Actions in summary – Bushfire Threat

• Where the CFA declares a fire danger rating “Code Red” for the Central District, ELTHAM College Research Campus will be closed to ALL persons.
• Where the College is operational and a bushfire threatens the College, we will:
  • Evacuate to Templestowe College if practicable; or
  • Remain in our “Shelter in Place”, the Sports Centre (as nominated by the CFA) should circumstances not permit evacuation.
Planned closure of schools and children’s services

Schools and children’s services including outside-school-hours-care services listed on the Bushfire At Risk Register (BARR) will be closed on days when the Fire Danger Rating is determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner as being **Code Red**. ELTHAM College is in the Central District. City Campus will remain open.

All bus routes co-ordinated by schools on the BARR will also be cancelled.

Note the College may choose to close if we believe our specific risk is higher than general conditions.
**Code Red**

**What does it mean?**
- These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire.
- Homes/Buildings are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions.
- The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas.

**What should I do?**
- Leaving high risk bushfire areas the night before or early in the day is your safest option - do not wait and see.
- Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass.
Hypothetical Bushfire Scenario

• Weather Conditions
  – Temperature: 40°C
  – Humidity: 8%
  – Wind Speed: 50 km/h
  – Wind Direction: NNW

• Fire Danger Rating
  – Code Red

• Fire Start
  – Grassfire starts in Phillips Crescent, Diamond Creek @ 1:30pm
Fire @ 2:30 PM

Diamond Creek - Phillips Crescent
Fire @ 3:00 PM

Diamond Creek - Phillips Crescent
Fire @ 3:30 PM
Fire @ 4:00 PM
How will I be advised of a planned closure?

- Where possible, the forecasting of a Code Red day will provide up to 4 days notice of a planned closure (including warnings about cancelling, changing, rescheduling or recalling off-site activities, such as camps and excursions), as well as information about cancellations of school bus routes.

- You will be advised by email or letter sent home from school – you can also check for updates at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx

- ELTHAM College will also advise on the public website.

- You should expect that, in some instances, fewer than 4 days notice may be given.

- The final decision to close will be confirmed no later than 1.00 pm the day before the potential closure by the Emergency Management Commissioner.

- Once the decision to close is made, this will not change – regardless of changes in weather forecast – this will help limit confusion and provide time for you to make alternative care arrangements for your children.
Closure – other than planned

• While every effort is made to anticipate fire threats, our school may be threatened by an unpredicted outbreak of a fire or a known fire may unexpectedly change its course.

• When this occurs, our Emergency Management Plan will ensure that we respond to the threat in a planned, timely and appropriate manner.

• Closure updates, including advice on re-opening is available from the Department’s website http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx
**Emergency Closures**

For general information regarding emergencies, the Bushfire At-Risk Register or Code Red days, see the Department's [Emergencies](#) page.

### School and early childhood service closures

The Department has not been advised of any closures.

### Bus service cancellations/alterations

The Department has not been advised of any contract school bus service cancellations/alterations. To view Bus Service cancellations/alterations please refer to the following pages:

- [Bus Service cancellations/alterations in the North Eastern Region](#)
- [Bus Service cancellations/alterations in the North Western Region](#)
- [Bus Service cancellations/alterations in the South Eastern Region](#)
- [Bus Service cancellations/alterations in the South Western Region](#)
What can you do?

• **Make sure** your family’s bushfire survival plan is up-to-date, including how your child will be cared for when their school or childcare service is closed due to threat of fire. Your child should not be left unattended.
• **Make sure** we have your current contact details, including mobile phone number.
• **Keep in touch** with us – read newsletters, check websites, talk to your child’s teacher and other parents.
• **Understand** our Emergency Management Plan.
• **Talk to your child** about bushfires and your family’s bushfire survival plan.
• **Talk to us** – your principal, teacher or school council representative, if you have any concerns.
Frequently asked questions and answers

Q. When the school is closed, will any staff remain on-site?
A. No. The safety of staff and students is our main priority and no staff will remain on-site.

