1. **PREAMBLE**

This is a summary of the GWMWater Fire Prevention Strategy Document which is available for Area Managers, Water Samplers and Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator.

Whilst the majority of GWMWater activities are undertaken in urban areas, some assets are located in rural areas and it is around these assets that the greatest potential fire risk occurs.

Many of the Corporation’s water storages and treatment plants are located out of town and are connected to the reticulation system via rising mains and/or trunk mains running through both crown land and private property.

The greatest fire threat comes from flammable vegetation and crops which grow around and adjacent to the storages, treatment plant works and pipelines which is ignited by work activities undertaken by GWM Water staff and contractors.

1. **PURPOSE**

This procedure and the Fire Prevention Strategy aims to reduce the risk to life and property from fire.

GWM water’s operational activities under this strategy include:-

1. promoting fire awareness to all staff and contractors
2. establishing operational strategies to reduce the risk of fire
3. providing ready access to water supply for trained fire fighters (CFA) and firefighting purposes
4. **PROCEDURE**
5. **Plant and Equipment**

During the Fire Danger Period the use of Plant and Equipment such as tractors, slashers, chainsaws, welders, grinding wheels and oxy acetylene cutting equipment in the open requires extreme caution.

**On days of Total Fire Ban the use of such equipment is banned without a permit from the CFA.**

Any work likely to create a fire hazard should be avoided on a day of Total Fire Ban unless absolutely essential. If any work is deemed necessary to be undertaken the conditions of the CFA permit must be adhered to.

1. **Vehicles**

CFA Regulations require that a water container of at least 9 litres must be available when working in the open during the fire danger period.

All vehicles likely to operate in potential fire danger areas are required to be equipped with a large capacity fire extinguisher during the fire danger period.

Hot exhaust systems can cause the ignition of dry vegetation and vehicles should not be parked or driven in areas of dry vegetation, even if retrofitted with heat shields.

1. **Water Sampling on Total Fire Ban Days**

If it is necessary to take water samples on a day of Total Fire Ban, the following shall apply:-

Take the sample - do not put it off to a non Total Fire Ban day, unless there is a requirement to drive through or park in long grass, in which case the sample should not be taken and Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator should be advised

1. Do not use a naked flame to sterilise the tap
2. When taking the sample let the tap run longer than usual
3. **CFA Permit**

GWM Water obtains an annual permit under Section 40 of the Country Fire Authority Act 1958, to operate such equipment on Total Fire Ban days in **emergency situations only,** between 1st December and 1st May each year.

A copy of this permit will be provided to Service Delivery Managers each year along with the conditions of use.

The Fire Prevention Strategy document contains additional information such as the CFA Contact Officers and guidelines for the use of equipment and machinery during the Fire Danger Period.

1. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that the requirements of the CFA permit are observed during the fire danger period and that a responsible attitude to the reduction of fire risk exists within the Authority.

1. **FIRE PREVENTION STRATEGY**

The Fire Prevention Strategy document has been prepared to provide the appropriate information to GWM Water employees to minimise the possibility of fire as a result of normal work procedures and is available from Regional Offices.

1. **RECORDS**
2. CMS/2345 - SOP 006 Fire Preparedness and Prevention
3. CMS/2703 - Fire Prevention Plan - Headworks Reservoirs and Storages
4. CMS/2343 - Day of Total Fire Ban Procedure
5. CMS/3102 - Total Fire Ban Procedure OMC Work Instruction

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**WHAT TO DO IF FIRE HAS BROKEN OUT**

**The first priority is to ensure the safety of all persons in the vicinity. If in doubt evacuate to a safe location, taking note of the prevailing wind conditions and path of the fire.**

If a fire has broken out, leave the danger area and report it immediately, do not attempt to fight the fire

1. If water supply exhausted and fire still burning, move to a safe distance from the path of the fire, contact local CFA brigade and Supervisor to report situation
2. Provide details of nature and size of fire, location, access, name
3. Warn people nearby or in potential path of fire
4. Remain at a safe distance and await the arrival of the local CFA brigade

If fire extinguished prior to the brigade’s arrival, remain in the area to check that no further outbreak occurs until brigade arrives.

Refer Emergency contact lists (CMS/3048 & CMS/3140) for CFA and emergency services contact numbers or Dial 000.