

FIREBREAK NOTICE 2025-2026

Notice to the Owners and/or Occupier of Land Bounded within the Town of Port Hedland

What is a Firebreak Notice?

A Firebreak Notice is a legal requirement issued each year by your local government under the Bushfires Act 1954. It applies to all landowners and occupiers, whether you live in a rural, semi-rural, or townsites/urban area.

I live in a townsite/urban area, why would I have to comply?

Bushfire risk doesn't stop at the town boundary. Overgrown yards, unmanaged vegetation, and rubbish piles can still fuel fires, especially during hot and windy days. Urban areas often have limited space and higher density, making preparedness even more important.

Town of Port Hedland Firebreak Notice:

Section 33 of the Bushfires Act 1954 Pursuant to the powers contained in Section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, you are hereby required all year round (or within fourteen days of becoming owner or occupier of land) to initiate and maintain the applicable fire prevention requirements within this notice to the land owned or occupied by you as specified.

What happens if I don't comply?

Properties are inspected to ensure compliance. If a property is not compliant on first inspection the owner/occupier will be contacted and given 14 days from notification to comply.

Owners or Occupiers who do not comply with the Notice will be issued with an infringement Notice (\$250) or prosecuted with a penalty up to \$5,000.

Additionally, any enforcement action due to owner/occupier non-compliance, the Town of Port Hedland is legally allowed to complete the required work and the subsequent costs be recovered from the owner/occupier of the land.

Please know an authorised officer can enter a property to validate property compliance without the owner or occupiers' permission.



Asset Protection Zone

An Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is a managed area around buildings/assets that helps protect them from bushfires. It reduces the risk by slowing the fire, lowering heat and flames, and giving the opportunity for a defensible space if required.

Owners and occupiers of land within the Town of Port Hedland must establish and maintain an Asset Protection Zone (APZ) around all habitable buildings.

The following outlines the APZ requirements:

- Keep the area within 20 meters of your house clear of too much vegetation and flammable material. This area starts from the edge of your house, gutter, or roof overhang, and applies only to your own property (not your neighbours)
- Make sure the amount of dry grass, leaves, branches, and other flammable material in this 20m zone stays low. No more than what would cover 8 tonnes in a hectare

Tree management

Big trees (5+ metres tall) should be:

- At least 6 metres away from your house
- Pruned so branches are trimmed up to 2 metres from the ground

If a tree is within 6 metres of your home:

- Keep its branches no taller than 2 metres
- Make sure the tree is at least 2 metres away from your house

No over-hanging branches:

- Branches must not hang over or touch your roof or walls

Shrubs and branches

Near the house

- Keep shrubs under 2 metres tall and maintain 2 metres of clear vertical space between them and your house
- Keep at least 5 metres between clumps of shrubs and your house
- Clumps of shrubs should not be larger than 5 square metres
- Leave 3 metres between clumps of shrubs
- Leave 2 metres between individual shrubs



Asset Protection Zone continued

Driveways and access tracks:

- Make sure there's at least 4 metres of vertical space above your driveway and access tracks so emergency vehicles can get through easily, no low-hanging branches or other obstructions.

Lawn care:

Keep grass short and green where possible. Dead or dry grass should be no higher than 50mm (about the height of a matchbox).

What counts as fuel:

- Fuel includes dry leaves, branches, grass, mulch, firewood, and burn piles. This notice is only talking about dead vegetation.

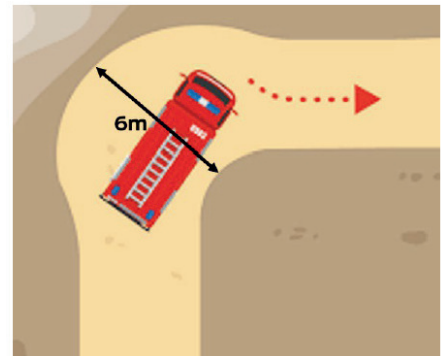
Storing fuel materials:

- Don't leave piles of mulch, firewood, or garden waste too close to your house or sheds.
- Remove them, store them safely, or get rid of them properly to reduce fire risk.

