

# Media Release

Friday, 23 February 2018 | Media contact: Rachel Dawkins 0407 821 153

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## Autumn planned burning set to commence in Gippsland

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) is preparing to start an extensive planned burning program in the Gippsland region to reduce bushfire risk for local communities and the environment.

FFMVic is working with local communities to ensure residents and visitors are informed about the upcoming planned burning program set to start in early March.

Gippsland's Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Chris Stephenson said: "Our autumn planned burning program will focus on reducing bushfire fuel around communities across the region and minimising the impacts of large scale bushfires in more remote areas."

"We will be starting the program with a combination of burns to reduce bushfire risk, high elevation regeneration burns and burns for ecological purposes," Mr Stephenson said.

"Planned regeneration burns take place each year and are important to promote the regeneration of native species in areas where timber harvesting has occurred.

"Gippsland communities may see and smell smoke, and some roads and parks may have to be closed for public safety while burns are being undertaken.

"We aim to reduce the impact of smoke on communities from planned burning and continue to invest in new technologies and systems to help us better understand the dispersion of smoke. We understand that smoke from planned burns may cause concern for some people, but it's important that our crews take every opportunity while conditions are right to reduce bushfire risk.

"We work closely with the Bureau of Meteorology to assess weather conditions such as humidity, temperature and wind speed, and will only carry out burns when conditions are suitable."

For the latest information about when planned burns are happening near you go to [www.ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn](http://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn), download the Vic Emergency app or call the VicEmergency hotline on 1800 226 226. Or you can register for the Planned Burning Notification System via [www.ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn](http://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/plannedburn)

If you are experiencing any symptoms that may be due to smoke exposure, the Department of Health and Human Services advises people to seek medical advice or call Nurse-on-Call on 1300 60 60 24.