

Policy – Council – *Extreme/Catastrophic Weather Day*

Date created/amended*: July 2022
Date of next review: July 2025
Adopted by: OHS Committee/Emergency Management Team
Date adopted: December 2022
Responsible officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

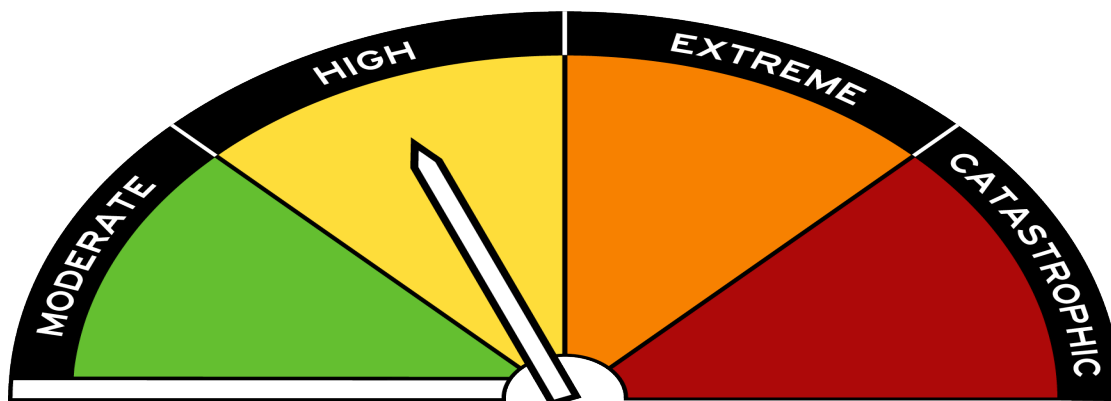
1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides the workplace arrangements that need to be implemented within the Pyrenees Shire Council (PSC) in the event that an Extreme/Catastrophic Weather Day warning is issued by emergency management authorities in the state of Victoria.

This policy applies to all Pyrenees Shire Council staff, Councillors, contractors, volunteers and visitors in all PSC work locations.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

On days of Orange (Extreme) and Red (Catastrophic) weather warnings (*see below*), PSC staff will, as far as is reasonably practicable, protect themselves and others from the risks associated with extreme heat and bushfires while engaged in Shire activities. Council’s Senior Leadership team/Emergency Management team will implement the approved procedures that support this policy and enable the Emergency Management Team to reach a state of readiness.



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3. DEFINITIONS

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) in consultation with fire agencies determines the ratings for any given period or day. The Fire Danger Rating Levels (AFDRS) uses words and color codes to give an expert assessment of the potential fire danger, the area rated Orange/Red can be related to levels of difficulty of suppressing a fire and the potential impact on the community.

Extreme (Orange) and Catastrophic (Red) is the highest fire danger rating in Victoria, these ratings are the worst conditions for a grass fire or bushfire with very high temperatures, strong wind and low humidity. It is almost impossible for fire-fighting agencies to control a fire in these conditions.

4. OBJECTIVES

In the event of a formal fire warning being issued for the Southwest District (which includes Pyrenees Shire), the objectives of this policy are to:

1. Promote and encourage safe work practices for Council employees refer EM Handbook
2. Provide guidance to employees on service delivery and leave entitlements. *Refer Extreme Weather procedure*
3. Determine the services that will be affected and document what will be modified or suspended. *Refer Business Continuity Plan*
4. Ensure the Council Emergency Management Team have sufficient resources in place to undertake their emergency management responsibilities. *Refer Extreme Weather Preparation Checklist*

Council have determined that as its service delivery will be affected on days declared as extreme/catastrophic fire danger days, some staff may be required to start work earlier in order to enable specific services to be delivered. Other staff members, who are primary carers for children, siblings and parents, therefore have a duty of care for family members, will be able to access leave as determined by their manager. Employees who have property that is threatened by immediate disaster will also be able to access leave as required.

5. Managers/Supervisors Responsibilities

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Briefing all people under their supervision on the terms of this policy and its procedures as well as any changes to Council service delivery.
- Ensuring all employees are aware of the Extreme Weather Day procedures OH&S requirements.
- Determining and implementing appropriate processes in the event that a 'Extreme Weather Day' is declared.