Asset land uses exceeding 5000 m2 (rural and non-rural)

Additional to the above APZ requirements, properties greater than 5000m² must comply with the following:

- Install and maintain a mineral earth firebreak of at least four (4) metres in width, must be cleared of all flammable material immediately inside and along the boundaries of the land.
- Ensure a minimum vertical clearance of four (4) metres is maintained along firebreaks, access tracks and driveways to enable vehicles to drive along without access being obstructed.
- Firebreak corners must consist of six (6) metre radius for the ability of vehicle/truck use.
- Where the land has been cleared for the purpose of development and the land remains vacant it must be regularly maintained in that cleared state.

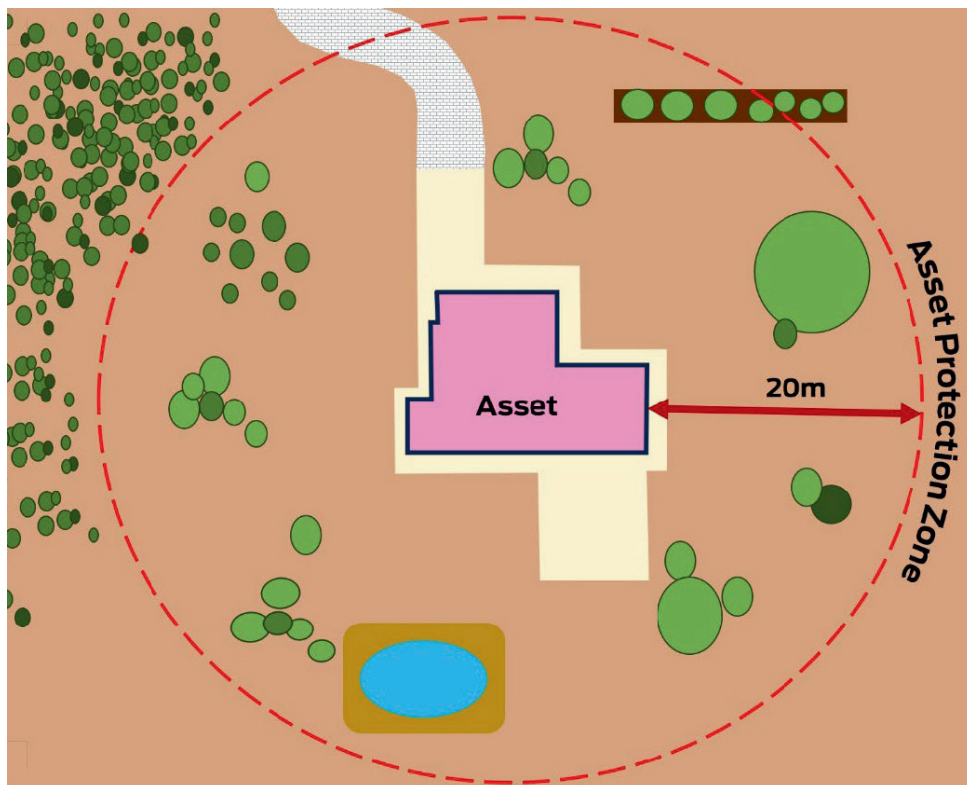
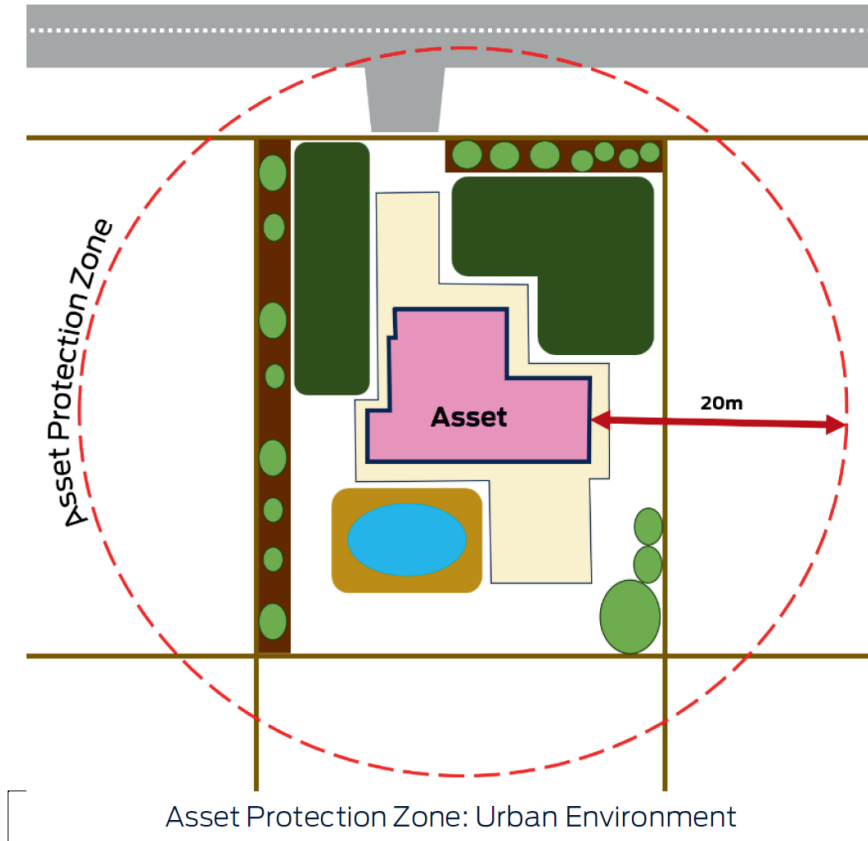


