

## What is a building protection zone?

### Key Points

- ⇒ Fuel loads influence bush fire intensity.
- ⇒ The lower the fire's intensity the less impact it will have on the building.
- ⇒ Create a minimum 20 metre circle of reduced fuel around a building to increase its chance of survival.

### Definitions

- ⇒ Surface fire is when the fire is burning grass and leaves on the ground.
- ⇒ A mineral earth firebreak is a firebreak without vegetation.

The aim of a building protection zone is to ensure there will be no direct flame contact on the building from a bush fire and to increase its chance of survival. This is done by managing and reducing the amount of fuel for a minimum of 20 metres around a building.

If there is little or nothing to burn then the fire's impact will be reduced.

This can be achieved by:

- ⇒ Maintain a minimum two metre gap between trees and the building.
- ⇒ Trim trees so there are no branches overhanging the house.
- ⇒ Keep the grass short and prune shrubs to thin them out and remove dead leaves and branches.
- ⇒ Rake up leaf litter and twigs under trees and remove bark.
- ⇒ Prune lower branches so they are at least two metres off the ground to stop a surface fire spreading into the trees.
- ⇒ Create a mineral earth firebreak.
- ⇒ Do not clump shrubs or trees, have a gap between them.
- ⇒ Have paths next to buildings and the driveway placed so they provide protection to the house.
- ⇒ Keep firewood away from buildings.
- ⇒ Fences that are flammable need to be far enough away from the building so that if they burn, they will not break a window or door and compromise the integrity of the building.
- ⇒ Keep gutters free of leaves and branches.
- ⇒ Ensure the valve on gas bottles face away from the building.
- ⇒ Ember proof your home by blocking all gaps around eaves, under the house, roof space, ledges and wall cavity.

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The 20 metre area of low cut green grass increases the survival of the house in a bush fire.



Grazed paddocks can provide protection to buildings.



Over hanging tree branches and flammable material near buildings will increase the chance of a fire spreading.