surrounds are as bushfire and grassfire ready as possible is critical to reducing the consequences of any bushfire or grassfire risk to children and staff.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Service name | Provider | Service premises address | Review conducted by | Review date | Bushfire attack level rating (BAL) | Date of rating |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. | Choose BAL rating. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Outline

Ensuring your education and care service’s buildings, safety and communications equipment and surrounds are as bushfire/grassfire ready as possible is critical to reducing the consequences of bushfire/grassfire risk to children and staff.

This education and care service site bushfire/grassfire readiness checklist is a key part of your annual bushfire preparation and complements other important tasks including:

* Reviewing and updating the service’s Emergency Management Plan (EMP).
* Conducting drills to rehearse emergency and evacuation procedures for specific types of hazards/threats at least every three months (regulation 97).
* Ensuring that staff with responsibilities in an emergency understand and can perform their roles.
* Share and discuss your EMP with families, local emergency services (such as the RFS), local Council and the broader community.
* Aligning your EMP with that of any facility, such as a school, sharing your site or in close proximity.
* Ensure staff, educators and families are familiar with the department [Bushfire recovery](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/working-in-early-childhood-education/bushfire-recovery) webpage to access information to support services, staff, educators, children and families in the recovery process, following an emergency.

NSW Department of Education has adapted this resource with permission from the Victorian Government Department of Education and Training.

## Fire and safety equipment

| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The service specific emergency warnings/alarms for evacuation, lockdown and shelter-in-place (if these are not able to function during a power outage, alternative arrangements have been developed). | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Contents of the emergency kit are regularly checked against the checklist of required items in the service’s Emergency Management Plan. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The following fire protection equipment, where in place, has been tested (check testing tag for currency) and is in working condition. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Portable fire extinguisher/s, including correct colour code
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Fire blanket/s in kitchen/cooking areas
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Fire hose reel/s
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Fire hydrant/s
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Water storage tank connections for fire appliances
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Fixed water pressure pumps
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Emergency generator/power system
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Water supplies and equipment
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Sprinklers (including any roof mounted and irrigation systems)
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Alarms
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * First aid materials (within expiry dates)
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Fire blankets
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Communications systems.
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| * Other (e.g. roller shutters on the shelter-in-place location).
 | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The service’s register of emergency equipment and maintenance testing is up to date. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Nominated staff have been instructed in, and practised the operation of fire protection equipment. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Fire safety equipment, including hydrants are clear of vegetation and obstruction, is easily accessible and visible. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| All fire protection equipment has clear signage and operating instructions are displayed. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The service has equipment to safely move children if necessary. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Smoke and vegetation management

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| Ensure your service maintains the Physical Asset Protection Zone area around your service premises and any service specific bushfire vegetation maintenance plans. The RFS has developed the [Standards for Asset Protection Zones](https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/13321/Standards-for-Asset-Protection-Zones.pdf) which can assist.  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Ensure the Asset Protection Zone areas around your service premises, including fire breaks (an obstacle to the spread of fire, such as a strip of open space), are maintained to prepare for the bushfire season i.e. remove leaf litter, native tree branches are clear of buildings, reduce regrowth and mow lawns.  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Ensure that all rubbish and tree branches are kept neat and well clear of buildings and gutters have been cleared.  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Ensure exposure to bushfire smoke is minimised. Consider indoor activities with the windows and doors shut and use fans rather than air conditioning. Refer to the NSW Health ‘[Bushfire smoke information for childcare centres**’**](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/air/Pages/child-care-centres.aspx) for more information.  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Emergency communications

It is critical to ensure the service is able to remain in contact with emergency services, parents and other relevant parties identified in your communication plan, such as schools and transport services, where appropriate during an emergency.

| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| In case of a power outage, the service has options/arrangements to maintain communications (e.g. dedicated landline, emergency positioning indicator radio beacon (EPIRB), satellite phone, designated mobile phone). | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Where possible, the service is able to access IT systems, including for sending emergency SMS messages to parents from an off-site location. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The service has a battery-operated radio in its shelter-in-place location or emergency kit. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Plans are in place for how the service will communicate with educators, staff, children and visitors in the event of emergency. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Plans are in place for how the service will receive and share communications updates from local emergency services (apps, radio, RFS, social media) during the bushfire season. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Staff and educators understand and are confident with the service’s plans and procedures in the event of an emergency. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Service bushfire preparedness and procedures information and arrangements are communicated to parents and families. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Evacuation/Relocation, site access and surrounds

| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emergency and evacuation floor plans/diagrams and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service (Regulation 97). Further guidance is provided in the Department’s [Emergency planning, management, response and recovery](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/current-service-providers/emergency/plan/resource-1) webpage. | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Exit signs are displayed over emergency exits | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Designated emergency exits are free of obstruction and easy to open | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The service has equipment to safely move children with a disability and non-ambulatory children, where this is required | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Fire appliances can access water tank connections | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Where they exist, driveways and fire vehicle access areas are clear of debris and any obstacles  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The service has more than one option for evacuating off-site | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Where neighbouring properties pose a fire risk to the service because of vegetation, flammable materials or activities conducted on the property, the service has consulted the property owner, local council or Department of Planning and Environment as appropriate to address the issue | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Shelter-in-place

All services should have nominated location/s in which to shelter-in-place (SIP). The shelter-in-place location can be used to provide temporary accommodation until emergency services arrive or as a place of last resort if there is insufficient time to evacuate. It is a part of good consultation to ensure emergency services, families and neighbours/local community are aware of where your service staff and children will shelter-in-place in the event of an emergency.

| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Location/s in which to shelter-in-place on the site have been identified | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The SIP location/s are able to accommodate all children and staff  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The SIP location/s provide access to toilets and water | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The SIP location/s have more than one entry and exit point | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| The SIP location/s allow access for children and staff of all abilities | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Safety equipment in the SIP location/s is in proper working order  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |

## Flammable substances/materials and site rubbish

| **Checklist criteria** | **Yes/No** | **Required actions** | **Due date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gas storage systems (portable bottles and fixed tanks), flammable materials and substances and other dangerous goods are maintained, secured and controlled. The [SafeWork Code of practice for the storage and handling of dangerous goods](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/50729/storage-handling-dangerous-goods-1354.pdf) (PDF 1.7 MB) can provide information on this.  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Gas storage/flammable liquids are kept away from the SIP location/s | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| If the car park is near the nominated shelter-in-place location/s, arrangements exist for vehicles to be relocated when necessary (due to the risk of fuel tanks exploding) | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Rubbish bins are emptied before each weekend and holidays | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Rubbish bins are secured away out of service hours from any buildings and structures such as pergolas, verandas and trees  | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Broken or unused equipment stored on site is appropriately disposed of, including resources, furniture and packaging material | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Industrial bins are located in a secure area or the lid secured and away from the shelter-in-place location/s | [ ] Yes [ ] No | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap to enter a date. |