

getting out there and unleashing a firestorm that burns through a large area. The ground cover burn gets into the undergrowth and dead wood, but not up into the tall trees, the canopy of the trees. By addressing a bushland reserve in blocks, it means that there are always locations for wildlife to escape to.

This year has been a relatively late start to the program of planned burns. Wet weather early in the season has left soil and fuel relatively moist until recent times. When those EKKA winds kick in, as we know, or there are Bureau of Meteorology predictions of wind, conditions are often unsuitable for commencing a burn. That would certainly be the case today. The first planned burn for this year was not until early August, only a few weeks ago. In some years planned burns have been able to commence as early as April.

A burn that was planned for Sunday just past in Burbank had to be cancelled, although it is rescheduled for tomorrow, and that was cancelled at the last moment due to those predicted winds, although a planned burn in the Mt Coot-tha Forest was undertaken on Sunday as the block was in a gully and protected from the wind. Several other burns have been undertaken in the Brisbane Council area in diverse locations across the city, including the Parkinson bushland, the Toohey Forest, Compton Road Park, the Brisbane Koala Bushlands, Third Lagoon Sandgate, Chermside Hills Reserve and the Anstead bushland.

All activity is undertaken in close consultation with the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. The media is kept well informed of all activities to ensure communication with nearby residents along with ensuring information is available on Council's multimedia outlets - the websites, social media streams and, of course, via call centre scripting. This is important for residents who may be concerned about smoke drift. The suburbs that may be affected by smoke are always included in the communication to make sure they are aware of what is occurring.

If residents spot a fire or are unsure whether it is a planned burn or a wildfire, they are certainly encouraged to report it via the call centre or to 000. Emergency Services staff are provided with the precise details of planned burns and will be able to determine whether or not what the resident is looking at is planned or unplanned.

Of course, there are a lot of other critical works that are undertaken in the interests of fire protection that do not involve burns and can be completed regardless of the weather. Fuel reduction does occur by means other than burns. Fire breaks are maintained or constructed; equipment needs to be either purchased or maintained in readiness. The Assets Services crews in Field Services are well trained and well equipped to deal with both pro-active burns as required or uncontrolled burns if they do occur, with over 100 trained staff and 17 fire fighting vehicles.

The good news is, on the weather front from the Bureau in relation to temperature levels and moisture, is that the conditions are categorised as reasonable for South-East Queensland. Our western cousins may not fare so well this season. West of the Great Divide is in drought and the fire conditions there are more extreme. But our staff are geared up and ready to respond to whatever is necessary to prevent any wildfires this season.

Chairman: Further questions; Councillor JOHNSTON.

Councillor JOHNSTON: Question 6
Yes, thank you Madam Chairman; my question is to the LORD MAYOR. What is or was the purchase price the State Government was asking Council for the RSPCA site at Fairfield?

LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor JOHNSTON, for the question. There was no purchase price.

Chairman: Further questions; Councillor HOWARD.