

Managing the fire

It is your responsibility to ensure that any fire you light does not adversely impact on other persons, properties, or the environment. As a permit holder, the Fire Warden is satisfied with how you plan to manage, contain, and control the fire. Make sure you follow the plan and abide by all conditions of the permit. It is important to ensure your fire doesn't smoke out your neighbours or become a nuisance or health issue. Consider where the wind will take the smoke of your fire and who it is going to affect.

If you are concerned the fire may get out of control or escape from its boundaries, you must:

- take all reasonable steps to extinguish or control the fire, and
- as soon as practicable, report the fire by calling 000 (triple zero).

How long do I supervise the fire?

You need to supervise the fire for as long as necessary to ensure that it does not escape. The Permit to Light Fire states: "After burning, the perimeter of the burn **must** be made safe and the fire patrolled until there is no longer any risk of the fire escaping".

You can cease patrolling when the burnt area is cool, with no remaining heat source.

If you are at all concerned about the behaviour of the fire, act early and contact emergency services.

Remember. Your fire – your responsibility.

Penalties and Fines

Lighting a fire without a permit (where one is required) or not adhering to permit conditions can attract serious penalties, including on the spot fines or prosecution.

The gravity of these penalties indicate how serious the Queensland Government is about ensuring that the use of fire is authorised, safe, and does not adversely impact on you, the community or the surrounding environment.

Further Information

Assistance and information can be obtained from a number of sources including:

- your Fire Warden - see the Fire Warden Finder at www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au
- your local Rural Fire Brigade or nearest Fire and Rescue Fire Station
- the nearest RFS Area Office.

In addition, these brochures will provide you with information that will assist you in safely using fire on your property. They are available from RFS Area Offices or the RFS website.

- Lighting Fires in Queensland brochure
- Applying to Light Fires in Queensland brochure

Contact Us

Barcaldine	(07) 4651 1190
Bundaberg	(07) 4154 6120
Burnett	(07) 4172 8700
Caboolture	(07) 5420 3733
Cairns	(07) 4232 5468
Caloundra	(07) 5293 4206
Darling Downs	(07) 4698 5720
Emerald	(07) 4843 9020
Gladstone	(07) 4899 2200
Innisfail	(07) 4063 4004
Mackay	(07) 4965 6641
Maryborough	(07) 4190 4839
North West	(07) 4761 5130
Rockhampton	(07) 4932 8129
Roma	(07) 4578 0045
South Coast	(07) 5587 4101
Townsville	(07) 4796 9082
West Moreton	(07) 3294 4944

OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERMIT HOLDERS

Information for and holders of a Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Permit to Light Fire.

www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au



RFS 00012 05/20A



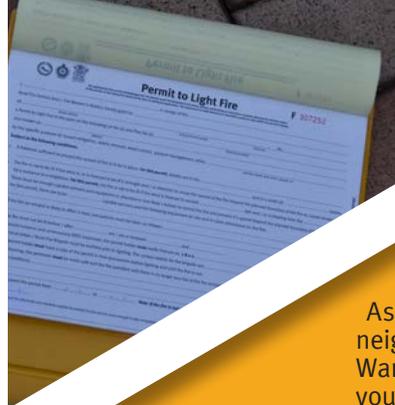
Permits to Light Fire

Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 (the Act)*, it is illegal to light a fire that is not exempt by legislation without an authorised Permit to Light Fire (permit). Lighting a fire without a permit, where one is required, or not adhering to permit conditions can attract serious penalties, including on the spot fines or prosecution.

Having a permit helps to ensure that fire is used safely, responsibly, and under conditions aimed to minimise the impact on people, property, and the environment. A permit sets out the rules around how a fire is lit and maintained and lets the fire service know when you are using fire on your property.

As a permit holder it is expected that you understand and meet your obligations on using fire in a safe and responsible manner.

