

# news 14.

What a difference a rain makes. The significant rainfall we enjoyed over Labour weekend has lifted pasture covers and spirits and our region is looking green for the first time in a long time. Some follow-up rain would be the perfect Christmas present. We have 'Survived until 25' and if economist Brad Olsen is correct, we will be looking at a further easing in interest rates in 2025.

We are pleased that common sense has prevailed around Intensive Winter Grazing Regulations with changes that have recently passed into law. These are outlined below.

Several of our members have gained New Zealand Farm Assurance Programme Plus (NZFAP +) accreditation. While this does generate a premium on prime stock, it can be a useful farm and resource management tool and farmers who have completed NZFAP + have found it to be a valuable exercise. It can seem like an onerous task, but HDLG can help farmers pull all the information they need together. We have the skills, the maps and resources so I really encourage farmers to consider putting this assurance programme on the 2025 'To Do' list and get in touch with us.

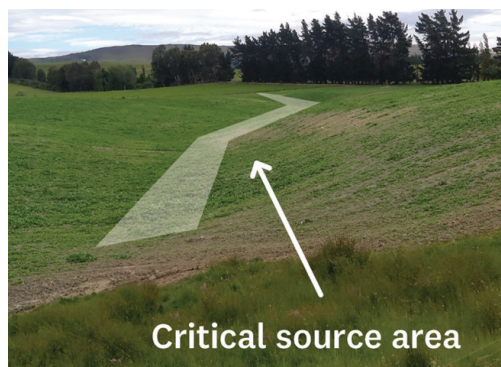
Recently, the Scargill/Greta Valley Civil Defence, Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ), FMG, and Hurunui District Landcare Group (HDLG) hosted a rural fire safety information evening to provide practical ideas for fire prevention and fire preparedness.

It has been a difficult couple of years in North Canterbury, so we hope our members are able to take some time out over the Christmas, New Year period to spend with family and friends.

Merry Christmas and a safe, happy and growthy New Year.

## Freshwater and Other Matters Amendment Act 2024 – What's Changed?

A recent change to environmental regulations was quietly passed a couple of weeks, which may be a positive development for some of our farmers. The change involves the removal of most of the Intensive Winter Grazing (IWG) provisions from the National Environmental Standard for Freshwater.



### What hasn't Changed

#### Critical source areas

Critical source areas must not be grazed and vegetation must be maintained as ground cover over all of the critical source area.

Maintaining that vegetation must not include cultivation or harvesting of annual forage crops.

#### Minimum setback for land used for Intensive Winter Grazing

Winter forage crops must be located at least 5 m away from the bed of any river, lake, wetland, or drain (regardless of whether there is any water in it at the time).

## What was Removed

*The winter grazing rules and need for consent around*

- Slope over (10 degrees)
- Area (greater than 10% or property size or >50ha for farms under 500ha)
- Reference period: Increase of area used for IWG between 2014-2019  
(which means these rules no longer apply!)

## Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) Regulations

There was also a change to this regulation which removed the requirement for low slope (Under 10 degrees slope) land requiring stock exclusion. The key rules now are:

- Dairy Cattle to be excluded from waterways on any terrain or management
- Dairy support cattle excluded from waterways on any terrain or management by 1 July 2025
- Deer and beef cattle excluded from waterways when intensively grazed (Winter grazing or irrigated land)

## Significant Natural Areas

It has now suspended the requirement for councils to identify Significant Natural Areas whilst the Government further understands the outcome of these rules.

Regional rules still apply.

**If you want to better understand what this means for your farm get in touch with one of our Catchment Farm Advisors.**

## Changes to NZFAP+

HDLG is well placed to help members achieve NZFAP+ accreditation. Please get in touch if you need any assistance. Some new and additional have been recently added to the programme to help meet current and future customer demands and while these may sound like a lot of work, we can help put this information together. These changes include;

### 2.2. Health and Safety

2.2.2 Complete and record a Health and Safety induction for all contractors.

2.3.2 Have a system in place for informing contractors of any new health and safety risks identified.

### 3.9 Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

3.9.1 Complete a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory annually that includes methane, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide emissions from on farm livestock production systems, and fertiliser applied, using an approved calculation tool and record:

- a. Total gross emissions (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e)
- b. Total gross emission per ha (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/total ha)
- c. Total emissions (kg for each gas) - methane, carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide.

3.9.2 Estimate GHG sequestration by any mapped woody vegetation (3.2.1(h)) occurring on the farm annually and record:

- a. total sequestration (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e)
- b. total area of mapped woody vegetation (hectares).

