

Season of fire

Firefighters battle bushfire amid soaring temperatures

THE cause of a major bushfire north of the Collie townsite last week is under investigation as firefighters in the region remain on alert.

The fire is understood to have started on a private property near Boys Home Road in Palmer last Thursday afternoon, quickly escalating and leading to road closures.

A major firefighting operation was subsequently launched, with around 70 ground crew deployed, supported by aerial water bombing.

Firefighters had made initial progress, but worsening conditions during the night resulted in an upgrade of danger levels.

An evacuation centre was opened at Roche Park Recreation Centre, and Collie Hills Village evacuated as a precautionary measure.

About 70 people had registered at the centre and nine remained overnight.

Firefighters continued to battle the blaze throughout the night, with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services downgrading the danger level on

Friday morning. Collie Shire president Ian Miffing has praised the efforts of all involved.

“Special thanks go out to all the firefighters who performed magnificently, and thanks also to all the supporting departments, agencies, companies and private individuals who worked tirelessly throughout the ordeal,” Mr Miffing said in a letter to the editor (see page 8).

Collie locals and businesses also took to social media to express their gratitude, with many businesses offering free provisions for firefighters.

More than 150 personnel fought the fire, which burnt through about 300 hectares.

Volunteer bushfire brigades, the Collie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, plantation companies and landowners all played their part, along with volunteers from the South West region and Perth.

Fire warnings have remained in place for the impacted area this week amid heatwave conditions.



SUMMER SKATE

Taj Nelson got some air, watched by Henry Kennedy and Kaleb Broomhead at the SK8 RIDE SCooT clinic held at the Collie Skate Park on Monday. They were among a keen group of Collie riders who put their skills to the test. *Story page 5.*

COLLIE WOMAN FACING SEVEN ARSON CHARGES Page 3

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