



# **Open Gardens Victoria: Extreme Weather and Fire Policy**

## **Introduction**

This Extreme Weather and Fire Policy supports decision-making regarding the safety and well-being of Open Gardens Victoria (OGV) Members, staff, volunteers, garden owners, and event attendees (including garden openings and other events) during extreme weather conditions and fire events. The policy is based on best practices and guidelines from the Victorian Department of Health.

## **Purpose**

This policy applies to all OGV Members, staff, volunteers, garden owners, and attendees to events (garden openings and other events). It aims to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved by providing clear guidelines for managing extreme weather and fire risks.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with any policies and procedures that exist at the location of a garden opening or event venue, and any directions under law during extreme weather and fire conditions.

The Committee of Management is responsible for monitoring and actioning this policy for all OGV events and garden openings.

A Key Contact Person must be appointed for each event and garden opening. This will normally be the Selector for a particular garden or the Event Co-ordinator for other events.

## **Scope**

This policy covers the following extreme weather conditions and fire risks:

- Fire
- Other adverse or extreme weather conditions including but not limited to:
  - Hot Weather,
  - Wet Weather,
  - Lightning,
  - Pollution,
  - Thunderstorm Asthma, and
  - Wind.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Committee of Management or Delegate:**

- Monitor weather forecasts and fire warnings up to, and for the duration of any OGV Event or Garden Opening.
- Decisions to cancel or postpone an Event or Garden Opening are at the discretion of the Committee of Management.
- Decisions to cancel or postpone an Event or Garden Opening will be made based on the advice from the relevant authorities and in the best interest of the health and safety of OGV Members, staff, volunteers, garden owners, event and garden opening attendees, and the general public.
- Communicate any changes or cancellations directly to the Key Contact Person for the relevant Event or Garden Opening.
- Communicate any changes or cancellations directly to the Head of Marketing and Communications (who will inform staff, volunteers, and event attendees, along with updating the OGV website and social media platforms and notifying local media where relevant).
- Ensure all safety measures are in place and adhered to during events.

### **Staff, Volunteers, Garden Owners and Event Attendees:**

- Follow the guidelines and instructions provided by Open Gardens Victoria.
- Be aware of evacuation procedures and safe assembly points.
- Take precautions to ensure personal safety and well-being.

If a garden owner or event organiser wishes to cancel a Garden Opening or Event due to the fire risk or adverse weather condition risk, their wishes will be respected.

## **Review and Evaluation**

- This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently as required to ensure it remains effective and up to date.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers, and garden owners will be considered during the review process.

## **Version Control**

Version	Date Approved	Review Date	Owner	Comments
1.0	11 Dec 2024	Nov 2025	Committee of Management	New policy