

Wirraway Homestead: School Camps

Bushfire Planning Advice

Wirraway puts the highest priority on the safety and wellbeing of all people involved in its activities, and has a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan which identifies risks and hazards which may be involved in running camps.

FIRE PRIORITY RATINGS

We have had extensive discussions with fire authorities on the implications of the new fire rating systems on Wirraway camps. Being located in farmland, with little scrub nearby, the risks of extreme fire conditions do not compare with the catastrophic bushland fires of Black Saturday in Victoria. We have been told that grass fires and ember attacks are the likely risk to Wirraway. In an emergency, where evacuation was not possible, we understand that the indoor arena would be adequate protection for the people on the site. The campsite has a permanently connected, back up, fire fighting system with an independent water supply.

EVACUATION

On a 'catastrophic' rated day, Wirraway staff would consult with the emergency services, and the school staff at camp at the time, and if advised to do so, would evacuate campers to Strathalbyn, which has been classified as a "Bushfire Safer Place" by the CFS. This is no more than 10 minutes from the campsite by bus.

In the event that evacuation is advisable, we have arranged for a local bus company to come and pick up the campers and transport them to a safe place in Strathalbyn. We have identified a number of alternative locations, and will decide where to go depending on the circumstances.

If evacuation occurs, the Wirraway staff have planned off-site activities which will occupy the campers for the time involved, and we will provide meals and fluids as appropriate. This includes the possibility of spending the day at the Strathalbyn Pool, which is willing to open specially for us if we decide to go there.

COMMUNICATIONS

We will update the website (www.wirraway.org) if there is any fire related information parents/schools need to know, and would remain in close contact with the school authorities at all times.

Please feel free to discuss this with the Manager, Peter Arnott, if you have concerns about this or any other issue, by ringing him at the camp on 8536 6063 or his mobile: 0429 366 063.