

Tuesday 15 November 2011

Overhanging trees to be trimmed on roads in fire-prone areas

Indigo Shire Council will spend \$100,000 trimming potentially dangerous trees on roads in fire-prone areas of the shire before the summer season hits.

The Council has received a grant of \$65,000 from the Office of Emergency Services Commissioner and has added \$35,000 from this year's budget to pay for the work.

Indigo Mayor Cr Ali Pockley said roads in Stanley, Allans Flat, Beechworth and Yackandandah would be targeted. "This is part of the overall strategy Council is putting in place to prepare for the coming fire season. We live in a beautiful part of the world in Indigo Shire, but leaning and overhanging trees on some of our roads can be potentially hazardous."

Cr Pockley said that despite this initiative, people needed to take responsibility for their own safety and make sure they had a Bushfire Plan in place and were clear about whether they would stay or go on a Code Red day.

The roads nominated for tree pruning are:

- Stanley - Pioneer Road, section of Stanley Road in the centre of Stanley starting at Mt Stanley Road, Myrtleford-Stanley Road.
- Allans Flat – Hodgson Lane, Lindsay Road, Allans Flat Road, Sanatorium Road, Osbornes Flat Road, Tomkins Lane, Meehan Lane.
- Beechworth – Malakoff Road, Woolshed Road, McFeeters Road, Old Chiltern Road.
- Yackandandah – Twist Creek Road, Bells Flat Road, Kirby Flat Road, Back Creek Road, Racecourse Road, Ben Valley Lane, Mongan Lane.

"The work will take up to six weeks and should be completed before Christmas," Cr Pockley said. She said Indigo Shire Council had worked closely with the CFA and Department of Sustainability and Environment to determine what roads to target.

Cr Pockley said this summer season was expected to be one of the worst for potential grass fires due to the increased growth in vegetation from the good rains in the past year.

"The CFA has started a roadside burn-off program to reduce the risk and create firebreaks on roadsides in the Chiltern-Rutherglen area," she said. "I urge people to be vigilant and seek the advice of the CFA if they need to reduce the fuel loads on their properties."

"We all remember the devastating Black Saturday fires in 2009 and I urge residents to take all precautions this summer. Prepare your bushfire survival plan, check the CFA website (www.cfa.vic.gov.au) for important information and times for FireReady meetings. Preparation and vigilance will go a long way to keeping people safe."

Caption: Indigo Council's General Manager Major Projects and Programs Andre Kompler reviewing potentially dangerous fallen trees with Yackandandah CFA fire brigade captain Cameron McKern.

Caption: Racecourse Road, Yackandandah, is one road where overhanging trees will be trimmed.

END

For more: Mayor, Cr Ali Pockley, 0448 803 411