MOVING HAY?
DON'T SPREAD FIRE ANTS

fireants.org.au

NATIONAL
Fire Ant Eradication
PROGRAM

Fire ants may be small, but they can have devastating consequences for your property, business, industry and all of Australia. Human-assisted movement poses the greatest risk for spreading fire ants.

If you transport materials that can carry fire ants – such as **soil, baled materials, mulch, green waste, manure, quarry products, turf, or potted plants** – you must follow movement requirements of the Biosecurity Regulation 2016.

Moving materials without mitigating the risk of spreading fire ants is an offence and could result in temporary business closures, financial penalties and legal repercussions. It could also damage your personal or professional reputation, increase your overall costs and jeopardise future work contracts.

Following simple fire ant-safe practices (found in this brochure) can safeguard you, your family, your staff and your livelihood.

FIRE ANT IDENTIFICATION

Fire ants are aggressive and will swarm when disturbed. Their distinguishable features make them easy to identify against other ant species.

Fire ants are:

- copper brown with a darker abdomen
- small, measuring 2–6 mm
- found in a variety of sizes within the one nest.

If you find a suspect nest or ants, report them within 24 hrs at fireants.org.au or by calling 13 25 23.

Fire ant nests can look like mounds or flat patches of soil with **no obvious entry or exit holes**. They are not always visible and can take months to pop up. They are usually found in warm, open areas such as:

- lawns, pastures and cropland
- footpaths and driveways
- garden beds and in piles of organic matter
- water sources – taps, dams and irrigation lines
- utility pits – water and gas meters
- cultivated land
- along fence lines
- disturbed soil and newly developed areas.

IMPACTS OF FIRE ANTS

Fire ants present a threat to our environment, economy and outdoor way of life.

They can hitch a ride in organic materials and establish nests in new areas – wreaking havoc on communities and local business.

Fire ants destroy ecosystems by killing native flora, fauna, pets and livestock. **Their ecological impact can cause population declines in 45% of birds, 38% of mammals, 69% of reptiles and 95% of frogs.**

Fire ants can render land unusable, and their stings can be fatal to humans. They can also destroy crops, damage electrical equipment and irrigation systems and, hurt or even kill livestock.

This invasive pest can change our way of life, but you can stop them in their tracks.

SOIL MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS

If you're moving soil, fill, spoil or anything containing soil originating from within the fire ant biosecurity zones, you have a general biosecurity obligation to use one of the fire ant-safe measures detailed in this brochure.

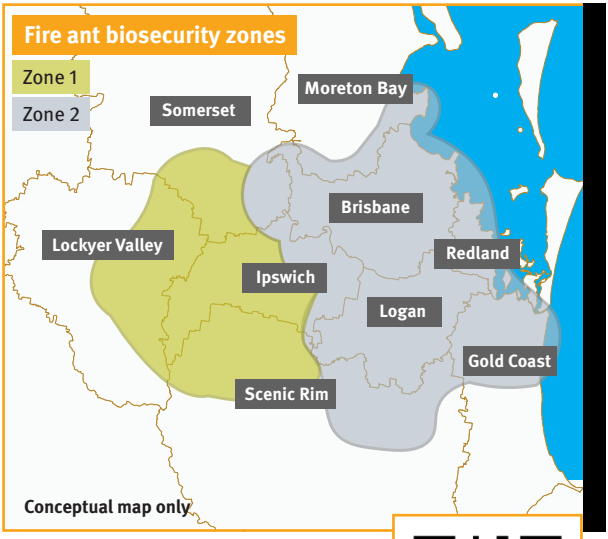
You can then move the soil:

- from zone 1 to anywhere inside zone 1 or zone 2

  or

- from zone 2 to a place inside zone 2 only.

Soil can only be moved outside of the zones, or from zone 2 to zone 1 with a biosecurity instrument permit. To obtain a permit, you will need to demonstrate how you plan to reduce the risk of spreading fire ants.



Moving live fire ants is an offence and penalties apply.

To view the latest fire ant biosecurity zone map, scan the QR code or visit **fireants.org.au**.

