

FIRE HAZARD NOTICE GUIDANCE

Properties 1,501m² up to 3,500m²

➤ **Why have some of the requirements of the notice changed?**

For a number of years, in the City's Bush Fire Notice, issued under Section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, properties that fall within this category have been required to implement and maintain a 20 metre Asset Protection Zone to maximize property survivability from the threat of a bushfire. This is in line with the [WA Bush Fire Risk Treatment Standards](#) for areas designated as Bushfire Prone.

When reviewing the City's Fire Notice for 2025/2026, due to current placement of structures being close to property boundaries and natural bushland reserves in this category, enforcing a 20 metre Asset Protection Zone to protect lives and homes in the event of a bush fire as recommended by the Bushfire Risk Treatment Standards in these areas was not feasible nor achievable, due to the environmental and ecological impacts to meet these requirements and associated loss of amenity that is imperative within these communities. Therefore, the 3 metre defendable space requirement was introduced in lieu of the previous 20 metre Asset Protection Zone. This is to provide improved outcomes for landowners, maximizing protection without losing the amenity of these areas. For many of these areas, homes were constructed prior to 2015, which is prior to Bushfire Attack Level standards being introduced for homes built in designated bushfire prone areas.

➤ **Will anything change with fire compliance inspections this year?**

NO

The City will be using the same method and Fire Control Officers who have carried out inspections in these areas in previous years, therefore a similar standard of assessment will apply. There is no intent for wholesale clearing of mature, living vegetation within the 3 metre defendable space, but rather a focus on accumulations of dead, flammable material in these areas, and recommendations on how the defendable space can be improved to allow enhanced protection to bushfires around dwellings.

➤ **What is a defendable space?**

A defendable space is an area of land around a building where vegetation, debris or other types of flammable fuel are modified and managed to reduce the effects of direct flame contact, ember attack and radiant heat associated with a bushfire to assets. As well as reducing your homes' exposure to the direct attack of a bushfire, a defendable space is an accessible area adjoining your house or structure in which firefighting operations can be

safely undertaken, providing a space where residents or crews can defend an asset or building.

➤ **Why is a defensible space necessary?**

During a major bushfire, it is unlikely that there will be enough fire fighting resources to defend your property. Even with adequate resources, some wildfires may be so intense that there may be little that firefighters can do to prevent your house from being impacted by fire. The key to improving the survivability of your home is to reduce fire intensity as a bushfire nears your house. This can be accomplished by reducing the amount of flammable vegetation immediately surrounding your home.

➤ **Does a defensible space require a lot of bare ground around the house?**

NO

While bare ground would certainly provide an effective defensible space, it's unnecessary and unattractive. Bare ground may also cause soil to erode. Many homes have yards with both effective defensible space and attractive landscapes with little or no bare ground.

➤ **Can I still have garden beds and shrubs within the defensible space?**

YES

Flammable vegetation within this space should be kept at an absolute minimum, and where possible, the space should be free from any combustible items and obstructions. Living lawn, garden beds, plants and shrubs can be retained provided they are living, reticulated and are free of dead flammable material. Where possible, low flammability plants and ground cover should be selected as shrubs can become a ladder fuel that aids the spread of fire. Large shrubs with high moisture content can provide screening and wind protection when planted away from the house where they are less of a hazard.

➤ **Can I still have any trees within the defensible space?**

YES

The lower branches of trees over 5 metres in height should be removed to a height of 2 metres above the ground or surface vegetation (under pruned), this may help prevent fire moving into the tree canopy from the underlying vegetation, and restrict fire spread within the tree canopy. Trees or shrubs within 3 metres of the habitable building (within defensible space) should be pruned away from the building to ensure a sufficient vertical clearance away from the building is in place. This is to ensure branches overhanging structures are removed to reduce flammable material buildup in gutters, forming a continuous canopy to carry a high intensity bushfire, and reducing the risk of canopy fires above properties causing significant damage or loss if ignited.

For further bushfire prevention and preparedness advice to ensure you, your family and property are best prepared for summer, please see the links below:

[DFES Firewise Gardening Guide](#)

[DFES Guide for applying the Bush Fire Risk Treatment Standards](#)
[Create a DFES Bush Fire Plan](#)

The City of Kwinana Rangers and Emergency Services Team are available to provide further information if required relating to the City of Kwinana Fire Hazard Compliance Notice and fire preparedness advice on 9439 0200.