

# Media Release

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## Prepare for a hot and dry summer: RAC

RAC is urging Western Australian residents to be extra vigilant against bushfires, with a hot and dry summer forecasted from the current El Nino weather pattern.

RAC Insurance Home Claims Manager, Glen Walker, advises members to take precautionary steps to defend against the extreme weather pattern.

“Last summer there was a significant increase in the number of bushfire claims from the year before, and we’re expecting another sweltering summer this year,” Mr Walker said.

If residing anywhere near bushland, RAC recommends taking essential cautionary steps as recommended by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES):

- Create a 20 metre building protection zone around your home and other buildings which includes clearing the area of rubbish, long dry grass, bark and other materials that may catch fire
- Create a mineral earth firebreak along the boundary of your property that meets your local government requirements
- Create and maintain a minimum two metre gap between trees and your home and prune lower branches to prevent a ground fire spreading into the canopy of the trees
- Keep grass short, and prune shrubs and trees
- Store petrol, kerosene and firewood or other flammable material away from your home in a cleared area
- To prevent sparks getting into your home, close in the eaves and other gaps that lead into the roof or under the floors
- Maintain gutters and keep the roof clear of leaves
- Ensure hoses reach all corners of your house

“Our advice is to also check the weather forecast and fire danger rating regularly. Strong easterly winds early in the day can fan fires rapidly.

“Every year, hundreds of thousands of hectares in WA are burned by bushfires. We want the community to be well prepared.”

For more home bushfire information and preparation tips visit <http://rac.com.au/insurance/tips/factsheets/bushfire-preparation>.

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