

The statutory bush fire danger period has commenced in NSW and runs from 1 October 2013 - 31 March 2014.

Make sure you have your bushfire survival plan in place and call 000 to report any fires.

If you are planning to light a fire in the open during this time, you will need a Fire Permit.

The aim of the Fire Permit is to ensure fire will be used safely. A Permit imposes conditions on the way a fire is lit and maintained, and can only be issued by authorised Permit Issuing Officers. Contact your local rural fire brigade for details.

Use extreme care if clearing grass or weeds and DO NOT use equipment that can create sparks such as a metal blade brushcutter, angle grinder, portable welder or other such tools on a Total Fire Ban day.

Total Fire Ban (TOBAN) Rules

From the NSW Rural Fire Service web site...

During a Total Fire Ban no fire may be lit in the open and all Fire permits are suspended. This includes incinerators and barbecues which burn solid fuel, e.g. wood or charcoal.

Can I use an electric barbeque?

You can use an electric barbeque for cooking as long as it is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating, and no combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating.

Can I use a gas barbeque?

You can use a gas barbeque under the following conditions:

- It is under the direct control of a responsible adult, present at all times while it is operating;

- No combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating;
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water; and
- The barbeque is within 20 metres of a permanent private dwelling such as a home;
- The barbeque is within a picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest

Can I use a solid fuel barbeque, like a wood or charcoal barbeque?

No.

I have a permit. Can I use fire during a total fire ban?

On Total Fire Ban Days the lighting of fire is prohibited and your Fire Permit will be automatically suspended. Your permit resumes once the total fire ban is lifted.

Are there exemptions during a total fire ban?

A range of activities may be exempt from Total Fire Bans, such as emergency infrastructure work, bee hive smokers, mining operations, sugar cane harvesting or ceremonial fires. The NSW RFS Commissioner is responsible for exemptions to Total Fire Bans. These exemptions are detailed in the NSW Government Gazette each time a total fire ban is declared.

What penalties are there for lighting a fire during a total fire ban?

Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts a fine of up to \$5500 and/or 12 months gaol. Penalties for a fire that escapes and damages or destroys life, property or the environment can attract much greater fines and gaol terms with maximums at \$100,000 and/or 14 years gaol.

Civil law suits can also be brought against the person responsible for a fire by those seeking compensation for losses sustained.

For more information about total fire bans and fire permits, please visit the [NSW Rural Fire Service web site](#).

[Current NSW total fire ban & fire danger map](#) .