

HIGH CLUTTER NOTIFICATION INFORMATION

Risk reduction information and processes

FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Program Design and Community Development



Research has identified that a high level of clutter or 'hoarding' in and around a home increases the risk of fire and reduces the likelihood of the occupant/s being able to safely escape in the event of a fire. Fires in these homes also increase the risk to responding firefighters and neighbouring properties.

FIRE RISKS

Fires in homes with problematic clutter or hoarded possessions increase risks to the occupants, their neighbours and firefighters because:

- Non-functional gas or electricity may result in unsafe practices for cooking and heating, this combined with high fuel loads provides greater opportunity for fire ignition.
- Possessions blocking exits and narrowing internal pathways impedes escape for the occupant and access for firefighters.
- Accumulation of possessions results in an abnormally high fuel load, creating excessive smoke and fire conditions, and possible structural collapse. Under these conditions:
 - fighting these fires and searching for occupants is far more difficult.
 - neighbours can quickly be affected.

FIRE RISK REDUCTION

Victorian fire services (CFA and MFB) recommend that in the first instance, individuals or agencies assisting those affected by hoarding should:

- Install smoke alarms and test them
- Unblock exits
- Widen internal pathways
- Check utilities are connected
- Remove clutter from the stove top and around the cooking area
- Remove clutter from around heaters and electrical items and discourage the use of open flame

Notifying CFA of high levels of clutter or 'hoarding' conditions within a property allows us to place a discreet electronic alert on a property address where the accumulation of belongings has resulted in increased risk. In the event of a fire or other emergency the alert activates advising responding firefighters that 'high fuel loads' have been identified at the property address, allowing firefighters to increase preparedness and safety.

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NOTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The property must be located within the Country Fire Authority Area (see attached map indicating CFA area).
 - The internal clutter must be at level 5 or higher on the Clutter Image Rating Scale (see attached scale).
- or
- Significant external clutter with the potential to impact neighbouring residents.

PROCESSES

Submit a new notification

- If clutter at the property fits the notification eligibility criteria, fill out the High Clutter Notification Form (see attached form) and submit via email to: resreferral@cfa.vic.gov.au.
- Within 5 working days you will receive an email to advise the notification has been received and the address has been activated.
- Notifications will be reviewed annually.

Review a notification

- A High Clutter Notification Review Form will be sent to your email address (as provided by you in the notification form) in approximately 1 year from the activation for you to complete.
- Fill out High Clutter Notification Review Form and submit this via email to: resreferral@cfa.vic.gov.au.
- If CFA does not receive a completed High Clutter Notification Review Form with 28 days the alert will be automatically removed.

Remove a notification

- You can remove a notification, which no longer meets the notification eligibility criteria, at any time. If residents relocate or the level of clutter reduces to 4 or below on the Clutter Image Rating Scale, you will need to notify CFA to remove the alert.
- Fill out the High Clutter Alert Removal Form (see attached) and submit to CFA via resreferral@cfa.vic.gov.au.

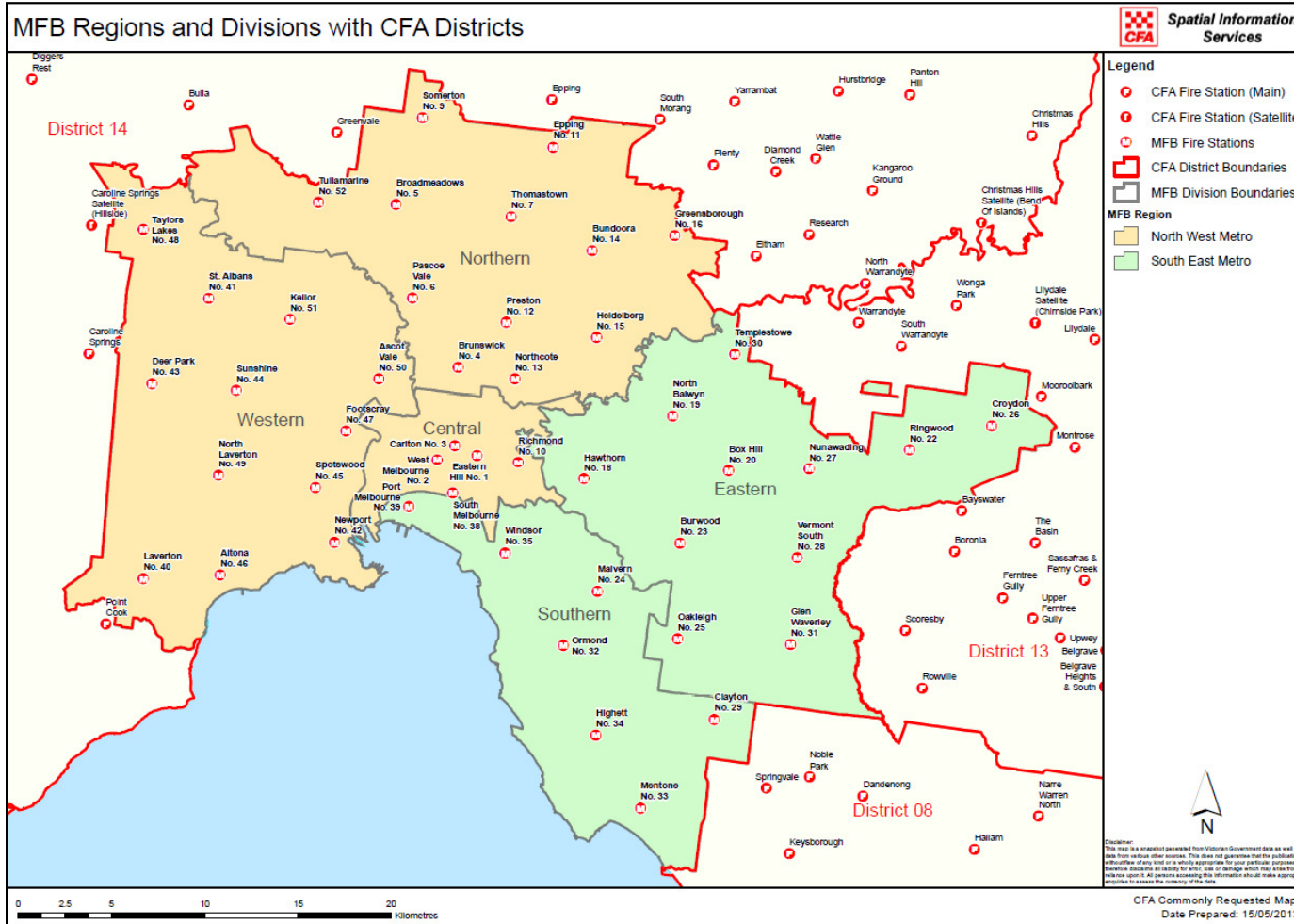
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MFB/CFA BOUNDARY MAP



Any locations within the MFB area, contact MFB's Burnley Complex.
Ph: 9662 2311.



Clutter Image Rating Scale: Kitchen

Please select the photo below that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



1



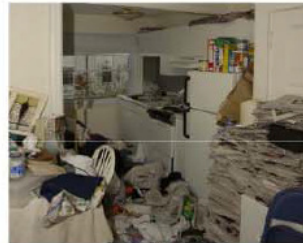
2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9