



# Horses and bushfires

## Have a bushfire plan

It's important to have a plan of action for how you will keep your horses safe during a bushfire. Starting to develop your bushfire plan could be as simple as having a conversation with your household, making sure that everyone knows:

- what your triggers are for evacuation or moving horses to safer areas (high fire risk days, emergency alerts)
- evacuation routes, planning for fire travelling in several possible directions
- where horses can be agisted during a fire. Consider options for a range of situations, including friends and relatives, showgrounds, saleyards, racetracks or pony or riding clubs
- how you will protect horses if they are unable to be evacuated, such as moving horses to paddocks with no vegetation and overhead power lines.

## Make an emergency kit

On high fire risk days, assemble essentials to take with you in case you must evacuate, including:

- at least three days of feed
- halters and leads
- first aid kit and any medications

## Prepare your property

- Ensure your horses always have a water supply that will last them at least five days, even if you expect to return home that evening.

- Have a map of your property with gates, food and water locations marked in an easy to find place, in case someone has to move your horse for you.
- Remove rugs, halters and fly veils from horses on high fire risk days as these often melt and cause burns during fires
- Don't shut your horse in the stable on high fire risk days.
- Ensure your horse float is roadworthy and easily accessible at all times.

## Evacuate as early as possible

Horses instinctively react to extreme conditions such as fire with nervousness and panic, and may become aggressive or resist capture if you wait until a fire is close before evacuating.

**Remember:** Do not cut fences or leave external property gates open during a fire – this can pose a safety risk to people evacuating and emergency responders.

## Identification

Ensure your horse is microchipped and registered on a licenced registry in case it becomes lost during a fire. Include proof of ownership/identification records in your emergency kit.



# Pause for your PAWE

Bushfires are stressful and making last minute decisions can be deadly. By writing down a **Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies (PAWE)** and including it in your bushfire survival plan, you can help ensure you make the best possible decisions to protect the safety of your animals.

Ensure all members of your household/workplace are familiar with your bushfire plan at the start of each bushfire season.

## Survival plan for your animals' welfare in an emergency

### 1. Evacuating animals

Which animals will we evacuate?

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How will we know when it's time for us to evacuate the animals? (high risk days, smell/see smoke, emergency alerts)

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How will we transport all of the animals being evacuated?

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Where can we take the animals? (e.g. agistment or boarding options)

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What are the possible evacuation routes? (consider the fire moving in different directions)

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### 2. Safer areas for animals

Which animals can't be evacuated?

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How will we keep them safe on our property during the fire?

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### What's our plan for after the fire?

How will we keep animals contained if fencing is destroyed, and provide food and water (in the case of burnt paddocks, destroyed sheds, mains water unavailable, contaminated dams)

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### Emergency contacts

Regular vet \_\_\_\_\_

24hr emergency vet clinic \_\_\_\_\_

#### Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

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