

Friday, February 6th

## Important Regeneration Burns Planned for Healesville area

VicForests and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) will undertake a number of planned regeneration burns in the Central Highlands region in coming months.

VicForests Regional Manager – Central Highlands, Brad Winthrop, said the burns may begin in late February in areas affected by the Black Saturday bushfires.

“Regeneration burns are carried out annually to assist the growth of young eucalypt seedlings following the harvesting process,” Mr Winthrop said.

“These controlled burns need to take place earlier than usual this year in some places because much of the fuel load was destroyed by the 2009 bushfires.

“Regeneration burns play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of our forests by creating an environment which encourages the regrowth of trees native to the area.

“We are very conscious of the community’s sensitivity towards fire and want to ensure people are not alarmed by smoke they may see as a result of this process,” he said.

Mr Winthrop said VicForests has developed detailed ‘burn plans’ in conjunction with DSE.

“All burns will be authorised by DSE prior to ignition and will be closely patrolled by crews on location,” he said.

“We would like to reassure the community that this process is part of the management plan for Victoria’s forests and will be monitored by trained staff throughout.

“Some areas have undergone ‘salvage harvesting’ which helps to utilise as much of the timber damaged by fire as possible.

“As a result as of the bushfires there is less fuel on the ground, meaning regeneration burns need to be conducted in warmer, drier conditions this year,” Mr Winthrop said.

More information about regeneration burns will be provided through local community forums.

For any urgent queries please contact VicForests’ Healesville office on 5969 9000 or go to [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au) and click on the Bushfire information link.

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