Q. What happens if the forecast improves?
A. The final decision to pre-emptively close a school will be made at 1.00 pm the day prior to the planned closure. Any improvements in the weather forecast after this time will not change the decision to close – this will help limit confusion and provide time for parents to make alternative care arrangements for your children.

Q. Is it likely that schools will be closed for consecutive days? If yes, how will parents be advised?
A. It is possible that schools will be closed for consecutive days. If this occurs, we will endeavour to contact you. However as we are on the Bushfire At-Risk Register, our school will be closed on all days determined Code Red. You should also check the Department’s website for updates – http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx
**Frequently asked questions and answers**

**Q.** If I’m concerned about the risk of fires, can I keep my child away from school, even if the school remains open?

**A.** Yes. If your family decides to enact its bushfire survival plan, the most appropriate place for your child may be with you and your family, and not at school. You should advise your school as soon as possible of your child’s absence.

**Q.** On average how many days each bushfire season does the government predict that schools will need to close?

**A.** While we cannot predict the exact number of days, it should be noted that there has not been a determined Code Red day since January 2010.
Frequently asked questions and answers

Q. What should I do with my child when the school is closed?
A. You should activate your family’s bushfire survival plan that should include alternative child care arrangements. Given the expected severity of the weather conditions, your child should not be left unattended or under the supervision of older children.

Q. Will school off-site activities (e.g. camps, excursions, sporting events) continue to operate during bushfire season? What happens if my child is threatened by fire while participating in an off-site activity?
A. Off-site activities will continue throughout the year. Our school will assess the likely threat of fire when organising the activity. If an off-site activity is threatened by fire, we will enact our emergency management plan. Off-site activities in areas affected by a determined Code Red day will be cancelled or recalled. Note that camps departing or arriving at the College may require a revised departure/arrival point.
For more information go to

Additional resources:
• Country Fire Authority – www.cfa.vic.gov.au
• Fire Ready Kit available at:
• Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 240 667
• ABC Local Radio
Scenario
College open – bushfire threatens

• There is the potential for a bushfire outbreak to occur at a time where the College is operational

• Responses will and must always depend on direction from the CFA/Police and assessment of the situation – proximity, direction, intensity of fire.
Evacuation details

• Where practicable, all personnel at the College will be evacuated – as directed by CFA or by our decision.

• Evacuation of the whole College will be to Templestowe College, High Street/Cypress Avenue Lower Templestowe – large oval.

• Transport – Panorama Buses on stand by. May require indirect route to get there.

• Selected as:
  – is well away from bushfire prone areas
  – has facilities to cope with students
  – will allow controlled pick up by parents.
Evacuation Process

• You will be advised by e-mail and information will be updated on our website. A portable computer and satellite phone will ensure communication can be maintained to and from the College.

• All personnel will be relocated to the Sports Centre.

• Buses will arrive at the bus bay (personnel will not be permitted to use personal vehicles).

• Groups of students will be taken to buses and accompanied by teachers.

• Personnel not directly responsible for students will assist to manage the evacuation.
Evacuation notes for Parents

• Please do not phone the College – we need “clear space” to manage the evacuation.

• Please do not come to the College – roads are likely to be chaotic, and coming to the College increases risks for all.

• Monitor our website for updates and instructions – our website is hosted here and in the City, so we can continue to provide updates of the situation.

• Monitor e-mails – update will be by e-mail where practical.
Evacuation notes for Parents continued…

• Students to be collected by parents from Templestowe College – this will be advised via our website. Default pick up area at Templestowe College will be Cyprus Drive if communication not viable.
• Should pick up not be possible, we will continue to provide care for students.
• Any supplies required will be obtained from local supermarkets.

NOW TO GLENN – What happens if we are unable to evacuate?
If evacuation is **not** possible

- Evacuation may be prevented by:
  - CFA advice
  - Police advice
  - Proximity of fire
  - Buses not able to access the area
  - Roads blocked
If evacuation is **not** possible

- **CFA Advice**
  - CFA support the use of the College’s Sports Centre as a “Shelter in Place” option in the event of a Bushfire threatening the local area if evacuation or relocation is not a viable option due to the proximity of a bushfire to the College.
If evacuation not possible
Sports Centre (Shelter in Place)