



## Bushfire Safety



# Off to the Tip – Middle Primary

## Introduction

The 'Off to the Tip' safety message explores the importance of preparing for bushfire season by managing (e.g. relocating, disposing of, or dispersing) flammable materials close to your home or sheds. This could include piled up branches, bark, leaves, twigs, heavy mulch and other wood piles.

This lesson should ideally be completed after the 'Raking up Twigs and Leaves' and 'What is a Spot Fire?' lessons.

It is recommended that you read the 'Background Information For Teachers' before undertaking this lesson.

## Links to Australian Curriculum

### Geography

- Understanding that environments are important to people and animals.
- Recognising the impact that bushfires and other natural disasters have on environments and communities.
- Developing ideas about how to prepare and respond to natural disaster events.

### Health and Physical Education

- Identify, plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing of self and others in various situations.

### English

- Accessing relevant prior knowledge or personal experiences to make meaningful connections to events, issues and ideas in a text.
- Sharing ideas and points of view relating to a text.



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## Learning outcomes

Participating in this lesson will help students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Students will learn how they can help protect their home from bushfire damage.
- Students will learn about potential bushfire hazards around the home and how to manage them.

## Resources

You will need:

- 'Off to the Tip' safety message video <http://vimeo.com/31114269> (running time: 30 sec)
- interactive whiteboard (IWB)
- pencils for drawing and colouring
- A4 paper (or relevant workbook)
- computers with the internet
- **'Managing Hazards'** activity sheet.

## Lesson steps

As a class, watch the video, 'Off to the Tip' <http://vimeo.com/31114269>

Ask students to discuss the safety message, record their responses. Questions could include:

- What was Amy's job?
- How was Maddie helping?
- Why were they taking the branches to the tip?
- Piled up branches can catch fire easily. What else can catch fire easily?
- What are some other dangers of leaving piles of branches lying around?
- Why is it important to prepare for bushfire season?



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With a partner, students discuss whether they have collected and disposed of anything in their yards in the past? What was it and why? Students to identify and discuss what potential hazards they have in their yard, and why they could be hazards. Explain to students that hazards can even include small leaves and twigs (about the size of your finger), which are sometimes referred to as 'fine fuel' and can become embers (burning leaves or twigs that are carried by the wind and can cause spot fires).

Students to illustrate their yard, (including any sheds, etc.) and draw and label the hazards. Consider what is lying next to sheds or other buildings, location of gas bottles or wood piles, over hanging branches etc.

Once finished, as a class, students to share their illustrations. What are some common hazards? List them on the board.

As a class, or in small groups, brainstorm ways in which each hazard could be managed. Management may include relocating items so they are away from buildings, tidying the yard or removing items using bins or the local tip. Record ideas on the board. Ask students to think of places in their local area that provide disposal options (this may require further research), or more information about maintaining a 'fire safe' property.

Students to complete the '**Managing Hazards**' activity sheet to list the hazards around their home, ways to manage them, and the person responsible for managing each of them.

## Further activities

Here are some suggested extra activities to extend the students' learning.

- Invite someone from your local bushfire service to speak to the class about ways to prepare for bushfire season.
- Students to collect small twigs and leaves to use in a fire-themed creative arts project.
- Organise a trip to a local tip or recycling centre. Find out how it operates.

## Extra resources

For more information visit your state or territory fire agency website:

- ACT Rural Fire Service  
<https://esa.act.gov.au/actrfs/>
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)  
<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/>
- Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service  
[www.pfes.nt.gov.au/Fire-and-Rescue.aspx](http://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/Fire-and-Rescue.aspx)



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- NSW Rural Fire Service  
[www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/)
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES)  
[www.qfes.qld.gov.au/](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/)
- South Australian Country Fire Service  
[www.cfs.sa.gov.au/](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/)
- Tasmania Fire Service  
<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>
- WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)  
[www.dfes.wa.gov.au/](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/)