



**CORANGAMITE  
SHIRE**

# **Fuel Reduction Slashing on Roadsides**

**Corangamite Shire**  
April 2019

# Council Policy



## Fuel Reduction Slashing on Roadsides

### Introduction

The unauthorised use of roadsides can pose a significant risk to Council and the community. Unauthorised activities may:

- Create a risk to public safety
- Create legal liability issues
- Lead to damage of services and utilities or native vegetation

### Purpose

To provide a policy direction to land managers in relation to activities on roadsides for the management of fire fuels and fuel reduction.

(This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Use of Council Land Policy* and *CFA Roadside Management Guidelines*.)

### Scope

This policy applies to the slashing or cutting of grass for the management of fire fuel on Council owned and/or managed roadsides outside of township areas. The policy will provide guidance for roadside slashing where a permit is not required under the *General Local Law 2015*.

Activities that include baling, grazing, spraying, burning and ploughing are not considered in this policy and require a permit in accordance with the Use of Council Land Policy.

### References

General Local Law 2015 and associated application forms  
Use of Council Land Policy  
CFA Roadside Management Guidelines

### Policy

Council believes that the activity of slashing and cutting grass on roadsides can reduce fire fuel loads and, if undertaken responsibly, will not negatively impact the community, the environment and Council operations. These fuel reduction activities however are not able to be applied uniformly across all Council managed roads. Accordingly, Council has a community responsibility to ensure roadsides continue to provide safe road infrastructure, habitat, bio-links and are managed in a way that they can benefit the region and community into the future.

Land managers (typically adjoining landowners) will be exempt from obtaining a Local Law Permit for the slashing and cutting of grass if the fire fuels to be managed are not native vegetation (native vegetation includes native grasses) or native vegetation exempt under the Planning Scheme and are:

1. Located on a low conservation value roadside; or
2. Located on a medium or high conservation value roadside which has been managed in this way for a period of 10 years or more prior to the date of this policy commencing (without any unauthorised native vegetation clearing undertaken in the last 10 years); or
3. Located to maintain traffic sight lines around house driveways.

Land managers are encouraged to contact Council for advice relating to any activity on Council managed roadsides and determine whether a permit is required.

If the above criteria do not apply an application can be made to Council to obtain a permit to undertake roadside slashing or grass cutting.

Activities relating to spraying, burning, baling, ploughing and earthworks on roadsides will be considered in accordance with Council's *Use of Council Land Policy* and permits required under *General Local Law 2015*. Ploughing or major disturbance will generally not be permitted.

### **Permits**

If a permit is required applications are to be in writing on the prescribed form contained within *General Local Law 2015*, a permit fee will apply. .

If the applicant is not the adjoining landowner written consent from the adjoining landowner must be provided as part of the application.

Permits will be issued at the discretion of the Local Laws Department.

The permit period operates from 1 January to 31 December unless cancelled by the permit holder or revoked by Council. All permits must be reviewed annually and there will be no refund of permit fees if the permit is cancelled.

Council may revoke a permit should the permit holder fail to comply with any or all of the conditions or requirements relating to this policy.

### **Decision Criteria**

The assessment of applications must consider the following -

- Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP)
- Rural Roadside Management Plan 2012
- General Local Law 2015
- Corangamite Planning Scheme
- And other future plans or overlays that apply to the roadside.

### **Requirements to undertake work**

1. The person undertaking the work must ensure that any vehicles or equipment used on roadsides is in a safe and roadworthy condition. The person undertaking the work will be responsible for damage to their own or any other person's vehicles and equipment as a result of undertaking the activity and must have all appropriate insurances to carry out the work.
2. Vehicles or equipment must not be stored on the roadside overnight or for prolonged periods while undertaking the slashing works.

3. The person undertaking the work must ensure that no activities will be undertaken on roadsides where soil is waterlogged, in order to prevent bogging damage to the ground surface.
4. The person undertaking the work must ensure that vehicle hygiene standards are maintained to prevent the spread of weeds and disease pathogens (such as *Phytophthora cinnamomi*). As a rule activities should be undertaken on higher quality areas first and followed by more degraded areas. Vehicles should be washed down after the activity.
5. It is the responsibility of the person undertaking the work to inspect the area for obstacles and utilities prior to commencing the activity and will be solely responsible for any damage to utilities or Council assets.
6. Activities undertaken on the roadside must not be in contradiction to other legislation and the person undertaking the activity on the roadside will be responsible for obtaining all associated permits.

### **Exemptions**

Council may exempt any person or class of person/s or an authority from the need for a permit or the payment of a permit fee.

### **Review Date**

April 2022

### **Human Rights**

The policy gives regard to relevant legislation, principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, community values and Council's resource capacity.

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)*.