  
**Rural Support**  
**0800 787 254**

For more information go to  
[www.rural-support.org.nz/Regions/  
South-Island/North-Canterbury](http://www.rural-support.org.nz/Regions/South-Island/North-Canterbury)



#### Catchment Farm Advisors contact details:

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# Rural Fire Safety Information Evening



Recently, the Scargill/Greta Valley Civil Defence, Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ), FMG, and Hurunui District Landcare Group (HDLG) hosted a rural fire safety information evening to provide practical ideas for fire prevention and fire preparedness.

## OUTLINED ARE SOME OF THE KEY LEARNINGS:

**Key points from Ian Knowles:** *(post the Waikari fire on his property earlier this year)*

### WHAT WORKED WELL:

- Good farm access
- Gates swing
- Safe tracks
- Water tank storage
- Great neighbours
- Good farm map
- Fire extinguishers
- Electric fences well maintained and turned off in summer

### WHAT DIDN'T WORK:

- Drought, NorWest wind, Night time fire
- Excess feed, no cattle
- Back Boundary standing hay- not tidy
- Dams not cleaned or full

### COULD DO BETTER:

- Better feed management
- Better extinguishers- No fire extinguisher big enough
- Better Insurance- unpractical to cover everything
- Better dam water storage on farm



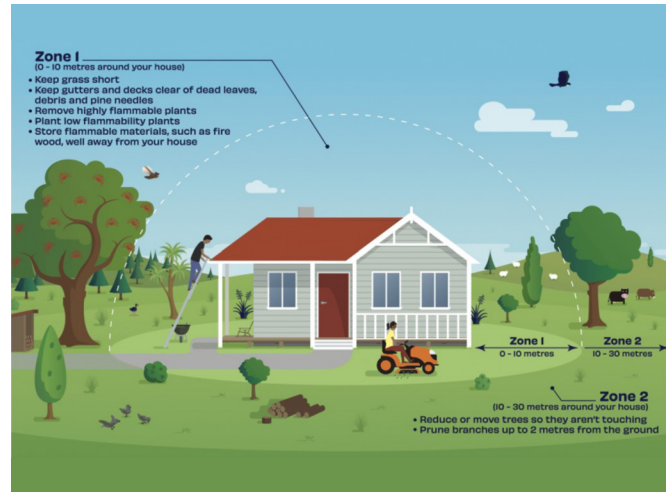
## KEY POINTS FROM FENZ:



### Access for Appliances

**If we can't get to you, we can't help you.**

- Is your driveway or access way 4m wide by 4m high?
- Are there over hanging branches or large overgrown shrubs blocking the way?
- Do you have at least two ways out of your property?
- Do you have obstacles that may impede the trucks direct access ie; bridges, small turning areas, large outbuildings?
- A fire call will generally turn out upwards of 3 appliances to assess the situation, more resources can then be called for.



### Defensible space around your home

**Take these simple steps around your home to reduce the effects of fire on your property.**

- Green breaks in a garden and surrounding property can help reduce impact of fire on the dwelling.
- Some plants are less flammable than others. Consider using these in the garden especially around the house.
- Think about outside structures such as wooden decks and pergolas and reducing the exposure to fire. Simply keeping these structures free from litter.
- Consider alternatives to bark and wooden mulch around the outside of the house. Pea straw is highly flammable when dry. Look to use alternatives within the defensible space around the house.
- Installation of sprinklers and irrigation around the house and property can help reduce the impact of a fire.

### Uphill Fires

#### Rates of Spread

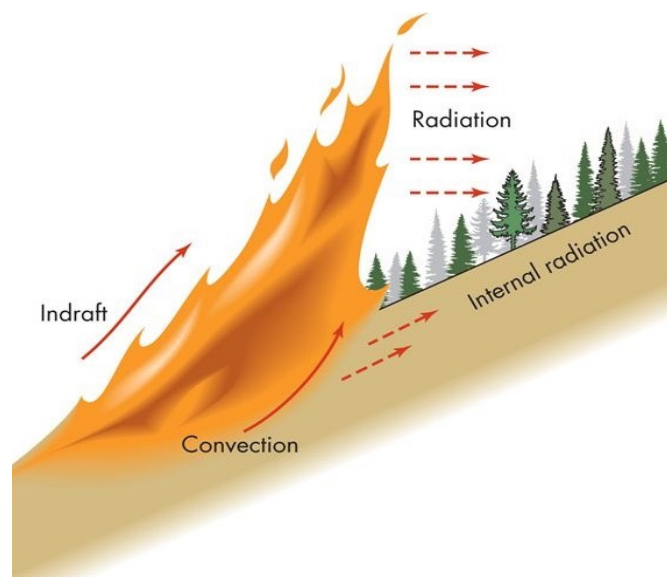
*Examples*

Starting from level ground:

- 10° slope = rate of spread x2 (speed)
- 20° slope = rate of spread x4 (speed)
- 30° slope = rate of spread x6 (speed)

The opposite is true for downhill fires.

