

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon **David Hawker** MP
Federal Member for Wannon



11 November 2009

CANBERRA CALLING

Summer is almost upon us, and with the recent unseasonably dry weather I urge all Pyrenees residents to ensure your fire plan is in place and to check your insurance for the bushfire season.

As with the beginning every summer we all need to take extra care to protect ourselves and our homes from the threat of fire. Much of our region has already dried out, exacerbating the fire threat this year, and I strongly urge all residents to prepare themselves and their homes with a bushfire plan.

February's devastating fires emphasise the need to work together to minimise the chance of further tragedies where homes, stock and properties are destroyed.

Property owners should already be checking their insurance as the fire season is now upon us. Frightening figures show that one in three farmers fails to fully recover financially from the effects of bushfire.

A key finding of government bushfire inquiries is that well-informed and well-prepared communities complement the roles of land managers and fire agencies.

This shared responsibility offers the best way of minimising risks to life and property, as well as the environment.

Individuals can help out through early preparation such as boxing in eaves and clearing gutters. All residents should also check water supplies and fire equipment.

On total fire ban days watch and listen for fire danger in your area on the TV and radio, and check regularly that your property is hazard free.

Our local volunteer firefighters do a wonderful job year after year, and we can all help make their job easier by taking these precautions.

Bushfires are a natural occurrence all Australians should be aware of and prepared for, and the current dry conditions have already fuelled a number of bushfires across Western Victoria.

By working together as a community, we can all play a part in reducing the likelihood of further loss to property and the environment.

- ENDS -

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