



Policy 2

BUSHFIRE PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Background

The Country Fire Service (CFS) provides advice on bushfire safety measures for the summer season.

The CFS website www.cfs.sa.gov.au contains detailed information about fire safety awareness, preparedness and actions.

The City of Mitcham website www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au also provides useful information.

The Mount Lofty Ranges (including Blackwood and surrounding hills suburbs) are considered to be an area of SA which has a high fire risk due to the large number of people and high fuel load that exist here. The fire danger season for this area is 1st December to 30th April.

The CFS has developed a hierarchy of places that can offer relative safety from bushfire. They are broken down into three categories:

Safer Settlement

These are places considered suitable to go to during a forecast bad fire weather days.

The inner Adelaide metropolitan area is nominated as a safer settlement with the closest suburbs to the Blackwood area being Clovelly Park, Edwardstown, Hawthorn, Marion, Mitchell Park and Sturt.

There are no nominated safer settlements in the Blackwood hills area.

Bushfire Safer Precinct

These are places of relative safety and may be used as a place for people to stay in or as a place of first resort for those people who have decided that they will leave high risk locations early on a bad fire weather day.

The Blackwood District Centre area has been nominated as a bushfire safer precinct – the area generally bounded by Waite Street, Gulfview Road, Station Avenue and Shepherds Hill Road, which includes the Blackwood Church of Christ property.

Refuge of Last Resort

These are intended to provide temporary protection until a fire front has passed, and only to be used when a personal Bushfire Survival Plan cannot be implemented. They are generally open spaces such as an oval that could provide some minimal protection.

The places identified in the Blackwood area are

Blackwood Hill oval, Trevor Terrace & Craighburn Road Blackwood

Hewett Sports Ground, Coromandel Parade & Garnet Avenue Blackwood

Bellevue Heights oval, Sargent Parade Bellevue Heights

Flinders University ovals, Shepherds Hill Road Bedford Park

Policy Purpose

To provide advice in relation to use of the Blackwood Church of Christ inc premises during the fire ban season.

Policy Statement

Blackwood Church of Christ inc Bushfire Protection Policy is to be consistent with the CFS and SA Government policy and advice.

1. The Blackwood Church of Christ inc policy is intended to avoid putting occupants of the premises at any risk during a day of severe, extreme or catastrophic fire danger.
2. The Blackwood Church of Christ inc premises will not be declared as a refuge of last resort.
3. The premises will be closed and not accessible on days of declared catastrophic fire danger for the Blackwood area.
4. If a Sunday is declared as a day of catastrophic fire danger for the Blackwood area, the premises will be closed and there will be no worship service held.

Fire danger ratings are forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology each day after 4:00pm for the following day.

It is considered safer for the congregation and users to implement their personal or family Bushfire Survival Plan rather than putting lives at risk by gathering at the Church.

5. If the premises are occupied when an Emergency Warning Message has been broadcast for the Blackwood area, occupants can choose to leave. The premises will remain open for those who consider it too dangerous to travel.

An Emergency Warning message is issued when there is a bushfire threatening and indicates that “you are in danger and you need to take action immediately; you will be impacted by fire”. This message will usually be preceded by the standard emergency warning signal, and be broadcast on ABC local radio (891), FIVEaa, Cruise 1323, MIX 102.3, SAFM, Nova and Triple M.

On all other days the premises will be open for normal programs and activities.

FURTHER NOTES

Families and individuals are encouraged to develop their own Bushfire Survival Plan (refer to the CFS website for more information, www.cfs.sa.gov.au) and to implement it on days of severe, extreme or catastrophic fire danger.

The CFS website also contains a detailed map of the Bushfire Safer Precinct for the Blackwood District Centre.

The CFS advise that the greatest danger to human life when a fire is actually threatening is in travelling on roads by choosing to leave home at the last minute.

Policy References

CFS Web site www.cfs.sa.gov.au

Mitcham Community News December edition

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed every two years or as required

Further Information

If you require further information, contact the Blackwood Church of Christ inc Office

Authorised by:

(Chair of Elders)

Signature:

Date: