

FAQs

Changes to 2020-21 Firebreak Notice Increase in Firebreak Width



Why do some firebreaks need to be 3 metres wide?

Bushfire has been identified as the highest risk factor to the community of Augusta Margaret River.

Firebreaks are required to slow or stop the spread of a low intensity fire, provide a fuel free area where fire suppression activities can be undertaken, and to allow access for firefighting vehicles.

Our firefighting appliances do **not** fit on firebreaks that are less than 3 metres wide, which is why the Department of Fire and Emergency Services recommend that firebreaks are a minimum of 3 metres wide, and the main reason we have increased the minimum width from 2 metres to 3 metres.

What size properties does this change apply to?

Residential and Rural Residential lots 4001m² and over require 3-metre wide trafficable firebreaks inside all boundaries.

Rural lots (excluding plantations, vineyards, orchards and olive groves) require 3-metre wide trafficable firebreaks within 100 metres of a boundary that abuts a road reserve, **except** where the land is being actively grazed or maintained to less than 10cm, then a 2-metre wide firebreak is required.

What if I have large trees near my property boundary close to my existing firebreak(s)?

If you are concerned about removing one or more large trees or other vegetation in order to widen your firebreaks, please contact the Shire Rangers on 9780 5695 who can meet you at your property to see if any suitable alternatives can be identified.

If so, you may be able to apply for a **Variation to the Firebreak Notice**. Further information regarding variations can be found on this information sheet.

What if there are threatened flora/fauna species on my property that may be impacted by widening my firebreaks?

If you believe there may be threatened flora or fauna on your property that could be significantly impacted (i.e. killed, injured, destroyed or harvested) by widening your firebreaks, you should contact the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, as you may require an 'Authorisation to Take Threatened Flora or Fauna'.

For information regarding **threatened fauna**, please contact the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions on 9219 9523 or by email to saci@dbca.wa.gov.au.

For information regarding **threatened flora**, please contact the Dept of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' Flora Administrative Officer on 9219 9513 or by email to flora.data@dbca.wa.gov.au.

What options do I have if I can't increase my firebreak to 3 metres wide?

Depending on the reason(s) that you are unable to increase your firebreaks to the required width of 3 metres, you may be able to apply for a **Variation to the Firebreak Notice**. Some examples of where a Variation may be considered include:

- Topography / composition of land e.g. rocky, water logged, steep gradient.
- Natural obstructions e.g. large tree, rocky outcrop.
- Environmental considerations e.g. creek line/ watercourse.

Variations providing additional time to comply (i.e. a phased approach), may be considered where landowners are likely to incur significant costs associated with tree removal and/or clearing directly related to increasing their firebreak width to 3 metres.

For more information regarding the 2020-21 Firebreak Notice, or if you would like to discuss any of the above, please contact the Shire Rangers on 9780 5695 or via email to amrshire@amrshire.wa.gov.au.