



MOOI RIVER

FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION



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MOOI RIVER FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

REGULATIONS 2026/2027

Status of the Association

The Mooi River Fire Protection Association (MRFPA) is a registered Fire Protection Association with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and is a member of the KwaZulu-Natal Fire Protection Association (KZNFPFA).

A key benefit of membership of a Fire Protection Association is the legal presumption relating to negligence. Where a landowner is a registered member and complies with the requirements of the Association, including holding a valid burn permit where applicable, that landowner will be presumed not to have been negligent unless proven otherwise.

In terms of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act, offences are classified into two categories.

First Category Offences

These offences may result in a fine and/or imprisonment for a period of up to two (2) years.

1. Lighting a fire in the open air when a High Fire Danger warning has been published.
2. Failure by any owner, occupier, or person in control of land on which a fire occurs to take reasonable steps to extinguish the fire, confine it to that land, or prevent it from spreading to neighbouring land or property.

Second Category Offences

These offences may result in a fine and/or imprisonment for a period of up to one (1) year.

1. Leaving a fire unattended after it has been lit.
2. Failure to prepare and maintain firebreaks, give the required notice of intention to burn firebreaks, or maintain the required level of firefighting readiness.

All members agree, upon joining, to comply with the Constitution, rules and regulations of the Association.

The Executive Committee may amend operational requirements from time to time, subject to approval at a duly constituted meeting or Annual General Meeting. These regulations apply for the 2026/2027 fire season unless amended by resolution of the Association.

Fire Season Restrictions

1 May – 30 October

No fires may be lit in the open air except for the following:

1. Burning firebreaks
2. Block burning of veld
3. Back-burning to control or suppress a wildfire under the direction of the Fire Protection Officer (FPO) or Fire Control
4. Burning maize or other agricultural residue
5. Burning plantation slash
6. Burning domestic refuse within a properly demarcated and controlled area
7. Fires within a properly demarcated picnic or camping area

All permitted burning must comply with Association requirements, including:

- A burn permit where applicable
 - A favourable Fire Danger Index (FDI)
 - Adequate firebreaks
 - Adequate personnel, equipment and water
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Additional Burning Restrictions

No fires may be lit:

- Over weekends, from 18h00 Friday until 10h00 Monday (except Provision 7 above)
- On Public Holidays (except Provision 7 above)
- When a burning ban has been implemented by the Fire Protection Officer (FPO) or the Association
- When High or Extreme Fire Danger conditions apply

These restrictions do not apply to emergency back-burning carried out under the direction of the FPO or Fire Control.

Firebreak Requirements

All landowners are required to:

- Enter into Firebreak Agreements with adjoining neighbours
- Prepare and maintain firebreaks along property boundaries in accordance with the National Veld and Forest Fire Act

Firebreaks must be established and maintained:

- Along property boundaries
- Along public roads where applicable
- Around buildings, homesteads and infrastructure
- In any additional areas as directed by the Fire Protection Officer (FPO)

Firebreaks must be completed prior to the commencement of the fire season and maintained throughout the season.

The Fire Protection Officer or authorised representative may inspect firebreaks. Where deficiencies are identified, corrective action will be required within a reasonable period.

Minimum Firebreak Widths (Recommended)

- Boundary firebreaks: 50 metres total (25 metres each side)
- Public roads: 30 metres on either side
- Internal firebreaks: 30 metres

The Fire Protection Officer may approve alternative widths where terrain, vegetation or risk conditions justify a variation.

Firebreak Burning Periods

Cool, moist grassveld areas

1 May – 30 June

(Includes Mike 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, Highmoor and Mike Rose zones and parts of Mike 2 and 7.)

Tall, dry grassveld areas

1 May – 15 July

(Includes parts of Mike 2 and 7.)

Extensions may be granted by the Fire Protection Officer, but not beyond:

- 14 July (cool areas)
- 28 July (dry areas)

Operational Conditions

- Burning may commence only after 10h00
- A favourable Fire Danger Index must be confirmed
- Adequate personnel, equipment and water must be available

Public Road Requirements

- Red warning flags must be positioned at least 100 metres on either side
- Do not burn if smoke or flames may drift onto the roadway
- Notify the Traffic Department where hazards may occur
- Landowners may be held liable for traffic incidents

Infrastructure Notifications

- Notify Telkom where communication lines may be affected
- Notify N3TC before burning along the N3

All fires must be completely extinguished before leaving the site.

