TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-SBF · Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: Outdoor, field, remote and travelling workers, drivers and supervisors in construction, civil works, councils, farms, mining and transport · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 19 November 2026

For outdoor, field and travelling workers: lightning, flash flooding, driving in smoke and storms, bushfire smoke, high fire danger days and the hazards of the clean-up after a storm.

Every storm and bushfire season puts outdoor and travelling workers in the path of lightning, flash floods, fallen trees and powerlines, smoke and fire. Most of the harm is avoidable with decisions made early: stopping work when thunder starts, never driving into floodwater, and leaving early on high fire danger days. WHS or OHS laws require the business to plan for these emergencies like any other risk.

This talk covers lightning (when thunder roars, go indoors), flash flooding (if it's flooded, forget it), driving in smoke and storms, bushfire smoke, what the fire danger ratings mean for the day's work, and the hazards of the clean-up after a storm. It is awareness, not firefighting, chainsaw or emergency services training.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Explain why storms, floods and bushfires put outdoor, field and travelling workers at risk
- Respond to lightning: stop outdoor work when thunder roars, shelter indoors, and wait 30 minutes after the last thunder
- Never drive, walk or work in floodwater, and turn back when a road is flooded
- Drive safely in smoke and storms, and know when to stop or not set out
- Know what the fire danger ratings mean for the day's work, and why leaving early matters
- Recognise the hazards of the storm clean-up, from fallen powerlines to damaged trees, and know who to call

What it covers

Module	Covers
Why it matters	Storms, lightning and flash floods; Bushfires and smoke; Decisions made early
Controls that work	Watching the warnings; Stopping, sheltering and leaving early; Driving in smoke and storms
Your part	When thunder roars; If it's flooded, forget it; The clean-up after a storm

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Activities

- Read the day: workers decide what a fire danger rating or a severe weather warning means for tomorrow's work
- What would you do: workers decide what to do in four storm and bushfire situations, from thunder overhead to a flooded causeway

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Is this firefighting or emergency services training? No. It is awareness for workers who work outdoors, in the field or on the road. It does not train anyone to fight fires, clear storm-damaged trees or work near powerlines, which need their own training and, for some work, a licence, and it does not replace your business's own emergency plan, which each worker should be shown.

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

Version 1.0 · 19 November 2026 · Orana Skills Centre. © 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

TOOLBOX TALK

Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness

Lightning, flash floods, smoke and fire: staying safe at work this season

20–30 minutes · Outdoor, field, remote and travelling workers, drivers and supervisors in construction, civil works, councils, farms, mining and transport

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

SBF

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ Lightning and flash flooding
- ✓ Driving in smoke and storms
- ✓ Smoke and high fire danger days
- ✓ The clean-up after a storm

This talk is not

- ✗ Firefighting training
- ✗ Chainsaw or tree work training
- ✗ Work near powerlines
- ✗ Our plan: **[Our emergency plan]**

Awareness only. Firefighting, chainsaw work and work near powerlines need their own training and authorisation.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Why the season matters

Most of the harm is avoidable with decisions made early.

- Lightning strikes people working in the open
- Flash floods sweep vehicles off roads and causeways
- Smoke cuts visibility and harms breathing
- Fires move faster than people can drive on smoky roads
- After the storm: fallen powerlines, trees and flooded electrics

A composite example

- A crew finishing a job hears thunder, but there are ten minutes of work left. They keep going.
- The storm arrives faster than expected, with lightning overhead and nowhere close to shelter.

No job is worth finishing in a storm.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Duties under WHS or OHS laws

The business must

- Plan for bushfire, storm and flood
- Watch the warnings and set the triggers
- Stop, reschedule or close when needed
- Train workers in the emergency plan

You must

- Follow the plan and the triggers
- Stop and shelter when thunder roars
- Never enter floodwater; check in on time
- Report hazards and near misses

Victoria's OHS laws set similar duties in their own terms.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

The order of controls for the season

1 Elimination No work in the danger: sites closed on Catastrophic days, no travel into fire or flood

2 Substitution Reschedule outdoor and remote work to safer days

3 Isolation Solid shelter close to the work; routes that stay out of fire and flood

4 Engineering Warning alerts, radios and satellite devices, cleared sites

5 Administrative Triggers decided the evening before, check-ins, drills

6 PPE P2 or N95 respirators for smoke, natural-fibre clothing

HIGHER ORDER

Higher order controls remove or control the hazard at the source, or put a barrier between people and the hazard.

LOWER ORDER

Lower order controls rely on people to do a thing or wear a thing, every time, tired, distracted or rushed.

Behaviours are not on the hierarchy, but behaviours and culture decide whether every control on it actually works.

Closing the site on a Catastrophic day is a control. 'Keep an eye on it' is not.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

TOOLBOX TALK · HAZ-SBF

Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

Storms, floods and bushfires give warning. Act on it early. Keep this page.

The order of controls

1. No work in the danger: close or stay away
2. Reschedule outdoor and remote work
3. Shelter and routes out of fire and flood
4. Alerts, radios and cleared sites
5. Triggers set the evening before, check-ins
6. Respirators for smoke, last

Lightning and floods

- When thunder roars, go indoors
- Wait 30 minutes after the last thunder
- If it's flooded, forget it

Never

- Drive into floodwater, smoke or fire
- Go near a fallen powerline

Before the day

- ☐ Do I know where to shelter at my job when thunder starts?
- ☐ Do I know the rule: if it's flooded, forget it?
- ☐ Do I check the fire danger rating and warnings before I travel?
- ☐ Do I know the check-in times when I work away from a site?
- ☐ Do I know to stay 8 metres from a fallen powerline?

Fire danger ratings

- Moderate: plan and prepare; High: be ready to act
- Extreme: take action now; Catastrophic: leave risk areas

Who to call

- 000; SES 132 500; **[Electricity network]**
- **[Check-in contact here]**; **[Who to report to here]**

When thunder roars, go indoors. If it's flooded, forget it. Leave early.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not firefighting, chainsaw or powerline training.

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-SBF Storm and Bushfire Season Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.