

Under the Bush Fires Act (1954), all owners and occupiers of land in Western Australia must establish and maintain firebreaks.

Local Government Rangers are Fire Control Officers who administer the Bush Fires Act. In outer metropolitan and rural areas they are usually first response bush fire fighters.

Their duties include conducting yearly fire break inspections on land within each district of Western Australia, fire suppression, providing public education and advice on fire prevention and bush fire safety awareness.

Fire breaks and protection measures are vital in assisting the prevention of fires spreading and to allow safer access for bush fire fighters and vehicles.

The majority of Local Governments provide information on landowner responsibilities in regard to firebreak installation, fire prevention measures and emergency contacts.

### **BE ADVISED**

**Installation time frames and specifications for fire breaks vary in different areas.**

**Land owners need to be aware of the requirements within their particular City, Shire, Town or Region.**

**Contact your Local Government Authority for details regarding the deadline for fire break completion in your area.**

#### *General Guideline For Fire Break Specifications;*

##### **Land with an area of 2,000sqm or more**

- A firebreak, not less than three (3) metres wide, must be cleared immediately inside (or as close as possible) around all external boundaries of the land.
- All tree branches that over hang a firebreak need to be trimmed back to a minimum height of three metres above ground level.

##### **Land with an area of less than 2,000sqm**

- A firebreak, not less than two (2) metres wide must be cleared immediately inside (or as close as possible) and around all external boundaries of the land.
- Tree branches to be trimmed back as per above.

##### **Buildings**

A firebreak not less than three (3) metres wide must be cleared immediately around all external walls of every building.

## Fire Break and Protection Zone Examples



### Non-Compliant

*No firebreak has been installed inside the property boundary fenceline.*



### Compliant Mineral Earth Fire Break





Original mineral earth firebreak showing grass and weed regrowth.

Ploughing or slashing may be required in order for the firebreak to comply.



Example of a firebreak where the grass has been slashed down to ground level



Example of no fire protection zones created around a building.



Extensive fire protection zones created around buildings





Example of a good Building Protection Zone that ensured the house was untouched after the Toodyay Fire of 2009

Land owners with power poles on their property need to ensure an adequate protection zone is installed around the base of each pole.



Thick scrub around the base of a power pole creates a potential fire hazard



Buffer zone cleared around power poles

## Methods for Fire Break Installation



➤ Ploughing down to mineral earth

➤ Mowing or slashing of vegetation must not exceed a finished height of 20mm over the entire area of the firebreak.



➤ If a firebreak is cleared by burning, the provisions of the Bush Fires Act and Regulations must be observed.





A wiper sniper or brush cutter may be an option where other methods may not be used to install a fire break or for clearing a small vacant block of land.







### Other Information

Regulations made under the Dangerous Goods Safety Act (2004) requires a site on which flammable liquid is stored to be totally cleared of all flammable material for a minimum distance of five metres surrounding the site.



