

BUSHFIRES AND INSURANCE- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

RISK OF NATURAL DISASTER IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Like every area, the Blue Mountains has particular risk factors when it comes to natural disasters.

Most residents live fairly close to the bush. In terms of risks to property, bushfire is the most immediate concern, particularly between September and March each year. Over 95% of the Blue Mountains is "bushfire prone". A bush fire prone area is an area of land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire attack.

Over the years, many homes in the Blue Mountains have been lost to bushfires. For example, in the October 2013 bushfires, around 200 homes were destroyed in the Blue Mountains. There were approximately 1745 insurance claims.

In the Christmas 2001-2002 bushfires, in the Blue Mountains and other areas, 109 homes were destroyed, 29 industrial or commercial buildings destroyed, and 437 out buildings destroyed.

Homes in the Blue Mountains are also damaged by other natural events such as severe storms, strong winds, lightning and hail (or these events in combination with falling trees). For example, a surprise hail storm in the lower Blue Mountains in March 2015 damaged homes and cars, with the SES responding to 30 calls for assistance on the night of the hail.

Some areas of the Blue Mountains are also at risk of severe flash flooding (1 in 100 year events). Blue Mountains Council has floodplain maps and management plans for certain areas in South Leura, Wentworth Falls (Jamison Creek Catchment), Glenbrook, and Blaxland.

While earthquakes are not commonly felt in the Blue Mountains, they do occur. Earthquakes of magnitude 5 have occurred near Lithgow.