MOVING MATERIALS OTHER THAN SOIL

Materials can be transported within Queensland without a permit, if you follow at least one of the fire ant-safe measures detailed in this brochure.*

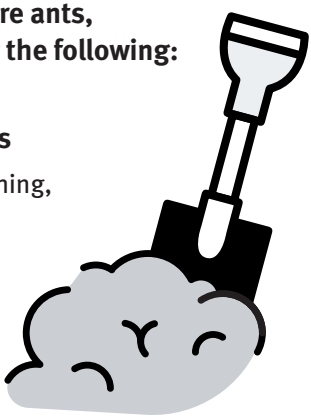
Alternatively, you can move the material:

- Directly to a waste facility, **but only if**
  - material from fire ant biosecurity zone 1 is moved to a waste facility inside zone 1 or zone 2, or
  - material from fire ant biosecurity zone 2 is moved to a waste facility inside zone 2.
- Within 24 hrs of it arriving on your property.
- If you apply for and are granted a biosecurity instrument permit before moving it. You can apply for a permit at **fireants.org.au/FACT**

**Different rules apply for soil – see' Soil movement restrictions' on page 5 of this brochure.*

PRODUCING AND PROCESSING MATERIALS

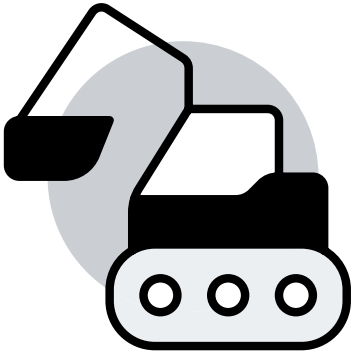
If you produce or process materials that can carry fire ants, you can reduce the risk of spreading them by doing the following:



Processing soil, mulch, manure and quarry products

Use machinery to vigorously disturb the material by crushing, screening, turning or washing the product.

You must do this **every 21 days**, unless stored correctly* and at least **24 hrs before** it is moved off-site.



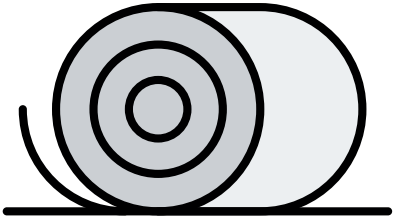
Excavating soil

Soil that needs to be taken off-site should come from at least **1 m below** the surface of the ground. The top **1 m of soil** must not be mixed with soil being removed from the site.

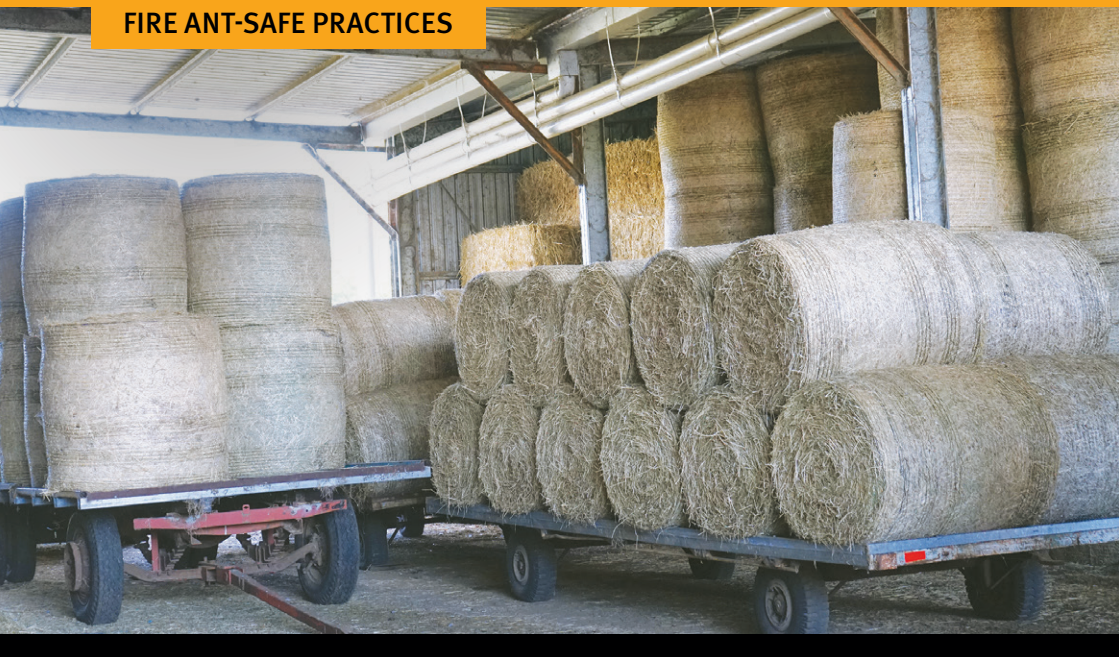
The soil cannot be stockpiled or exposed to the environment for **more than 21 days**. If stockpiled for **longer than 21 days**, soil should either be processed, treated or stored as recommended in this brochure.**

Harvesting hay and other baled materials

Perform the last 2 rakings **within 24 hrs** of each other. Cut material must then be baled **within 24 hrs** and either moved off the paddock **within 24 hrs** of baling or stored* appropriately.



