

# All about mulch

## and its benefits after a bush fire

### What is mulch?

Mulch is an organic material that covers soil and provides a range of benefits to your garden, including

- Keeps weeds down
- Reduces soil erosion and soil compacting
- Keeps roots cool in summer and warm in winter
- Helps retain moisture, which means you need less water for your garden and is excellent for drought conditions
- Improves nutrients in the soil

### How can mulch help after a bush fire?

Mulch can assist plant regeneration after a bush fire. By using coarse wood chip mulch made from trees on your property, you can reduce the risk of soil erosion, improve soil quality and provide a refuge for small plants and microbes to re-establish.

By mulching using the wood chip from fire effected trees on your property, you protect the burnt ground from wind and rain fall erosion, and reduce waste going to our land fill facilities, which saves the environment and money.

You can organise to have your larger green waste mulched, using the free kerb side chipping service provided by Council. Residents can access up to two free chipping services a year. More information is available on Council's website: [bmcc.nsw.gov.au/BookedWasteService](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/BookedWasteService)

### Is mulch a fire risk?

The NSW Rural Fire Service Standards for Asset Protection Zones recommends a suitable layer of mulch (< 5cm deep). This can improve soil stability and does not pose a significant bush fire hazard. The use of coarse woodchips (> 6mm diameter) is preferred to that of finer mulches such as pine fines and leaves, as fine mulch is less compact and will burn more readily.

Thick layers of mulch are not recommended, nor should you place mulch against flammable objects or structures such as sheds, fences, houses or trees, as low smouldering mulch can turn into an open flaming fire once the radiant heat has established.

### General benefits of mulch

Mulch is a key element in protecting your garden, helping it grow, and preventing soil erosion, especially on sloping lands. Reduced soil structure may lead to run off erosion, which can pollute and block waterways and drains. This is detrimental to the environment and may contribute to poor water quality, and cause a reduction of habitat for our wildlife.

A permanent ground cover of coarse wood chip mulch on your land will improve the soil and provide an area that is easy to maintain, and can assist with weed control in your gardens.

