



PRIMARY CARE PREPAREDNESS

phn
MURRAY

An Australian Government Initiative

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES (NSP)

In Victoria, a Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort (NSP-BPLR) is a location only designated for use as a last resort during a bushfire emergency, when your primary bushfire plan has failed. It is important to note that:

- it is not a substitute for planning to leave early
- it may offer some protection from flame and radiant heat but does not guarantee safety
- NSPs are often open spaces (sports fields, parks or existing buildings, not purpose-built fire structures).

Why do they exist?	After major bushfires (notably the 2009 Black Saturday fires), Victorian fire-agencies and councils recognised that despite the best plans many people could be caught without a safer option. NSPs provide a backup option when leaving home, staying to defend or when evacuating via alternative routes is no longer a viable option.
How are NSPs designated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipal councils (or equivalent authorities) identify and designate sites such as NSPs within their jurisdiction.• The Country Fire Authority or CFA assesses potential sites using Assessment Guidelines e.g. for radiant heat exposure, access and exit and vegetation clearance• Once designated, NSPs are listed publicly e.g. on the CFA website.
How you can recognise an NSP-BPLR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can recognise a NSP-BPLR in Victoria and New South Wales by a green and white sign which includes the words:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ ‘Bushfire Neighbourhood Safer Place – A Place of Last Resort’◦ ‘Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood safer Place’.
What kinds of places can an NSP be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A local sports oval or recreation reserve• Foreshore reserve or park• Community hall• School oval
What you should know and do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The safest option on days of high bushfire risk is always to leave early from high-risk areas. An NSP is only for when all other plans have failed.• Travel to an NSP may be dangerous – smoke, fire activity, fallen trees and blocked roads may intervene.• At an NSP you may face – No emergency services present, no facilities for pets, no food/water supply guaranteed, exposure to smoke heat, flying embers, poor visibility.• If you are forced to use an NSP wear protective clothing, bring drinking water, medications, phone etc.• Monitor conditions and be prepared to move.
What an NSP is not	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is not a substitute for a well-prepared home or a defendable property.• Not a place for general daily refuge or for other emergencies.• Not to be confused with a Community Fire Refuge, which is a building modified for higher protection.

Locally – what you need to check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out if your local council has designated NSPs in your area. Some areas may not have any. <p>Visit the CFA website or local council website and look for listings/maps in your municipality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the location/s, how to get there safely and evaluate whether your travel path is viable in extreme conditions. Make sure your personal bushfire plan includes Plan A (leave early), Plan B (defend if appropriate) and Plan C (NSP or other last resort).
Key points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSPs are only last resort options They provide some protection but do not guaranteed safety Leaving early always remains the best strategy People with special needs, such as the elderly and people with a disability, should always leave before the threat of a bushfire Know your local NSPs, your exit routes and keep your plan current
More information and resources and how to find an NSP-BPLR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFA – Neighbourhood Safer Places Page NSW Rural Fire Service – Neighbourhood Safer Places Page You can find your closest Neighbourhood Safer Place in New South Wales on the interactive map.

Other useful links and resources to share with patients

- [NSP-BPLR – List of Locations Victoria](#)
- [NSP New South Wales Factsheet](#)
- [CFA's fire ready kit; protective clothing and community fire refuges.](#)

Contact us

For more information or support email primarycarerresponse@murrayphn.org.au

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