

TRANSCRIPT - of Manningham City Council's video:

Don't Wait and See
Released Friday 6 January 2012

Video on the danger of Bushfire in Warrandyte. Also applicable to most of Nillumbik.

Don't Wait and See is production of Manningham City Council to assist the residents of Warrandyte and surrounding suburbs in their preparation of their bushfire plans and to understand the specific fire risks associated with living in the greater Warrandyte area.

Video Transcript

Picture: High flames, Homes on fire

Voice over:

In the aftermath of Black Saturday I realized that living in south Warrandyte, I was not going to be immune to a bushfire. To see their home totally destroyed, friends, family not knowing where they were. It was just a shocking, shocking scene. The devastation that would have been caused in Warrandyte, would have been horrendous. The significant loss of life would be the greatest problem that I'll have to deal with, because I know people will not be able to get out of this area, if we are impacted by a major bushfire.

Don't wait and see

Bushfires in Greater Warrandyte.

Picture: Yarra River/environment, Shopping strip – businesses

Voice over:

Everyone that lives in the great Warrandyte area feels lucky because it's a special part of this State. We're surrounded by bushland, open spaces, Rivers, flora and wildlife, and yet we live only a short distance from the city. But we also know that living here has some dangers. On Black Saturday the fires were heading towards the greater Warrandyte region. A cool change that saved this area, destroyed Kinglake and areas smaller and with fewer residents than ours.

Picture: Old bushfire photos

The terrain, topography and road network in this area are not designed for an easy escape. Being prepared in getting out early, could save your life and lives of your friends and family. Greater Warrandyte resident simply cannot rely on emergency services being able to get in and get you out in a major bushfire. In greater Warrandyte we are no strangers to bushfires. In 1851 50 homes were lost in Black Thursday, in 1939 71 people died on Black Friday. We had major bushfires that burned for days in 1962 and 1969. The last fire here was in 1991, starting in Pond Bend and burning across the Yarra River into north Warrandyte. Many here believe another big fire in the region is well over due.

Picture: Yarra River, native vegetation close to homes

South Warrandyte CFA Captain Greg Kennedy:

We mustn't fool ourselves that we live in suburbia, we do live in and around the bush and we must recognise that the bush is there and we then must recognise and be aware that during the summer months, there is an ever present risk of bushfire.

The task of fighting fires in this area is made extremely difficult because of the river. It provides us a source of water, but also prevents us from having good access to any fire, either north or south of the river.

Picture: Warrandyte Bridge

Warrandyte Police Sgt Keith Walker:

The topography of the area is a great concern because it lends itself to a major bushfire going right through the area quite rapidly. The devastation would be caused because of the topography, because of the fact that it would be very hard to fight the fire, very hard for people to be leaving at the last minute that is a great issue.

Picture: Warrandyte Bridge showing gridlocked traffic

South Warrandyte CFA Captain Greg Kennedy:

The combination of the road network, when the country road network of some 60 years ago, coupled with the significant increase of residents and population means that they are will become clogged with vehicles during any emergency. The leave early message is important because if residents don't heed the warning, there is a very, very real possibility that they won't be able to leave this area, is times of a major bushfire.

Picture: Warrandyte Bridge

Warrandyte Police Sgt Keith Walker:

We only have one bridge here, a two lane bridge crossing at Kangaroo Ground Road and another bridge at Fitzsimons Lane approximately 5 kilometres away. We have a narrow road in between those two exit and entry points, should we have motor car collision anywhere on those bridges, those 8000 people, or so, trying to flee, are going to find it extremely hard.

Picture: Narrow roads two car struggling to pass, bushfire.

CFA representative Nick Rodway:

If they are here and a fires already in the area, it is too late to leave. Our roads are narrow, there is bush right up to the edges of the road, we've got fire trucks coming in as are residents trying to leave, and it creates congestion. If they are going to stay and defend, then that needs to be a clear plan from the start, they can't change half way through..... that's the inherent dangers. If they are staying to defend, they need to properly prepare their homes and themselves. It is not as easy as staying and putting out a few little embers; there is a fair bit of physiological and physical pressure that comes with it that makes it very difficult for some of the strongest people to stay and defend, so they need to be very clear on their plan and they need to prepare as best they can.

Transcript typed from public broadcast from [Don't Wait and See](#) Manningham City Council website.
Please check for accuracy against Manningham City Council video.

Picture: Residents cleaning up fuel loads.

Voice over:

Being prepared for a bushfire is essential. Have a personal survival plan that includes a backup plan. Is your property fire ready, this includes simple things that may save you and your home in a bushfire. Know the standard emergency warning signal and heed important professional advice and signals on your mobile phone, television and radio in a bushfire emergency.

CFA representative Nick Rodway:

No Matter how prepared you think you are, it always helps to get a second opinion, or a professional opinion to come outand really stop and consider whether you can really handle what may come.

Picture: Neighbourhood Safer Place Signage

South Warrandyte CFA Captain Greg Kennedy:

Your plan shouldn't be to rely upon going to a Place of Last Resort; it is as it is called a Place of Absolute Last Resort.

CFA representative Nick Rodway:

It is too dangerous to wait and see if the fire is going to be bad, if you think you can stay and defend, because once the fire has started, it's too late for you, so you need to be prepared before summer, are we going to stay or are we going to leave. If you are going to leave, then leave early.

Warrandyte Police Sgt Keith Walker:

I think everyone needs to think about what happened on Black Saturday, it could happen to us here. Lots of people in those areas were self-sufficient, lots of emergency gear to assist in a bushfire, unfortunately a lot of them perished. So if they are unsure of an area.....; get out.

South Warrandyte CFA Captain Greg Kennedy:

There is a belief in our community that a fire truck will come to your property in times of a bushfire, it is just not possible for us to be able to do that. The demand well and truly exceeds the supply, we do our best, but we can't guarantee that we will be able to get to your property; therefore you need to plan accordingly. You need to have your own plan, you need to understand the plan and you need to implement it. Don't wait and see, have a plan and act accordingly.

Call the:

CFA Home Bushfire Advice Service

03 9262 8501

Don't Wait and See

Plan early and Leave early

***Heed the message –
Plan early and Leave early***

You must have a plan

***Talk to your neighbours about
their plans***

***Know your
Town Protection Plan (TPP)***

***An NSP is a place of absolute last
resort and not a guarantee of safety.***

Produced by Manningham City Council

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