



Home fire safety fact sheet

Brush Fences

When a brush fence burns it produces a large amount of radiant heat which can spread the fire to other property very quickly. Most brush fence fires are deliberately lit at night.

The best defence against arson in this situation is vigilance and having a garden hose connected and ready to use. If a brush fence fire does start, call triple zero (000) for the fire service as soon as possible, as a garden hose may not be able to control the fire once it has taken hold. When extinguishing a brush fence fire, it is ideal to apply water to each end of the flaming fence to slow down or stop the fire spread.

If you have a window within three metres of a brush fence, fire resistant curtains and window treatments should be used.

Exterior blinds should be non-flammable.

Do not use the area adjacent to a brush fence to store flammable material of any kind including: wheelie bins, recycling material and garden refuse.

Vehicles should not be parked close to a brush fence.

Do not store flammable liquids or chemicals in garden sheds near brush fences.

Fire retardants are available to treat brush fences but the MFS recommends that you carefully investigate the effectiveness of the retardant after exposure to rain and sun. If you do use a retardant you should also be prepared in the ways mentioned above.

Smoke alarms also have a role to play in managing your risk from brush fence fires. If the fence fire spreads to your home the smoke alarms will alert you, especially if the fire is started at night when you are sleeping. Make sure that your smoke alarms are functioning at maximum efficiency. (See our Home Fire Safety Fact Sheet – [Smoke Alarms](#) for more information.)

New Brush Fences

From 29 November, 2007

- A new brush fence (or a rebuild of an existing brush fence) will not be allowed within three metres of an existing or proposed dwelling, and
- Dwellings will not be able to be constructed within three metres of an existing brush fence, unless the dwelling materials meet certain fire resistance measures.

The changes have been made through the adoption of Minister's Specification SA 76C of The Development Act 1993.

Existing brush fences and repairs to those fences are not affected although if the fence is completely replaced it must comply with the new conditions.

For more information about the legislation go to: www.sa.gov.au and enter "Brush Fences" in the search box.