



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 13 October 2010

Blackburn Lake neighbours take action to prepare for for summer fires

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) in partnership with the Whitehorse City Council held a community Reserve Clean-Up and Bushfire Information Session at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary today, as part of Fire Action Week.

Minister for Gaming and Consumer Affairs and Member for Mitcham the Honourable Tony Robinson MP also popped in for a visit in his local electorate.

While rain prevented the clean-up happening on the day, a lively information session was held for local residents, and Grade 5 students from Blackburn Lake Primary School, who were able to ask questions from the available expert personnel about the actions they can be taking now to prepare for the threat of fires this summer.

Whitehorse Councillor Philip Daw said this is a time for us all to focus on preparing for the season ahead.

“No one in Victoria – no matter where they live or what their fire experience has been – can afford to be complacent including those who live near bushland like Blackburn Lake Sanctuary,” Cr Daw said.

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary is one of the area’s most significant environmental assets and is regarded as one of the most important bird refuges in metropolitan Melbourne.

“Individuals and householders have a key role to play in the fire preparation effort and this is what this event was all about,” Cr Daw said..

MFB Community Safety Commander Mark Milaszewicz said it was terrific to see so many interested residents and children from the neighbouring school participating in the event.

“Most people associate bushfires with the country and rural areas. People who live in urban fringe areas should be prepared too, especially if your home is adjacent to bush or grassland, like the Blackburn Lake area.

“Today’s session was a great opportunity to speak one on one with Blackburn Lake residents and give them advice on what to expect in a bushfire and how to prepare their homes and properties,” Mr Milaszewicz said.

“It was a terrific morning and an excellent way to keep our communities informed on this important issue,” Mr Milaszewicz said.

MFB recommends some simple house and garden preparations before the summer season. These could include:

- Clearing gutters of leaves and rubbish.
- Ensuring underfloor areas are enclosed or screened.
- Sealing gaps, vents and roof spaces, to prevent embers entering the house.
- Storing LPG gas tanks appropriately – they should be vented away from the house.
- Firmly fix roofing.
- Keeping grass areas watered and well trimmed to no more than 10cm in height.
- Clearing dead leaves.
- Removing or trimming shrubs. No shrubs over one metre next to or below window line.
- Trimming tree branches overhanging your house.

For more information, please visit the MFB website www.mfb.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.

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For more information please contact:

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