

# ROADSIDE BURNING IN THE SOUTH BURNETT REGION

## Procedure for 'Burning Off' Local Road Reserves & Other Council Controlled Reserves

In accordance with s901 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, South Burnett Regional Council is responsible for the management of all local rural roads within its shire boundary and therefore plays a key role in the conservation and management of remnant vegetation that exists within the roadside reserve.

It is the responsibility of Local Government and State Government Agencies under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990 to address potential vegetation fuel load problems in the road reserve.

Residents are advised that the procedure for obtaining permission to 'burn off' a local road reserve or any other council controlled reserve is as follows:

1. Ascertain whether the road reserve is a Main Road or Local Rural Road.
2. If it is a Main Road, please contact the District Director, Main Roads, PO Box 645, Toowoomba Ph: (07) 4639 0746.
3. If it is a South Burnett Regional Council Local Rural Road please contact Council's Department of Community.
4. If it is an Urban or Village area in the South Burnett region please contact Council's Department of Community.
5. Obtain an 'Application for Approval to Burn a Local Road Reserve or Other Council Controlled Reserve' from South Burnett Regional Council.
6. Return completed form to South Burnett Regional Council for assessment. The site will be inspected and depending on climatic conditions and vegetation types a letter of approval may be issued from South Burnett Regional Council.
7. If Council approval is issued then make application to the local Fire Warden for a permit to light a fire.
8. Take your letter of approval issued by South Burnett Regional Council and your completed application for a 'Permit to Burn' form to the appropriate fire warden.
9. Your local warden will assess your application and may issue you with a permit to burn including the necessary conditions and procedures.
10. At all times the 'Permit to Burn' MUST be accompanied by a letter of approval from South Burnett Regional Council.

Residents are advised that it is an offence to carry out any burn-off on a local rural road reserve or other Council controlled reserve without the appropriate permit.

## For Further Information

Please contact our friendly Natural Resource Management  
Officers: (07) 4189 9100

## Fire Management in Roadside Reserves

Fire is an integral part of many of South Burnett region's diverse vegetation types, notably its sclerophyll and grassy ecosystem. Many plants and animals in these communities do not merely tolerate burning; rather, fire can play an important role in their life cycle.

However not all species are adapted to fire, but to a particular regime of fire. Inappropriate fire regimes affect ecosystems structure and composition, and may even lead to species extinctions (Gill and Bradstock 1995). If we want to conserve the full range of species and ecosystems currently found in the South Burnett region, then the role of fire cannot be ignored. Rainforest species are fire intolerant and rainforest ecosystems should never be burnt.

Roads provide a practical firebreak, escape route from fires and a refuge for native fauna. However areas of dense remnant vegetation existing within the road reserve can be considered potential fire hazards. The level of risk depends upon the type of vegetation and the surrounding land uses as well as the conditions on the day.

Prior to carrying out any fire prevention works on roadsides, fuel loads need to be properly assessed and desirability of burning or using other fuel reduction methods determined.

The method/s chosen should be the one or a combination of methods that is the most effective and that does not compromise the environmental significance of the area. Some suggested fuel reduction methods include ploughing, slashing, burning, herbicide, grading or grazing or a combination of these.

This assessment is particularly necessary along roads of High and Medium Conservation Value in order to identify significant plants, wildlife and wildlife habitat, which are to be protected.

Fire management on roadsides, reserves, parkland and private property is a complex process and unique local factors must always be addressed. Land managers (private landholders or public land managers) must decide whether to initiate planned burns, and where, when and how to carry them out. Fire management plans will protect property, people's safety and minimise the effects of fire on native plants and animals.