For information regarding service delivery, see Appendix A attached to this document.

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6. REFERENCE & RELATED DOCUMENTS

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
Emergency Management Act 2013
Aged Care Act 1997 and Charter of Aged Care Rights

- Municipal Heatwave Plan
- Procedure – Extreme Weather
- Work Instruction – Response to Declared Weather Conditions
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Extreme Weather Preparation Checklist
- PSC Internal Emergency Handbook

6.1 Consultation and impact

Pyrenees Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and its employees. Council will involve elected employee health and safety representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health, safety or wellbeing of any of its employees.

Development of this Policy was conducted in consultation with relevant staff and consultative committees prior to approval. It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on the rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (2007).

7. VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Issue date	Description of change
1.0	Dec 2014	Initial release
1.1	Nov 2015	Reviewed with no changes
2.0	Sept 2019	Review – wording and administrative changes; addition of actions' listing for specific functions
2.1	July 2022	Review re wording/descriptions in line with new fire rating changes Australia wide AFDRS

8. GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Gender Impact Assessment provides a useful record for reporting and can assist with demonstrating compliance with the Gender Equality Act.

Is a Gender Impact Assessment required to be undertaken for this Policy? YES NO

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Appendix A – Extreme/Catastrophic Weather Day (Declared) – Services Affected Listing

Directorate - Action	Detail	Responsibility of -
Assets and Development - Waste/transfer stations	All waste/transfer stations will be closed to all users	Manager Engineering
Assets and Development – Community Safety & Amenity Officer Call Outs	Only approved essential call outs will be conducted. Call outs on these days must be attended by a minimum of 2 members of staff.	Manager Planning and Development
Assets and Development - Roadside Slashing and Chainsaw Use	All slashing and chainsaw use will be postponed except for emergency management purposes.	Manager Works
Assets and Development - Township reserve mowing and chainsaw usage	All reserve mowing and chainsaw use will be postponed unless for emergency purposes or the preparation of a public event. The Manager Works will determine the level of risk prior to any works being undertaken on a case-by-case basis.	Manager Works
Assets and Development - Road Construction	All road construction work will be postponed, unless it's works to keep worksites safe i.e., signage, watering	Manager Works
Assets and Development - Road Maintenance	All scheduled road maintenance works will be postponed other than patrolling for inspection purposes and/or emergency management. All road sealing to be cancelled unless its committed works that can't be rescheduled.	Manager Works
Assets and Development - Depot Maintenance	All Works staff will be required to undertake depot-based maintenance such as plant cleaning, depot housekeeping and general servicing on days of Extreme/Catastrophic Weather Danger.	Manager Works
Assets and Development - Equipment Usage	All plant that is prohibited to use on Total Fire Ban days will not be used on Extreme/Catastrophic Weather days e.g., angle grinders, welders	Manager Works

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Directorate - Action	Detail	Responsibility of -
Assets and Development - Excessive Heat	Staff required to work outdoors to maintain safety at worksites need to adhere to the Pyrenees Shire Council Extreme Weather Procedure (rest break guidance)	Manager Works
Corporate and Community Services – Pyrenees Community Care	Community Services to telephone clients on our Vulnerable Persons List.	Manager Community Wellbeing
Corporate and Community Services – Pyrenees Community Care	Only pre-determined ‘high risk’ clients will continue to receive essential care-all other services will be postponed.	Manager Community Wellbeing
Corporate and Community Services – Maternal and Child Health	Maternal and Child Health centres in high-risk areas will close. Home visits in these areas will be postponed, as will any immunization sessions.	Manager Community Wellbeing
Economic Development & Tourism – Community Events	Each event must have an emergency management plan, which will include what will happen on Extreme/Catastrophic weather days. Event permits will be revoked on Extreme/Catastrophic weather days if the event is to be conducted in a high-risk area.	Manager Economic Development & Tourism
General actions – Site Inspections and non-essential travel	All site inspections and non- essential travel is to be postponed.	Managers or any relevant staff members
Assets and Development	All pools may close on catastrophic fire days if conditions are deemed unsafe for staff or customers.	Belgravia Leisure Swimming Pool Operator