To keep your property as safe as possible consider planting low flammability plants along your boundary to slow an advancing wildfire.







## Potential fire starters

Bird's nests and general machinery maintenance:

- Keep the hood of tractors and vehicles open so that you can check for nests before operating vehicle.
- Keep all machinery serviced to avoid fires starting.

Hot works:

- Remove all fire hazards from the area you are working in or wet down the area.
- Choose a cooler time of the day to complete the works, mornings are usually cooler and less windy.
- Have some form of fire suppression – fire extinguisher, water source etc.

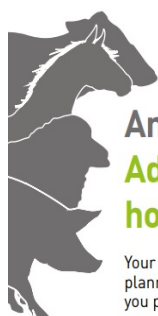
Burn piles:

- Make sure there is a fire break around the pile preferably of bare earth.
- Have a water source handy, or a way to extinguish the fire.
- Check the weather forecast to make sure there is no strong winds due.
- Ensure your pile is fully extinguished! This means turning it over and dousing with water.



## Fire on your property or threat of one approaching

- **Sounds silly but call 111 immediately if you see a wildfire. You may think other people have already called it through but any delay in notifying us can cost lives or property.**
- Have stock on your property that you can't move in a hurry? Keep all external gates closed, open up internal gates and allow stock to roam freely to avoid the fire as best as possible. Stock loose on the roads can be a hazard to people evacuating or responders.
- **If you have a water tank that FENZ can connect into (fire service couplings) then please let us know by calling 111 or 03 341 0266 to inform them of that water source. It must have the 100mm female round thread coupling for our crews to connect.**
- Ministry for Primary Industries has information on their website regarding evacuation plans for livestock and animal owners.



Ministry for Primary Industries  
Manatū Ahu Matua



### Animals affected by fire Advice for livestock, lifestyle block, horse and pet owners

Your animals are your responsibility. You need to include them in your planning in the event of an emergency. The following information will help you prepare to ensure the welfare of your animals in a fire.

#### Evacuation plan

## KEY POINTS FROM HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL:



### Would we find you?

Emergency services need to know where you live easily and quickly, RAPID numbers make this possible.

Is yours correct? It is strongly recommended you check your RAPID NUMBER!

To do this contact Liz Atkins on 027 733 2237, [lizatkins@hurunui.govt.nz](mailto:lizatkins@hurunui.govt.nz)

RAPID number plates can be ordered from:  
Motivation Design and Print:  
[www.motivationdesign.co.nz/hurunui-rapid-numbers](http://www.motivationdesign.co.nz/hurunui-rapid-numbers)

RTL:[www.rtl.co.nz/products?query=hurunui](http://www.rtl.co.nz/products?query=hurunui)

These RAPID number plates are blue, 2mm thick alloy plates with reflective digits. They are designed to be extremely durable and visible at night.



### To find out more information go to

[www.hurunui.govt.nz/property-rates/rapid-numbers](http://www.hurunui.govt.nz/property-rates/rapid-numbers)

Even better display your RAPID number on your gate

## INSURANCE ADVICE FROM FMG:



### BUSTING THE MYTH: LIABILITY COVERS EVERYTHING

*FMG's Liability cover insures you in the event you accidentally cause damage to others' property in connection with your business operations.*

Even if the fire originated from your property, you might not be liable for the damage the fire caused to others' property.

For your liability to respond, you must be negligent. In other words, a third party can't claim from you if you've done nothing wrong.



### Things to consider if you start the fire.

The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 came into effect 1 July 2017, this changed the way suppression costs are paid for - land owners are no longer responsible for these costs. In some instances the person that lit the fire may be charged with a criminal offence and FENZ may seek damages - which is NOT covered by insurance.

Under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017, (FENZ) will fund all suppression costs, provided the correct process is followed.

If there's a fire on your property, you must dial 111 immediately.

Helicopter suppression MUST be undertaken by a certified contractor, who has been approved for vegetation fire-fighting. FENZ will be responsible for operations involving air support.

Know how to describe the location of your farm. Homestead rapid number as a start point.

### Things to consider Damage caused by wildfire & the costs beyond an insurance claim



Damage to Pasture



Land damage from the fire, fire breaks being created and areas used for firefighting crews and equipment.



Damage to trees and plantings.



A large number of low value items are all lost in the same event totalling a large loss.



Livestock lost to fire or smoke inhalation. Also stock that has been displaced and need returned.



Disruption, stress, time to source replacements and project manage the rebuild.



**Check what you are covered for and if your sum insured is enough.**

### Estimate the cost to replace your home contents

Simply enter your address to calculate your estimated home contents replacement cost. If we don't have your details or if your details need to be amended, simply answer a few quick questions and we'll automatically calculate a new contents sum insured.

[Click here>>](#)