

Maiden Gully Fire Brigade Winter 2020 Newsletter

www.maidengullycfa.org.au



Winter Fire Safety – a vital message from your local Fire Brigade

Check your smoke alarm

Only a working smoke alarm will alert you and your loved ones in the event of a fire



Across Victoria, many people think that the CFA only fight bushfires but in the past 10 years CFA has responded to more than 17,000 residential fires, with more than 400 resulting in death or serious injury. Of these fires, a quarter started in sleeping areas, 23 per cent in lounge areas and 15 per cent in kitchens. Clearly it is our sleeping and lounge areas that are the biggest risk. Without properly placed smoke alarms your chances of surviving a house fire are greatly diminished – especially when you are asleep. Brigade Captain, Peter Dole has stated, “We all know the lifesaving impact smoke alarms can have. Fire safety is no accident. The only way to ensure your smoke alarm is working is to check and test it.” Here are the Brigade’s key winter Fire Safety questions:

- Do you check your smoke alarms monthly?
- Are your smoke alarms more than 10 years old? If so replace them!
- Have you a home fire escape plan?
- Have you practised your escape plan?
- Are any of your power boards overloaded?
- Have you had your home heating serviced recently?

Also remember to never leave cooking unattended and to turn off all appliances before going to bed. You can check the Brigade’s website (www.maidengullycfa.org.au) for more information.

Brigade News

In the year ending March 31st, your brigade responded to 74 calls (an increase of 12%). The increase all related to supporting communities outside of Maiden Gully. Members first assisted in NSW back in mid-November and later in the fires in Gippsland and the Northeast. Strike teams to these major fires were generally crewed on a District wide basis resulting in only one or two Maiden Gully firefighters being away at anyone time. Our people were in Mallacoota when the fire hit and in following weeks. Changing over crews was interesting with conventional aircraft, helicopters, barges as well as buses being used. Maiden Gully Tanker 1 worked overnight on township protection at Lexton and at the

major fire north of Huntly along with our Field Command Vehicle. Other members have been involved in Incident Management and air operations. Fortunately since the end of the fire danger period, the rate of calls has slowed.

New equipment and improvements

Around the fire station, we have:

- Installed a larger rear vehicle access door to our engine bays making it much easier and safer to park our tankers.
- Installed an automatic security gate to the rear compound for safety reasons, which brings us back up to the standard for other CFA stations. In coming months, the adjoining section of fence which be updated to the same design.
- Repainted the engine bay and drying room.

New equipment includes:

- New generation of breathing apparatus sets along with spare face masks and a mask drying cabinet.
- Car entry kit, new pressure washer and a root soaker nozzle.

Lisa Chesters MP has just announced that we have been successful in gaining an Australian Government Volunteer Grant for \$1,200 that will be used to buy a larger refrigerator for the station replacing our 2002 unit.

Winter is also bonfire season - always register your bonfire or burn-off

Check with the Council to see if you need a permit (information is on our website) and ensure that you notify your bonfire by calling 1800 668 511 or emailing burnoffs@esta.vic.gov.au. These actions help ensure that firefighters are not called out unnecessarily and you don't get fined. To keep your fire safe and legal:

- Check first with the Council
- Never leave it unattended
- Monitor weather conditions
- Have sufficient water and equipment to stop the fire spreading
- Let your neighbours know.

Alternatively, take your green waste to the Eaglehawk Landfill for free any day. This is a great pollution free alternative.



MFB and CFA recommend
**photoelectric
smoke alarms**
with a **10-year
lithium battery**
in a tamper proof chamber

