

Clematis and Menzies Creek Bushfire Preparedness Project

Project aims

With funding from the Victorian Government Safer Together Program, Cardinia Shire Council and Yarra Ranges Council worked with the communities of Clematis and Menzies Creek to:

- develop a shared understanding of the current level of bushfire and emergency preparedness in Clematis and Menzies Creek
- increase bushfire preparedness within local townships
- promote a culture of working together, including councils with other councils, councils with fire and environment agencies, and the communities of high bushfire risk-townships that share a municipal boundary foster leadership within those communities and identify local solutions to bushfire risk
- increase community connectedness.



Project outcomes

Increased community engagement about emergency management

- In-depth consultation and community engagement in the Clematis and Menzies Creek communities happened during the project. 98 surveys were collected from residents across townships, with the aim of getting a better understanding of their attitudes and opinions with regard to emergency preparedness.
- Local groups and residents were kept informed throughout the project via regular face-face meetings and online updates.

Bushfire risk information tailored to specific community needs developed

Via the extensive community engagement, the community identified 3 main areas where the project could increase their level of bushfire preparedness. These were:

- provision of local fire risk information
- assistance with developing personal fire plans and
- assistance with developing personal evacuation kits.

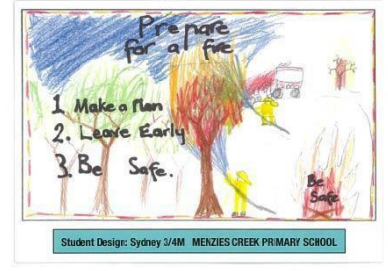
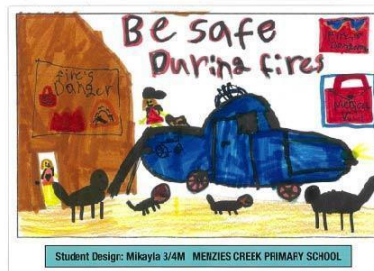
These identified community needs were met via targeted community education delivered in partnership with the local primary school, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP).

Menzies Creek Primary School Partnership and Postcard Competition

Council and the CFA delivered tailored bushfire preparedness information to Grade 3 and 4 students at Menzies Creek Primary School.

As part of the session, students took part in a postcard design competition to promote key CFA messaging. The winning designs were distributed to the local community to help spread preparedness messages.

Winning designs of postcard design competition, with CFA messaging →



Community workshop



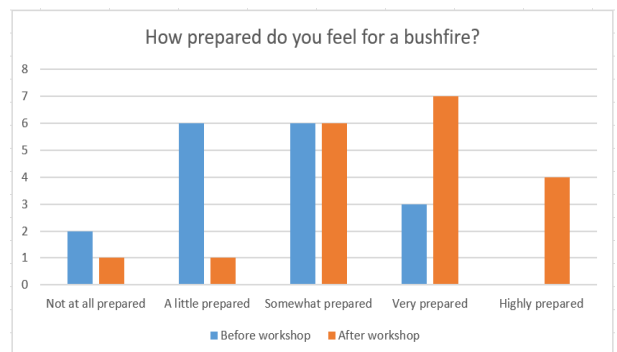
A community bushfire preparedness workshop was held in Menzies Creek targeting the identified community needs. Information presented included:

- bushfire-risk modelling developed by Cardinia Shire Council and Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP),
- bushfire planning advice from the CFA,
- evacuation kits and USB sticks pre-loaded with important preparedness information were distributed to the community by the Shire of Yarra Ranges and Cardinia Shire Council. Remaining tubs were handed to the local brigades for further distribution.

Increased community understanding of bushfire risk and preparedness

At the end of the workshop, community were asked to rate their knowledge of local bushfire risk and also their level of preparedness and that of their community.

After the workshop, survey results showed the community felt significantly more prepared for bushfire.



Local community leaders championed

Stories of community members who took part in the project were recorded and shared via local media. It is hoped that this will encourage other local residents to learn from their peers and better prepare for bushfire in future.