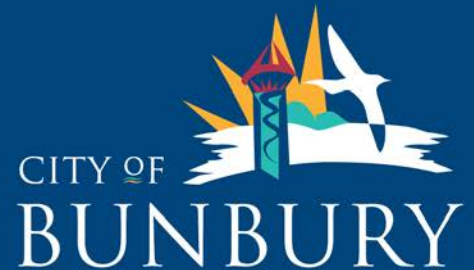


MEDIA STATEMENT



Tuesday, 10 January 2017

Be a bright spark and consider the fire risk of patio heaters

People who plan to use a solid fuel patio heater to keep the evening chill at bay while outdoors this summer are being urged to consider whether it is safe to do so.

With an ever increasing number of residents using solid fuel patio heaters, the City of Bunbury has moved to introduce permits that allow their use during the restricted fire season in a bid to reduce the risk of fire.

An inspection would be carried out prior to the granting of a permit, which would cover the homeowner for the duration of the restricted burning period.

Open pit fires, chimineas and other similar appliances do not meet the criteria under the Bushfires Act, however, can be considered for a single use permit as long as it can be demonstrated that it does not present unreasonable risk.

City of Bunbury Team Leader Community Safety and Emergency Management Chris Widmer said with people now more aware of the risk of fire, it was appropriate to educate the community about the potential hazards posed by solid fuel heaters.

“Any fire lit outdoors from 30 November until 10 May is subject to conditions specified within the Bush Fires Act,” Mr Widmer said.

“In recognition of the increasing popularity of patio fires, the City has created a regulation where their safe use can be encouraged.

“It will be a simple and free process to gain a permit and it will give residents peace of mind that they are reducing the risk of sparking a fire.”

Mr Widmer said it was also important that residents advised neighbours if they intended to use an outdoor solid fuel heater.

“No one wants to see a fire truck pulling up outside their home with lights flashing because someone reported a fire at their property, when in fact it was just smoke from a solid fuel heater,” Mr Widmer said.

“It is also courteous to ensure smoke from such appliances doesn’t impact on neighbours, such as blowing into windows or onto washing.”

Permits can be applied for by downloading an application form from the City’s website www.bunbury.wa.gov.au, by phoning 9792 7000 or emailing records@bunbury.wa.gov.au. There is no cost involved.

ENDS

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