*See 'Storing materials correctly' on page 8 of this brochure.
**See 'Soil movement restrictions' on page 5 of this brochure.



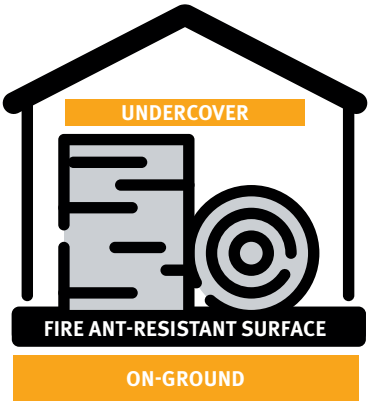
STORING MATERIALS CORRECTLY

If you store materials that can carry fire ants, you must mitigate the risk of them nesting the materials you want to move off-site.

Store the material off-ground or on-ground with a **suitable covering** that prevents fire ant queens from flying in and building nests.

Storing materials off-ground does not require chemical treatment. However, materials must be covered at all times with a tarpaulin, or be stored inside a shed.

Materials stored on pallets **ARE NOT** compliant unless you follow the rules for on-ground storage (see page 9).



If material is **stored on-ground**, the ground should be:

1 **Fire ant-resistant:**
- solid concrete or bitumen with no surface cracks
- a floor covering that fire ants cannot penetrate, e.g. 200-micron plastic (continuous) with no holes.

2 **Treated with bifenthrin***
Fire ant-resistant flooring should receive a 30 cm-wide perimeter treatment.

Please note:
- If material is not stored on a fire ant resistant surface, the entire area on which material is stored should be treated*
- Materials used for animal feed should be kept on rubber mats or plastic sheeting to avoid chemical contamination.
- You must keep treatment records to demonstrate actions taken.

For more details check the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) website at **apvma.gov.au*

TREATING TURF, POTTED PLANTS AND SOIL

You have a general biosecurity obligation to reduce the risk of spreading fire ants by treating some organic materials before you move them.

Soil*

- Inspect the site and use approved fire ant treatment on the soil being excavated **2 weeks** before moving it.
- Always check for fire ant activity on previously treated areas before transporting soil.**

Potted plants*

You can store or treat using one of the following options:

- Treat potting mix with bifenthrin or chlorpyrifos.
- Drench or dip the pot in bifenthrin, cyfluthrin or chlorpyrifos.
- Spray the potting media and the structure that the plant is stored on with bifenthrin.

Turf*

- Treat before harvest with bifenthrin and move off-site in **2–42 days**.
- If not sold within 42 days, **you must** treat again.

**Please check the conditions of the APVMA permits to verify treatment requirements and instructions.*
***See 'Soil movement restrictions on page 5 of this brochure.*

INTERSTATE CONTROLS

Other states and territories have their own rules you must follow when moving soil, plant material and equipment used to complete this work.

Before moving materials or equipment that has come into contact with a restricted organic matter, contact the relevant state or territory to confirm their requirements.

Businesses dealing with potted plants under an Interstate Certification Assurance must follow ICA-39 conditions. All requirements should be considered in addition to the Queensland Biosecurity Regulation 2016, outlined in this brochure.

For more information visit **www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/plant**

RECEIVING MATERIALS

If you are purchasing or receiving materials that may carry fire ants, check that your supplier is following fire ant-safe practices.

Ask if the material:

- originates from a site that has fire ants
- is sourced from within the fire ant biosecurity zones
- has been produced, processed and/or treated to mitigate the risk of spreading fire ants.

You should then input your supplier's answers in our fire ant compliance tool at **fireants.org.au/FACT** to determine if there is a high risk of the material carrying fire ants.

By taking these simple steps, you can help protect your property and prevent the spread of fire ants into new areas.

NATIONAL

Fire Ant Eradication

PROGRAM

For more information about fire ants or how to reduce the risk of spreading them, visit fireants.org.au or call 13 25 23.

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program is a nationally cost-shared program funded by all Australian state and territory governments, and the federal government.

Australian Government

Queensland Government

Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

NSW Government
Department of Primary Industries

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Tasmanian Government

Northern Territory Government

ACT Government

Government of Western Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development