



Niall Blair

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Lands and Water

MEDIA RELEASE

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HUNDREDS OF HOMES INSPECTED TO MAKE SURE RED FIRE ANTS ARE A THING OF THE PAST

Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water Niall Blair has praised volunteers, who will this weekend inspect more than 600 properties in the Port Botany area to ensure the successful eradication of red imported fire ants.

“Last year red fire ants were detected at a port facility at Port Botany – and because we got on top of it early, it appears the infestation was able to be contained,” Mr Blair said.

“Still, we are leaving no stone unturned to make sure these imported ants are eradicated once and for all – we all owe a huge vote of thanks to the team who will be out this weekend inspecting the properties as a precautionary measure.”

While there have been no further detections of the ants and the initial infestation sites have been treated, volunteers will inspect homes in Port Botany, Phillip Bay, Little Bay, Matraville, Chifley, Malabar, Pagewood and Banksmeadow on July 18 and 19.

The weekend’s activities are a precautionary measure to ensure there has been no spread of the infestation.

Trained inspectors from the Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services will work with volunteers from the Rural Fire Service and NSW State Emergency Service to inspect front and rear yards of randomly selected properties within approximately two kilometers of the original detection site.

There is no requirement for any indoor inspections, however inspectors will require access to backyards to look for red imported fire ants and will be door knocking on Saturday and Sunday during daylight hours.

Following the residential surveillance over the weekend, an ongoing surveillance campaign of commercial premises and public land in the area will be undertaken during the remainder of July and August.

This surveillance includes inspections of port facilities, industrial land, roadsides, beaches, playgrounds, golf courses and cemeteries.

Red imported fire ants are a serious exotic and aggressive pest that can inflict painful bites on people, pets and livestock.

If anyone suspects red imported fire ants, they should contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.