



3 October 2007

Cowper urges residents to formulate bush fire action plan

Murray MLA and Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services Murray Cowper is urging residents in bush fire zones to ensure that they have a Bush Fire Action Plan in place before the fire season commences at the end of this month. Having worked as a volunteer with bush fire brigades and the SES for many years, Mr Cowper is particularly aware of the life and property-saving value that proper fire season preparation can offer.

In particular, he stresses that the decision to “Stay and Defend” or “Go Early” should be made well in advance of any potentially disastrous events. This decision should take into account residents’ own physical fitness, an ability to deal with the stress of a bushfire, and whether the house will offer adequate protection to those inside.

“Residents need to clear a 20 metre radius around their home from any materials that can catch alight. In addition, they need to:

- keep grassed areas trimmed and watered;
- clear all gutters;
- store flammable items such as woodpiles, boxes, outdoor furniture and paper well away from the house; and
- ensure hoses and reserve water supplies such as swimming pools or water tanks are easily accessible.”

He also urges residents to keep on hand equipment which will help if they choose to stay and defend their properties, such as gloves, hoses, ladders, old garden backpack sprays for putting out spot fires, metal rakes and shovels, mops, buckets, and wet towels and blankets for sealing off buildings from smoke and embers.

“In addition, a plan for pets and livestock in the case of bush fires needs to also be formulated,” he said.

He encourages residents to go to the FESA website and look at their fire preparation information at www.fesa.wa.gov.au.

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Photo : Murray Cowper MLA inspects the destruction caused by the Dwellingup fires early this year

