



Warrandyte Community Association

Media Release

9 November 2012

Be Ready Warrandyte – community responds to bushfire readiness survey

A Bushfire Readiness survey conducted by the Warrandyte Community Association has revealed that most households in the 'Greater Warrandyte' area do not have an effective bushfire survival plan, despite the significant majority (81 per cent) of respondents believing they will face a bushfire threat in the near future.

Dick Davies, President of the Warrandyte Community Association (WCA) which conducted the "Be Ready Warrandyte" bushfire readiness survey said this was one important finding identified in preliminary results.

The "Be Ready Warrandyte" project is a call to action to the Warrandyte community and our neighbours to be informed, supported and well prepared for the everyday reality of living with bushfire risk.

Mr Davies said survey responses were received from 650 out of 2870 households in the Warrandyte, North Warrandyte and South Warrandyte area which is "excellent and above expectations".

"While 61 per cent of respondents have a Bushfire Survival Plan at some level of development, around 20 per cent had back up strategies - Plan B, Plan C."

"The data show that residents are responding to the Fire Danger Rating with the number of households intending to leave early increasing as the forecast of fire threat rises."

Despite the community awareness that it will be difficult to leave the area due to traffic congestion, 63 per cent of respondents indicated that they would leave as soon as possible after receiving a notification of a fire in the area. Most residents plan to leave on a 'Code Red' day.

Mr Davies stressed that survey respondents were more likely to be more actively aware than others about the potential bushfire threat.

"Therefore, we may infer that the 80 per cent or so who did not respond to WCA's bushfire readiness survey are less well prepared."

"Of concern are the more vulnerable in the community, of households where someone has a disability, only 56 per cent have a plan."

The respondents have suggested that the top three barriers to having a Bushfire Survival Plan are:

- They need assistance in preparing one
- They do not know how to prepare one
- They are too busy

The initial survey results point out that people want to find out more information about preparing a Bushfire Survival Plan through:

- A local-oriented webpage
- A community meeting with expert guest speakers, preferably CFA
- Face to face with someone knowledgeable from the community who visits them at home.

Mr Davies said the survey has provided a wealth of information which will inform the community and CFA for years to come.

The full results of the survey will take some time to analyse properly but will be available at the Be Ready Warrandyte website www.warrandyte.org.au .

The project will now move into Stage 2 which is to develop tools to inform and educate residents on bushfire survival planning.

The Be Ready Warrandyte project is funded by a Victorian Government Fire Ready Communities Grant to the WCA from the Department of Planning and Community Development, and supplemented by funds from Manningham Council, Nillumbik Council, the Warrandyte Community Bank and the Community Market Committee.

Dick Davies
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Quotes from survey – many more available on request

Quote:
“Our survival plan is to leave but we really have not discussed what we could do if we could NOT leave.”

Quote:
“So many areas in the (CFA pro forma) plan, it gets put aside and forgotten about.”

Quote:
“Can't find any options of where to take my mum- (text omitted).....disabilities - have asked the care providers, and they say the only option is to ring an ambulance!”