

# New South Wales Fire Brigades Safety Bulletin 2009/01



## Safety at bushfires – Falling trees and branches

This Safety Bulletin should be read in conjunction with Operations Bulletin 2008/14, [LACES – Firefighter safety at bushfires](#).

This Safety Bulletin is to reinforce awareness of the hazard posed by falling trees and branches at bushfires and natural hazards incidents.

Recent tree strike incidents have led to a death and a serious injury to NPWS and RFS personnel.

Tree trunks and branches may be subject to significant fire damage during bushfires, which may lead to them falling. Trees may also suffer weaknesses from other factors that may contribute to their falling, none of which may readily be seen from the ground, such as:

- Prior damage (eg from storms or previous bushfires)
- Disease or infestation (eg termites)
- Dry rot from drought.

In addition, following the passage of fire, damage to trees may continue unseen from the phenomenon known as candling/chimney trees – trees burning internally that otherwise may appear undamaged.

Tree or branch fall may occur at any time and is not wind dependent. Trees may fall with little or no audible sound and all persons at incidents involving trees, or working in or moving through bushland, must maintain situational awareness.

Noted, Station Commander	A	B	C	D	Other

Contact Officer	File Number	Date
Acting Superintendent Darryl Dunbar Acting Manager Bushfire Urban Interface Ph (02) 9742 7348 or 0488 787 239	NFB/03377 CHO/06178	21 January 2009

Previous Safety Bulletin: 2009/08 Fully encapsulated suit glove failure