

Guidance on Bonfires

A bonfire is a large naked flame with lots of fuel.

This makes it especially hazardous and its outside environment increases the danger to wildlife and traffic.

The following advice should be heeded when lighting, using and extinguishing a bonfire.

- Before you light the bonfire, check that children and animals are not hiding inside and are a safe distance away
- Don't leave bonfires unattended. An adult should have the time to supervise it until all material is consumed
- If the bonfire has to be left, it should be dampened down with water
- Don't light bonfires in unsuitable weather conditions, particularly wind
- Keep a bucket of water or a hosepipe handy, just in case
- Build bonfires well clear of buildings, garden sheds, fences, hedges and traffic
- Never use flammable liquids to start the fire, and never burn dangerous rubbish such as aerosols, paint, foam furniture, rubber tyres, batteries etc.

The Environment and Your Rights

Fires release pollutants into the environment that can be hazardous to health and a nuisance to people's lives. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 it is an offence to cause a 'statutory nuisance'. Smoke from a bonfire can constitute such an offence if it is a regular



occurrence and is interfering substantially with your well-being, comfort or enjoyment of property.

Bonfires and Traffic

Under the Highways Act 1980, anyone lighting a fire and allowing smoke to drift across a road faces a fine if it endangers traffic.

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