If you live in a high bushfire risk area, you need to understand your bushfire risk.

Most people living in high-risk areas underestimate their risk, even though there may actually be a very high risk of bushfire in their area.

People in high-risk areas must be prepared.

**What areas present a high risk from bushfire?**

High-risk areas include bush and grassland near the city, where there may be parks or homes near grasslands and paddocks. These areas are lower risk than the bush but fires do occur in these areas.

The risk of bushfire in the bush is very high, because there are plenty of trees, grass and bark fuel in these areas.

During the spring when there is plenty of rain, and the grass grows long. Summer brings hot weather with little rain, many hot days with dry wind. These hot and dry conditions greatly increase the risk of bushfire.

There are a number of causes of bushfire.

Bushfires may be caused by lightning, lit cigarettes thrown from car windows by careless drivers,

and electrical sparks from trucks and farm machinery. Bushfires can happen anywhere,

but some areas present a much greater risk than others.

If you live close to or among grass or paddocks, close to or among dense or open bush, near the beach with plenty of coastal scrub, or where suburbs meet the bush or grasslands, you are at high risk from bushfire.

There are several things you need to do.

Every year before summer, you need to plan and prepare for the summer season.

Preparation is vital. Bushfires are extremely dangerous.

There are two main threats from bushfires.

The first threat is the embers from a fire, which can travel up to 35 kilometres from the fire front.

The second threat is the radiant heat from a bushfire.

Embers and radiant heat can cause significant damage to property, and can cause injury or death.

**What are embers?**

Embers are hot, burning leaf matter blown by the wind from a bushfire to other locations,

which start spot fires where they land.

Embers are burning twigs, leaves and pieces of debris from the bushfire area.

It is extremely common for homes to catch fire from embers.

Embers can land on top of debris in your gutters and set fire to your house.

An ember attack can happen at any time. When the fire front is far away from your home,

an ember attack can set fire to your house, just as it can when the fire front is near your home.

Even after the fire front has passed your home and you think it is safe again, an ember attack can set fire to your house.

**What is radiant heat?**

Radiant heat is the intense heat from a bushfire, like the heat that radiates from a campfire, but radiant heat from a bushfire can be 50,000 times stronger than the heat from a campfire.

The human body cannot absorb large amounts of heat without its cooling system failing.

Radiant heat leads to heat exhaustion and can cause heart failure. Radiant heat is the biggest killer in a fire. Most bushfire-related deaths are caused by radiant heat.

Radiant heat can be blocked by a solid barrier, such as a wall, building or a large rock. However, radiant heat will travel through glass, which is why glass is dangerous in a bushfire.

Bushfires can be large and difficult to control, or small and localised. All fires can cause serious injury and death.

The safest place to be is away from high-risk bushfire areas.

The Country Fire Authority recommend that leaving early is your safest option.