
CROCODILE RIVER RESERVE FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION



General Rules

1. Membership

- 1.1 All members must comply with the general rules and the constitution of the CRRFPA.
- 1.2 Membership requires the applicant to complete a membership form.
- 1.3 According to the CRRFPA Constitution members must notify the Secretary in writing of any change of membership details, including contact details.
- 1.4 Members must pay the membership fee within 30 days of receipt of invoice.
- 1.5 Membership is automatically terminated if the member fails to pay the membership fee, charges or interest within 90 days of date of invoice.
- 1.6 Members must give written notice of termination of membership.
- 1.7 Membership fees are not refundable or transferable.

2. General

- 2.1 All members must comply with National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 101 of 1998.
- 2.2 All members must comply with National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (10/2004): Alien and Invasive Species Regulations to control and minimise the biomass.
- 2.3 Members must participate in the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.4 Members must elect 2 to 4 coordinators in the applicable local management unit.
- 2.5 At least one of the coordinators from each local management unit must attend the meetings of the CRRFPA committee.

3. Private Areas in the Reserve / Individual portions

- 3.1 All members are required to ensure the buildings on their property are properly protected and made safe against the danger of fire. (See the applicable section in the Fire Management Plan for advice.)
- 3.2 Members must isolate any fire hazardous area that is present or likely to develop on their properties to eliminate any danger to themselves or adjoining properties.

4. Fire Management

- 4.1 The coordinators of each management unit must submit an operational plan for the year to the CRRFPA Committee.
- 4.2 The plan must indicate where the regional wide firebreaks will be created.

- 4.3 The plan must address the financial requirements and how the funds will be raised.
- 4.4 The plan must name the coordinators and provide full contact details.

5. Management Unit Coordinators

The coordinators are responsible for –

- 5.1 Planning the regional wide firebreaks
- 5.2 Communicating the fire break plan to the residents in the area
- 5.3 Sending out notifications when burning regional wide fire breaks
- 5.4 Sending out fire danger rating and warning information
- 5.5 Compiling fire reports after a wild fire, including the cause, source and spread of the fire (hectares lost). The report should also indicate the cost of containing the fire and estimate damage.
- 5.6 Communicating with adjoining management units to coordinate fire breaks and related activities.
- 5.7 Creating awareness about fire management – how to protect the home, that the law requires everyone to act to prevent a fire from spreading, etc. (See Fire Management Plan for detail)

6. Equipment at the Local Management Unit

Recommendations:

Area	Slashers	Fire Beaters	Backpack sprayers	Rakes	First Aid Kit	Cell Phones/Radios	Blower	Bakkie Sakkie/Fire Green
1-500ha	5-10	5-10	2-4	3-4	2	2	1	
501-1000ha	10-15	10-15	4-6	4-8	2	2	2-4	1
1001ha – 2000 ha	20-30	20-30	6-8	10-15	4	5	4-8	2

7. Fire Danger Rating

- 7.1 Members must comply with the instructions about danger rating.
- 7.2 During LOW fire danger rating burning may proceed as planned.
- 7.3 During MODERATE fire danger rating burning may proceed only in the still conditions and when temperatures are at daily lows.
- 7.4 During HIGH fire danger rating NO burning or fires permitted. Lookout for smoke and respond.
- 7.5 During VERY HIGH fire danger rating NO burning or fires permitted. All on high alert for rapid response.

8. Prioritising Response

The following criteria in order of significance is applied when evaluating veldfire risks, and prioritising the deployment of response teams –

- a) Threat to life
- b) Threat of injury
- c) Loss of injury to animals
- d) Loss of home/office/income

- e) Loss of catchment / wetland
- f) Loss of natural habitats
- g) Spread of invasive species

9. Refuse

- 9.1 No person may burn or bury refuse on their property according to the by-laws of the City of Tshwane.

10. Invasive plant clearing

- 10.1 Invasive plants add to the biomass in the veld, and therefore to the danger of the fire. The removal of invaders and weeds must be a priority activity in the time leading up to the winter fire season.

11. Firebreaks – Minimum Requirements

- 11.1 All members must create firebreaks on their own property or between properties are may be agreed between members of the CRRFPA.
- 11.2 Firebreaks must be prepared and maintained ahead of the winter fire season. No further burning may be done after the cut-off date is announced to all members, usually 31 July of each year. This date may be earlier depending on weather conditions and fire danger rating.
- 11.3 Notification must be given to the local management unit coordinators and the direct neighbours by email, sms or in writing. The other landowners/residents must be notified through the accepted local communication structure, e.g. WhatsApp group
- 11.4 The Fire Act requires that 14 days' written notice of intention to burn is provided. The intention should be followed with a reminder on the accepted channel of communication the day before.
- 11.5 If the firebreaks cannot be burned on the days originally chosen, the same notification is required but the 14 days' notice no longer applies.
- 11.6 Firebreaks must be created in accordance with the Fire Management Plan, taking every precaution to protect and conserve the natural flora, including the quality of the natural grass.
- 11.7 Firebreaks are ideally created by cutting two tracer lines, and then burning between the lines.
- 11.8 Manual cutting is preferred to mechanical unless the firebreak is already highly transformed.
- 11.9 Notwithstanding any of the above, no one may burn firebreaks if the fire danger is forecast to be high, or if the conditions are not conducive to the burning of firebreaks, that is, if there is a danger of the fire spreading.

12. Block Burn

- 12.1 It is noted that the grasslands are fire-dependant and that fire is a management tool. Members of the Crocodile River Reserve must comply with the Environmental Management Plan, have the veld assessed and obtain permission to "block burn" from the CRR Committee. Permission is also required in the form of a permit from the Department of Agriculture.
- 12.2 Members must observe all conditions of the Burning Permit.
- 12.3 No person may block burn without giving the prescribed notice.
- 12.4 The block burn may not proceed if the CRRFPA objects; the reasons for objecting must be clearly communicated and may not be unreasonable.

13. Minimum requirements

- 13.1 All members must comply with Chapter 5 of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act by having equipment, protective clothing and trained personnel as is reasonable for the extent of the member's property.
- 13.2 All members must ensure that in their absence there is a responsible person present on or near the property that will assist in extinguishing fires and take reasonable steps to alert the CRRFPA and neighbouring landowners of the fire.

14. Training

- 14.1 Where the CRRFPA is able to arrange training by the local authority or their agent, all members must attend or send staff to be trained.
- 14.2 If formal training is not provided, all labourers should periodically work with experienced teams creating fire breaks in order to learn about safety, the behaviour of fire and how to work in a team when controlling fires. The cost of the labour is carried by the landowner/resident as normal.

15. Reporting fires

- 15.1 All fires must be reported immediately to the CRRFPA, the local management unit coordinators and neighbours.
- 15.2 Where available, the fire must be reported on the radio, else the appropriate WhatsApp group or by telephone.
- 15.3 When reporting fires clearly state the portion number and farm name, the nearest access road, and the direction the fire is heading.
- 15.4 The landowner/resident on which property the fire started must fight the fire.
- 15.5 Members must offer assistance wherever possible. If the fire is on a non-member's property, assistance may be charged at a rate determined annually by the CRRFPA, typically, the joining fee + three times the operational fee.
- 15.6 During the fire a designated person must communicate the weather conditions, wind direction and speed, and other circumstances which will inform the precautionary actions during a fire.
- 15.7 Refer to the Fire Management Plan for further information about reporting fire and interventions.
- 15.8 Response and Incident Management
- 15.9 All members must adhere to the firefighting command structure and the communication protocol described in the Fire Management Plan and the local management unit's operational plan.
- 15.10 Where fences are an obstacle to firefighting, these will be cut. The cost of repairs will be for the landowner/resident.

16. After fire fighting

- 16.1 The site of the fire may not be left unattended.
- 16.2 The perimeter of the fire must be checked for any smouldering material within 5 meters of the perimeter. The material must be extinguished.
- 16.3 If a tree stump is burning, sand/soil should be used to smother the embers. If the fire occurred in a wetland, the area should be monitored closely as the fire may persist without being visible until it flares.
- 16.4 The coordinator of the local management area must complete the Fire Report Form and submit this to the CRRFPA within 5 days of the incident.

- 16.5 Check and service all firefighting equipment.
- 16.6 In the case of a severe fire, as in where property or life is lost, or multiple properties were affected, a debriefing session must be convened. All members involved in the management of the fire should make every effort to attend.

17. Information Management

- 17.1 Each local management unit must provide statistics about fire incidents and fire managements to the CRRFPA and the local members.
- 17.2 Statistics must be included in the annual submission to the Minister, as required by the Fire Act.

18. Communication protocol

- 18.1 Radio communication during fire management is preferred.
- 18.2 Radio communication is monitored by a designated communication officer and the content is relayed on other communication channels, such as WhatsApp, including to adjoining local management unit coordinators.
- 18.3 It is imperative that all members of staff are included in the communication about fires.
- 18.4 Every working team at the fire front must have a radio. If there are insufficient radios and communication by cell phone is not 100% reliable, the teams must remain in close proximity with each other.

19. Enforcement

- 19.1 Non-compliance, particularly among non-members, may be reported to -
 - 19.1.1 The Tshwane Chief Fire Officers
 - 19.1.2 Members of the South African Police Service