



Media Release



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ForestrySA prepared for action this fire season

ForestrySA fire crews and staff are preparing for action, as signs point toward a busy 2008-09 fire season in South Australia.

ForestrySA State Fire Management Officer Dave Stevens said an increased level of fire activity was expected in the Green Triangle region, while the forested areas of the Mount Lofty Ranges and Mid North areas were preparing for average seasons.

Rainfall in all forest areas over the past month has been below average and this is reflected in Soil Dryness Indices, which are increasing rapidly for the third consecutive season.

“Rainfall expectations over the next few months, according to Bureau of Meteorology forecasting models, show that the Mid North can expect about average rainfall, the Mount Lofty Ranges have a 55% to 60% chance of below average rainfall and the Green Triangle Region has a 65% to 70% chance of reduced rainfall,” Mr Stevens said.

“This, accompanied by the forecast that all forested areas have a greater than 80% chance of increased summer temperatures, shows that this season, like the previous two, will be of concern to all who live and work in the country.”

Mr Stevens said there were a number of signs which showed the fire season was fast approaching.

“A good indication that the fire season is nearing is a warm and windy couple of days in spring, which brings with it a number of small fires,” he said.

“Grass areas set their seed and start drying off and fine fuels in forest areas lose that damp springy feel and become dry and brittle.”

As a result, ForestrySA is now preparing for what will almost certainly be a busy fire season.

Fire breaks are being slashed, annual checks have been carried out on the Fire King fleet and new bulk water tanks delivered in readiness for the onset of summer.

Fire crew training, medical and fitness testing is also being carried out at ForestrySA sites across South Australia, with temporary fire season staff to be appointed in the near future.

Prescribed burning in native forest areas also began last week.

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