Protection from liability - For fires that require a permit, individuals will not incur any liability under *the Act* or common law for any loss, injury or damage caused by the fire providing they comply with the conditions and directions of the permit unless it can be shown that they acted recklessly or maliciously.



What Do I Need to Know?

A permit is a legal document that can only be issued by a Fire Warden or Chief Fire Warden in their area of responsibility.

The permit authorises an individual to light, maintain, and use a fire during a set period of time on the land described and in accordance with the permit conditions. A permit can be amended, cancelled or suspended at any time.

A permit is only issued for burning vegetation including large area burns for hazard reduction, managing grazing lands, timber production management, weed control, and burning accumulated vegetation. You cannot burn any materials that are toxic or hazardous such as rubber tyres, plastics, and paint. In addition, the fire must not cause air pollution by producing excessive amounts of smoke.

As a permit holder you need to ensure you are aware of any fire bans or fire restrictions that could potentially restrict or prohibit the lighting of a fire or clearing of native vegetation.

Permit holders:

- must have the permit in their possession before lighting the fire and may need to produce a copy if requested
- must ensure that an individual with the ability and resources to extinguish the fire is in attendance at all times while the fire is alight
- must comply with all conditions detailed on the permit, and
- cannot alter anything on a permit without the consent of the Fire Warden.

Who do I need to notify?

As a permit holder you would have already contacted your neighbours before submitting your application to the Fire Warden. However, it is also considered good practice to let your immediate neighbours know before you light the fire so they can make arrangements to avoid smoke, move stock, or undertake other preparations they deem necessary.

For all permit burns, you also need to contact:

- The local Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) **Fire Communications Centre (Firecom)**. Just before you light the fire call the free call 1800 number written on the permit. Firecom is responsible for taking reports of fires, (000, triple zero calls) and allocating QFES resources accordingly. They need to know of any planned fires in an area to avoid unnecessary responses.
- The **local Rural Fire Brigade**, if identified as a condition on the permit. As they are likely to be the first response unit to be aware of the fire.
- The Fire Warden may also include a condition that requires you to notify certain parties of your intent to burn, if this is the case, you are obligated to do so.

When to light

Permit holders must abide by the conditions of the permit when lighting and maintaining a fire. Any conditions detailed by the Fire Warden must be followed throughout the entire burn.

If there are no time restrictions detailed on the permit, you can choose the most suitable time for the outcome of your burn. To ensure that you maintain control throughout the burn, you need to be aware of the weather conditions for the duration of the planned fire, not only at the time of lighting.

Wind, temperature, humidity, and rainfall are weather elements that affect the behaviour of bushfires. These variables are used by fire agencies to determine a Fire Danger Rating (FDR) which relates to the difficulty of controlling and putting out any fires which may occur. If fire conditions are likely to be dangerous, the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) issues Fire Weather Warnings to alert the public. This can lead to QFES declaring a Fire Ban or restriction. A four day outlook FDR can be found on the Rural Fire Service (RFS) website to assist in fire planning within Queensland.

Checking the local weather forecast prior to lighting is essential to ensure that the current and forecast conditions will not be outside those detailed by the Fire Warden. By checking the conditions prior to lighting a fire, you have the best chance of ensuring that you follow the requirements of the permit for the entire time that the fire is alight.

Visit the BoM website at www.bom.gov.au and use the 'Meteye' application to access current and forecast weather conditions for your location, including temperature, relative humidity, and wind strength and direction.

Fire Permits and Fire Bans

Bushfires are more likely to spread and cause damage on days when the weather is very hot, dry, and windy. These conditions make for very high to extreme fire danger days. To reduce the risk of fires damaging or destroying life, property, and the environment QFES may declare a local Fire Ban or during extreme fire danger conditions, a State of Fire Emergency. While a Local Fire Ban or State of Fire Emergency is active the lighting of fire may be prohibited and any permit issued is automatically cancelled.

All Fire Bans and State or Fire Emergency declarations are widely broadcast in local media, on QFES Social media and on the RFS website.