



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Heatwave conditions see increased fire danger for Hunter Valley Rural Fire District

16<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is warning residents of an increased risk of grass fires across the Hunter Valley District area with hot and dry weather expected over the weekend and into next week.

NSW RFS Inspector Mark Denton said that under these conditions, grass fires can start easily and spread rapidly, threatening lives, property, crops and stock.

“Current weather systems are expected to generate hot and unsettled conditions through the weekend until late next week, with heatwave conditions forecast for parts of NSW”, Inspector Denton said.

“I urge Hunter Valley District landholders to be aware of this threat and of the risks associated with using machinery outdoors.

“Every landholder should be prepared for fire and have firefighting equipment on hand, such as a full knapsack, spray pumper or a handheld fire extinguisher, each in good working order.”

Inspector Denton said grass fires travel much faster than bush fires because grass ignites so quickly.

“Hunter Valley District residents need to ensure they have an up-to-date Bush Fire Survival Plan and know what they and their family will do if a fire threatens their property,” Inspector Denton said.

“You should also make sure you have downloaded or updated the new Hazards Near Me NSW app and set Watch Zones to receive accurate and timely information.”

The NSW RFS provides the following advice about protecting properties from grass fires:

- Put fire breaks in place around assets and standing crops as well as boundary fences.
- Check your farm equipment is in good working order and is ready to deal with a fire.
- Be aware that slasher and mower blades can spark if they strike rocks or metal, causing dry grass to ignite.
- Register Static Water Supply sources on your property, such as dams, swimming pools and water tanks, with the NSW RFS, which will assist firefighters in a fire emergency.

For more information and resources, visit [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare)