

# Fire hazards

**Preventing fire outbreaks is an important job for everyone in the community and it is something Council, and the local Fire Brigade, take very seriously.**

As an inner urban area, Darebin's biggest risk around fire outbreaks is mainly caused by overgrown grass.

In the dry summer months long overgrown grass is the perfect fuel to create a fast spreading and devastating fire, putting both life and property at risk.

Other fire hazard risks on private property include:

- stored dry grass
- dry tree branches and dry or dead vegetation
- any flammable or burnable material not stored safely.

Please note: it is illegal to light any outdoor fire of any kind during Total Fire Ban Days. More information about Total Fire Ban Days is on the CFA website at [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au).

## Our approach to fire hazards

Our priority is to work with the community to address the issue of fire hazards. If for any reason you are having trouble maintaining the grass and vegetation on your property please contact us so we can work with you to take a proactive approach.

## Reporting a fire hazard

**If there is a fire emergency please:**

- ✓ call the Fire Brigade on **triple zero - 000**

**If you see a fire hazard or fire risk you can report it to Council by:**

- ✓ calling **8470 8888**
- ✓ emailing [mailbox@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:mailbox@darebin.vic.gov.au)



### **The local law requires property owners or occupiers to maintain their properties and prevent them from becoming a fire hazard.**

Council officers inspect properties across Darebin in the summer months to reduce fire hazards and risks to the community.

If a property is identified as being a fire hazard, Council will issue a Fire Prevention Notice to each property owner, which gives 14 days for the property to be cleared of the fire hazard.

Please note: If you receive a Fire Prevention Notice it is important that you take action quickly and within 14 days to remove the dangerous fire risk from your property. Council and the Fire Brigade take this issue very seriously. There are large fines and penalties for not complying with the Notice and there are no extensions of time on the 14 days.

Council officers re-inspect the property at the end of the 14 day notice period.

If the fire hazard has not been removed, Council will issue a fine and organise for the land to be cleared and the fire risk removed with all costs and charges going to the property owners.

All properties will automatically be checked again in the following year.

### **Other types of fire hazards**

Long grass is not the only fire hazard to look out for. Other potential fire hazards include:

- cooking outdoors especially during fire-ban periods
- disposing of BBQ bricks or heat beads into public bins or parks
- burning off materials in the open air or in an incinerator.

In addition to being a fire hazard, burning off also creates health and environmental issues, as often the materials being burnt produce toxic smoke.

**This is why it is not allowed anywhere in Darebin to light an incinerator or burn any materials in the open air or on public land.**

**It is also not allowed to burn any materials or substances in an outdoor oven or in a wood heater located in a building that could be:**

- **dangerous to the health or safety of a person**
- **offensive to any person**
- **prohibited or toxic like wood that is wet, treated or painted.**

### **Tips and hints**

**The most important thing you can do to avoid your property from becoming a fire hazard is regularly maintaining your garden and lawn.**

Other tips and hints include:

- ✓ storing burnable materials in a safe place in your garage or shed
- ✓ remembering to put your green waste out for Council's kerbside collection
- ✓ taking advantage of Council's free branch collection service
- ✓ taking excess green waste or unwanted burnable goods to the Darebin Resource and Recovery Centre on Kurnai Avenue in Reservoir.

There are also things you can do to reduce the smoke and odour coming from a wood fire oven including:

- ✓ using dry fuel and seasoned timber
- ✓ adjusting the air damper to allow good air flow
- ✓ making sure the fire is hot and burning brightly.



## Possible penalties

Although our first priority is to work with the community, the local law enables Council to take further action if required.

If a fire hazard is not removed from a property within the 14 day notice period, we may issue a fine as well as charge you for any costs to clear the land and remove the risk.

If a fine is issued for failing to comply with the Fire Prevention Notice, it will be given to all property owners (for example, if the property is owned by two people, an infringement is sent to each person).

### Burning off fine - \$500



**For more information contact our Local Laws team:**

 **8470 8888**

 **[www.darebin.vic.gov.au](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au)**

**You can also access more information from:**

Department of Environment and Primary Industries

**[www.depi.vic.gov.au](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au)**

Country Fire Authority

**[www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)**

Metropolitan Fire Brigade

**[www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au)**

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