

Brush fences in close proximity to dwellings have been identified as a potential fire hazard that could pose a risk to the safety of occupants of those dwellings.

The State Government has moved to address this issue by introducing new fire safety requirements regarding brush fences.

The changes affect new homes or home additions and new brush fences, and are designed to prevent the spread of any brush fence fire to a home.

From 29 November 2007:

- If you are going to retain a brush fence any proposed dwelling, or additions to that dwelling, must be a distance of 3m or more from the existing brush fence.
- If the distance is less than 3m the external wall of the dwelling will need to be fire resisting in accordance with clause 6.1 and 6.3 of Minister's Specification SA 76C.
  - The fire resistance level will need to be a minimum of 60/60/60 (1 hour of fire resistance).
  - The fire resisting construction includes all construction elements of the external wall, including windows and doors. The eaves and roof must also be constructed of a non-combustible material.

These changes do **not** affect existing brush fences or existing dwellings, if no changes are being made to the fence or dwelling. Existing brush fences will be able to be repaired, but not replaced with another brush fence *unless* the new conditions are met.

Minister's Specification SA 76C outlines the fire safety measures to be taken for protecting Class 1 (houses) and Class 2 (flats and apartments etc) dwellings from a fire spreading from a brush fence if the distance between the brush fence and the dwelling is less than 3 metres.

The Specification comprises performance requirements, which must be met, and 'deemed-to-satisfy' provisions that comply with the performance requirements.

These provisions are additional to those required by the Building Code of Australia.

You can find out more about the Minister's Specification SA 76C and Brush Fences by contacting the Government of South Australia by ringing Building and Policy Branch on 8303 0602 or going online at <https://www.sa.gov.au/> and searching "Brush Fences".

Please note that although Development Plan consent is not necessarily required for the construction or alteration of a brush fence, Building Rules consent is required.

If you intend getting your building rules consent from a Private Certifier, you **MUST** inform the Certifier if you intend to construct a brush fence or if a brush fence already exists.