Need to make a special request from the above requirements?

If things like the shape of your land, existing buildings, or environmental reasons make it hard to meet the above requirements, you can apply to the Town for a variation.

- A Town officer will assess your application. Use the QR code to access the online application.
- If approved, the changes may apply either permanently or for a set time - this is up to the officer reviewing it
- Even if a variation is granted, you still have to follow all other parts of this notice
- If your request is not approved, you must follow all the listed requirements

Asset Protection Zone visual aids





Bushfire Management Plans

Where a property is subject to an approved Bushfire Management Plan, the owner and/or occupier must comply with all requirements outlined in this notice, in addition to any supplementary requirements specified in the approved plan. In the event of any inconsistencies between this notice and the Bushfire Management Plan, the provisions of this notice shall take precedence.

Solid fuel appliances

For the purpose of cooking, BBQs, pizza ovens, and smokers may be used at any time of the year, provided the following conditions relating to the use of solid fuels for outdoor cooking appliances are strictly observed

- At least one person remains in attendance of the fire when lit until fully extinguished (don't leave the house while it cooks)
- At the completion of using the cooker the fire must be fully extinguished by water.
- No burning of solid fuels is permitted on days declared a Total Fire Ban for the area on days when the Fire Danger Rating is High or above

Camping and cooking fires: What you need to know

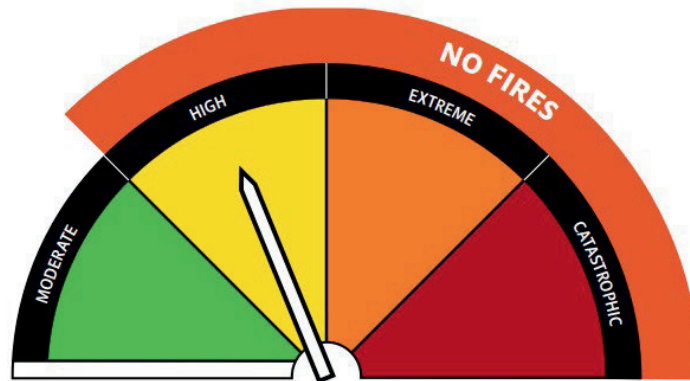
In the Town of Port Hedland NO camping or cooking fires are allowed between 1 November to 30 April. From 1 May - 30 October, fires are only allowed if:

- The fire is not within 3 metres of a log or tree stump
- You have cleared a 3 metre area around the fire of all grass, bush, leaves and anything that can burn
- The Fire Danger rating is below "High"
- If the rating is not below "High", "Very High", "Severe", "Extreme" or "Catastrophic", you must not light a fire unless you have written permission from the Town of Port Hedland.

Use of fire pits

Fire pits (Chimeneas/fire basket/fire bowl/fire drum) can only be used during the following designated period - 1st May to 30th October. They cannot be used if there is a total fire ban or harvest and vehicle movement ban declared, or the fire danger rating is high or above. (to confirm it is not a Total Fire Ban or the Fire Danger Rating for the day please visit [Emergency.wa.gov.au](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au))

- The fire pit size does not exceed 1.5 by 1.5 metres.
- The pile to be burnt at one time must not exceed 1m³ (1 by 1 by 1 metre).
- A suitable water source is available at all times
- Do not burn green waste;
- Only burn dry cured firewood;
- Have a three-metre clearing of all flammable material around the fire;
- An adult is in attendance at all times
- Fire pits are not permitted to be used any other time of the year unless a Permit to Burn request has been submitted and approved (The Town has discretion on the determination of approval)



Fire Danger Rating

Permit to Burn

Any other type of burning, such as burning garden waste (whether in a pile, on the ground, in an incinerator, or at a rubbish tip), setting fire to bushland (including for charcoal production), using fire in a lime kiln for making lime, or burning dead animal carcasses, is restricted. These activities must not be carried out unless you have obtained a Permit to Burn.

A Permit to Burn require the following conditions:

- Obtain a Fire Permit from an Authorised Officer via www.porthedland.wa.gov.au
- Fire Permits are automatically deemed invalid on days where the Fire Danger Rating is forecast “High” or above;
- It is the Permit Holder’s responsibility to comply with ALL conditions outlined on the front and rear of the permit;
- All permit holders must ring DFES ComCen and RDC on 08 9395 9210 / 1800 631 227 to register their burn with the nearest road intersection referenced as the location of the planned burn activity;
- A Fire Control Officer has the authority under the Bush Fires Act to halt any activity or operation that they deem as hazardous or likely to cause a bushfire; and
- Failure to comply with requirements of any permit to burn may incur penalties as defined in the Bush Fires Act and/or Regulations 1954.



Definitions

Authorised Officer	An employee of the Town appointed as a Bush Fire Control Officer, pursuant to the powers conferred in section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954
Total Fire Ban	A Total Fire Ban (TFB) is declared when the Fire Danger Rating reaches Extreme, based on weather conditions that may hinder fire suppression efforts. The ban is usually announced the evening before it takes effect and is reassessed throughout the day, with the possibility of being lifted if conditions improve. During a TFB, all open-air fires are strictly prohibited, including those for cooking or camping. Activities that could start a fire, such as using incinerators, welding, grinding, soldering, or gas cutting, are also not permitted. To check for declared bans in your area, visit the Emergency WA website after 6 pm at www.emergency.wa.gov.au .
Vertical clearance	A continuous, uninterrupted vertical line at a right angle to the horizontal baseline of the firebreak, to a minimum height of four (4) metres from the ground
Firebreak	A strip or area of ground, with a minimum width of three (3) metres but no wider than four (4) metres, and a vertical clearance of four (4) metres, immediately inside all external boundaries of any lot and constructed to a trafficable surface, that is kept and maintained clear of all flammable and combustible material. This includes the pruning and removal of any living or dead trees, scrub, or any other material encroaching onto it or into the vertical clearance of the firebreak area. Firebreaks may be constructed by one or more of the following methods: ploughing, cultivating, scarifying, raking, burning, chemical spraying, blowing, or other methods as approved by an Authorised Officer.
Maintaining fuel loads	Relates to managing fuel loads described in this Notice. Reducing fuel load levels does not necessarily require the removal of existing natural vegetation. A combination of methods can be utilised, including planned burning, raking, weed removal, pruning, and/or removing dead plant material.
Managed vegetation	Vegetation that is pruned away from buildings, under pruned to minimise contact with ground fuels, and that is kept free of dead suspended matter such as twigs, leaves, and bark.

Definitions continued

Habitable builings	Any building or other dwelling suitable for human residency, occupation, or use within an already existing Asset Protection Zone. This includes attached or adjacent structures such as garages, carports, verandas, or similar roofed structures that are attached to, or within six (6) metres, of the dwelling or primary building.
Trafficable	To be able to travel from one point to another in an emergency services vehicle on a clear surface, unhindered, without any obstruction that may endanger such vehicles. It must not terminate, lead to a dead end, nor have any pinch points without provision for egress to a safe place, or a cleared turnaround area of not less than an 18-metre diameter.