

Domestic firewood collection in the Central West

The Victorian Government is creating over **75,000 hectares** of new parks and reserves in central west Victoria, including three new national parks.



Importantly, there will continue to be opportunities for domestic firewood collection that supports local communities in central west Victoria.

Firewood in Victoria

In Victoria, firewood can be collected for domestic use on public land at nominated collection areas during the autumn and spring collection period.

This is important to local communities and those who depend on firewood as their primary source of heating.

While firewood is free to collect, it is a limited resource, and it can only be collected at designated sites, where it is in balance with other forest values, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Places for **domestic firewood collection** in the Central West

- Some areas currently available for domestic firewood collection will be affected by the changes being made to public land uses. However, there will be no expected impact on supply in the next two years.
- Domestic firewood will continue to be available from designated sites in state forests. Domestic firewood will also continue to be available from designated sites in most of the new regional parks until June 2029.
- Domestic firewood may be available as a by-product of forest management activities (e.g. hazardous tree removal for safety purposes and forest health operations).
- The creation of the proposed national parks will be staged to allow for commercial timber harvesting in some areas that are currently state forest prior to being included in the parks. In these areas, domestic firewood collection (from designated sites) will also be possible until the areas are added to the parks.

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Wellsford Block

- Some domestic firewood collection in the addition to Bendigo Regional Park will be available from designated sites selected to improve the ecological structure of the forest, until June 2029.

Wombat-Macedon Block

- Some domestic firewood collection in the four new regional parks and regional park additions will be possible until June 2029.
- Domestic firewood collection from designated sites will also be possible in areas where commercial timber harvesting is permitted, prior to those areas being included in the new Wombat-Lerderderg National Park.

Mount Cole-Pyrenees Block

- The Mount Cole-Pyrenees block retains 11,901 hectares of state forest where domestic firewood can be collected from designated sites.
- Domestic firewood collection from designated sites will also be possible in areas where commercial timber harvesting is permitted prior to those areas being included in the new Mount Buangor and Pyrenees National Parks.
- Domestic firewood collection (from designated sites in harvested coupes) will also be possible in the Pyrenees Regional Park for up to two years.

Alternative energy options and support for local communities

- The Victorian Government has programs in place to support transition to alternative energy supply options that meet local community needs. From July 2021 the Home Heating and Cooling Upgrades Program will provide a base rebate of \$1,000 towards the cost of purchasing and installing a high-efficiency heating and cooling system.
- Where firewood supply is scarce, there are several Government programs that low income firewood users can access for financial assistance with fuel costs. More information is available at: www.ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood/energy-concession-and-support
- To support firewood users in the future, the Victorian Government will conduct state-wide research into demand for domestic firewood and limits to supply. This research will inform the future management of domestic firewood in Victoria.
- The \$250 Power Saving Bonus (PSB) is a one-off \$250 payment to provide direct support to vulnerable Victorian households experiencing energy bill stress because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The PSB is available to people receiving payments under the following concession card programs:
 - Centrelink Pensioner Concession
 - JobSeeker
 - Youth Allowance
 - Austudy
 - Abstudy
 - Department of Veterans Affairs Pensioner Concession, or
 - Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card.

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About these changes:

These changes reflect the Victorian Government's response to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's (VEAC's) Central West Investigation Final Report and its recommendations.

These changes preserve our precious environmental and biodiversity assets and strike a sustainable balance that aims to meet the needs of all land users, now and into the future.

You can find the government response on [our website](#).

More information about domestic firewood collection is available at <https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood/firewood-collection-in-your-region>

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ISBN 978-1-76105-577-5 (pdf)

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