**Firewise in Rooiels**

Rooiels is in a **HIGH risk area**for fires.  We have hot dry and very windy summers and alien plants in the area accelerate fires.  We need to be very vigilant.

**See back of the page for the Evacuation Information in case of serious fire**.

The Rooiels Disaster Initiative – REDI co-ordinates fire prevention and reaction in Rooiels. Contact them through RESA (Rooiels Ratepayers Association) or redi@iafrica.com

**Fires in the fynbos are a part of their natural cycle – but they should only be every 10-15 or 20 years, depending on the area. More frequent fires negatively affect the fynbos and disrupt reseeding. Fires in the area are very dangerous to our homes. Rooiels is prone to gusting winds at gale force which make fires almost impossible to control. T**here is no controlling its path or where it destroys.  Bolts of fire leap across major highways and land on roofs and set the house alight and it all happens in a very short time.  It is essential to avoid fires starting and to report them as soon as possible.

**Help to Avoid Fires in Rooiels**

1. In addition to national legislation relating to fire prevention - please:
2. **DO NOT place any old coals from fireplaces or braais**(no matter how dead they seem) into the fynbos around you.  This is a major cause of fires.
3. **DO NOT braai in an open fire on a day with wind**.  If you are building - site your braai area in a place with the south east protected from the wind. **It is illegal to have an open fire in the wind**.
4. **DO NOT burn your garden waste** - it is illegal to do so without a permit.
5. **DO NOT throw cigarettes out** - that is the possible cause of the March 2017 fire Extreme care needs to be taken with cigarettes.

**Report Fires immediately** and take steps to put it out if safe to do so

**Property protection measures**

1. **Remove alien trees from your gardens, especially pines and rookrans. (In Knysna several houses with indigenous flora were saved when all neighbouring houses with alien trees burned).**
2. **Be sure that you have no gaps in the eaves of your roof – flying embers that get in under the roof are the most likely cause of houses burning down**
3. **Keep dead wood under control and be sure to remove it from your property**
4. **Avoid trees touching your house and especially touching wooden balcony etc**
5. **See Rooiels website for a list of** [firewise plants](https://rooiels.weebly.com/fire.html)
6. **Keep your gutters clear from leaves and debris**
7. **In the event of a fire – if there is time before you evacuate, close all windows and doors, switch off electrics, remove curtains, water the roof and the area immediately around your house**

**Aliens and fire – out of fynbos fire fuel handbook 2015**

*Acacia saligna* (Port Jackson) invasion increased the total live biomass about 3.3 fold over proteoid fynbos - a substantial increase*Pinus pinaster* (pines a problem along the route near Pringle Bay we will need to watch that they don’t spread this way) and *Acacia longifolia* (wattle, could be some in the area) increased the fuel load up to 9 fold in Coetsenberg area

Our most serious threat is *Acacia cyclops* (rooikrans)