Block Burning

Cool, moist grassveld: 1 August – 30 September

Tall, dry grassveld: 15 August – 31 October

A minimum of 15 mm of rain must have fallen prior to burning.

Conditions:

- Area must be protected by a surrounding firebreak of at least 9 metres
- Burning may not commence before 11h00
- No burning over weekends (18h00 Friday – 10h00 Monday) or Public Holidays
- No burning during High Fire Danger conditions
- Notify neighbours and the Fire Protection Officer or Area Coordinator
- Notify Telkom or Eskom where infrastructure may be at risk

Subject to Regulation 12 of the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983).

Not applicable within Highmoor and Kamberg Conservation Areas.

Back-Burning (Wildfire Control)

- May only be undertaken as a last resort to control a wildfire
- Must be carried out under the direction of the Fire Protection Officer or Fire Control
- Care must be taken to protect human life, livestock and property
- Burn narrow strips from a suitable control line ahead of the wildfire

Agricultural and Other Burning

Maize Harvest Residue

- 1 June – 31 October
- 14h00 – 24h00
- Minimum 9m surrounding firebreak
- No weekends or Public Holidays
- No burning during High Fire Danger
- Notify neighbours and FPO

Plantation Slash

- Prohibited between 1 May and 30 November
- Where permitted outside this period, a 9m firebreak is required
- No weekends or Public Holidays
- Notify neighbours and FPO

Domestic and Farmyard Refuse

- Burn only within a demarcated area protected by a 50m cleared fire belt
- Burning should take place in a pit or contained structure
- No weekends or Public Holidays
- Fully extinguish before weekends or holidays
- No burning during High Fire Danger

Picnic and Camping Fires

- Only within designated prepared areas
- Must be supervised and fully extinguished
- No fires during High Fire Danger conditions

Responsibilities of Members

Members are required to:

- Maintain firefighting equipment, water and trained personnel
 - Keep base and vehicle radios operational
 - Maintain high standards of fire prevention and control
 - Remain within their area during incidents unless instructed otherwise by the FPO or Fire Control
 - Notify the FPO or Area Coordinator if absent during the fire season
 - Monitor the daily Fire Danger Index
 - Assist with strategic firebreaks where required
 - Report fires, hazards or non-compliance to the FPO or Fire Control
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Area Warden / Zone Coordinator Duties

1. Ensure landowners maintain adequate firebreaks
2. Coordinate initial response within the area under FPO direction
3. Liaise with neighbouring areas where fires spread
4. Ensure landowner preparedness and equipment availability
5. Investigate fire causes and report to the FPO
6. Arrange a deputy if absent
7. Assist with planning of strategic firebreaks
8. Promote safe burning practices
9. Report changes in land ownership or occupancy
10. Maintain communications and participate in radio checks

Area Wardens coordinate operations and are not responsible for personally extinguishing fires or burning firebreaks.

Fire Emergency (For the Uninitiated)

1. Inform Radio Monitor or Fire Control
2. Dispatch equipment if within your area
3. Standby if outside your area
4. Secure homestead
5. Leave a communications contact
6. Control your own labour
7. Attack from the rear or flanks
8. Monitor wind conditions
9. Back-burn only with FPO approval
10. Park vehicles safely off roads
11. Do not self-deploy outside your zone
12. Await instructions
13. Movement between areas must be authorised
14. Maintain radio discipline
15. Ensure PPE and water for crews
16. Withdraw if unsafe and report
17. Maintain escape routes
18. Identify water sources
19. Patrol for hotspots after extinguishing
20. Account for all personnel before leaving

Members must not leave their designated area unless instructed by the FPO or Fire Control.

Before Leaving to Attend a Fire

Do not forget:

1. Firefighting equipment
 2. First Aid kit
 3. Chainsaw or cutting tools
 4. Fencing tools
 5. Approved ignition source if authorised
 6. Torch or headlamp
 7. Tool kit
 8. Drinking water
 9. Personal protective clothing
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Operational Readiness

- Keep all firefighting equipment in working order and easily accessible
 - Water containers should be always kept full
 - During high fire danger, strong winds, weekends and Public Holidays, members are advised to keep a tractor and water cart on standby where possible
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Compliance

Members must comply with all rules and operational instructions issued by the Executive Committee, the Chairperson and the Fire Protection Officer (FPO) to protect life, property and the rural environment within the Mpofana area.
