

Media Release:

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Bushfires NT Urges Territorians to be Fire Aware

Bushfires NT Director Stephen Sutton is urging Territorians to be fire aware and heed all fire warnings.

“Bushfires NT have issued a fine as well as several warnings over the last four days to residents who have thoughtlessly caused fires in the Darwin rural area,” Mr Sutton said.

“Lighting fires without permits, lack of fire breaks and not heeding to fire warnings are what our bushfires crews have been up against.

“A landholder in the Elizabeth Valley region started a fire without a permit, which resulted in a bushfire burning 1,500 hectares of scrubland, and threatened assets and property holders in the area.”

Senior Regional Fire Control Officer John Whatley said this is one of the worst fire seasons he’s seen for a few years.

“We are surprised by some people’s negligence, we’ve issued a number of warnings, including one to a person who was welding in long grass on a fire ban day,” Mr Whatley said.

“Another warning was issued to a person who had started a campfire amid some long grass in the Elizabeth Valley area, with no fire break whatsoever, it was just luck that the fire didn’t get away”.

Mr Sutton said warnings have also been given for burning rubbish on a fire ban day.

“A lot of these fires aren’t started with malicious intent, but that is cold comfort if you lose a few thousand mango trees, everyone in the rural area needs to take more care during the fire season,” Mr Sutton said.

“With the dry windy weather looking set to continue for some time, people need to remain vigilant until we get some decent rain.

“All landholders need to take measures to reduce the risk of bushfire, which means having a fire management plan, ensuring they have fire breaks and removing fuel from around buildings.

“The minimum standard for fire trails is four metres wide slashed, with all slash material removed, bare earth or graded, chemically treated or grazed.

“If landholders all do the right thing it makes our job a lot easier and reduces the impact of bushfires on their own lives.”

For more information go to www.nt.gov.au/bushfires

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Media Note – for more information contact Steve Sutton on 8922 0832

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