



FACTSHEET

Application for Safe Removal of Hazardous Trees

The Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund has made available a Payment to assist with the assessment and treatment of hazardous trees on bushfire affected properties.

The Safe Removal of Hazardous Trees Payment is to assist home owners reduce the immediate risk to human safety posed by hazardous trees on their property.

The trees must have been made hazardous as a result of bushfire damage sustained in the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

Am I eligible (revised 22 February 2010)?

You are eligible if you were the owner of a residential property at the time of the bushfires and, as a result of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires, you have trees that are a hazard to human safety that need to be removed on this residential property.

Landlords are eligible to apply for this payment in order to make their property safe for tenants.

Home owners may apply for this payment once the work has been completed. You must provide an arborist's report and may provide either valid invoice/s or receipt/s for the work already completed.

Burnt native trees can be removed without a permit to make a site safe under planning provisions made in response to the 2009 bushfires. Areas covered by special planning overlays may require other approvals. Applicants should check with their local council as to restrictions or requirements associated with the removal of trees and vegetation.

What assistance is available (revised 22 February 2010)?

A payment of up to \$4000 per home owner will be made available to assist with the assessment and removal of hazardous trees from your property.

Payment will only be made based on an assessment from a qualified service (these include arborists, professional tree removers or council) confirming the trees are hazardous to human safety as a direct result of the damage sustained in the 2009 bushfires.

Payment will be by way of reimbursement, direct to the applicant, upon the provision of receipts or invoices for work already completed.

What is an arborist and how do I find one?

An arborist is a trained technician for trees. Arborists are often employed by, or own tree care services. An arborist's training enables them to assess the health and stability of a tree and to safely prune, fell and remove trees. While you must provide an arborist report identifying the hazardous trees, you may use any legitimate tree contracting service to undertake the tree removal.

To find an arborist your shire's website may provide a list of local arborists. Otherwise you can check the

Yellow Pages or the Tree Contractors Association Australia website www.tcaa.com.au

How do I claim?

To claim the Safe Removal of Hazardous Trees payment, you will need to complete the application form and include all supporting documentation.

What information do I need to provide?

If you have already applied for Bushfire Appeal Fund grants and have provided any of the information listed below in previous applications (eg. proof of identity, bank details, rates notice), then please note this on your application and we will source this from your other applications.

You will need to provide:

1. An assessment from a qualified service advising that the tree/s are hazardous
2. Valid invoice/s for the assessment and/or the cost of removal of the hazardous trees

The Government will need to reasonably establish:

- proof of identity of the applicant
- that the applicants were the owner of the fire affected address

Proof of identity can include:

- Passport
- Drivers licence, Key Pass or other photographic identification
- Birth certificate

Proof of ownership of the fire affected property may include:

- Rates Notice

Who can witness a statutory declaration?

People authorised to witness statutory declarations include lawyers, police, pharmacists, school principals, ministers of religion, bank managers, doctors, vets and Housing Services Officers.

If you require assistance with getting your statutory declaration witnessed please contact the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund on 1800 180 213.

How long do I have to claim (revised 22 February 2010)?

You have 30 June 2010 to lodge a claim for Safe Removal of Hazardous Trees payment. Applications beyond this date may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

What if I need assistance with completing this form?

You can contact the Victorian Bushfires Appeal Fund on 1800 180 213.