

Bonfire danger and nuisance warning as hot weather continues



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Cotswold District Council Environmental Health officials and Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service (GFRS) have warned against lighting bonfires during the current hot weather.

Every year at this time, smoke produced by the burning of garden and other waste causes countless problems between neighbours. And GFRS has highlighted how quickly bonfires can escalate out of control during hot, dry spells.

General nuisance caused by smoke leads to most disputes at this time of year, and in particular during a heat wave. People need to have their windows open at certain times of the day and they like to enjoy being in their gardens.

Tempers can fray when smoke from bonfires is a nuisance and the smoke itself may be harmful to health – not only does it contain carcinogenic compounds but it will also make life much more difficult for those suffering with breathing difficulties associated with hot weather.

The speed at which a bonfire can spread during very hot and dry weather can also take people by surprise.

Andy Hermiston, GFRS Acting Chief Fire Officer says:

“During this hot weather that we are currently experiencing, the advice from Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service would be for people not to have bonfires.

“We have seen a rise in the number of bonfires becoming out of control during these dry conditions and what we tend to find is that people are not equipped to deal with the speed at which fire can spread in these exceptional conditions.

“We would advise people to use local household recycling centres to dispose of their rubbish and garden waste.”

While it is not against the law to have a bonfire, the smoke produced by burning **could** be illegal in that it may cause a smoke nuisance as laid down in the Environmental Protection Act, 1990.

It is also a widely held belief that bonfires are legal after 6pm – this is **not** the case. In fact, temperature inversion effects in the evening can result in smoke not dispersing and so lingering in the neighbourhood during night hours. Therefore the evening is one of the worst times to light a bonfire.

Cotswold District Council Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Sue Coakley comments:

“The message is loud and clear - do **not** light bonfires, especially when there are so many better ways to get rid of your garden waste. These include chipping, composting, kerbside garden waste collection when subscribed and disposal at a Household Recycling Centre.”

Composting: Put the goodness back in your garden by composting your garden waste – see <https://getcomposting.com/profile/login> for further information.

Collection: Consider signing up for the Cotswold District Council [garden waste collection service](#).

Disposal: You can also take garden waste to the following recycling centres free of charge:#

Fosse Cross, Cirencester, GL54 4NW

Pyke Quarry, Horsley, GL6 0QA

Hempsted, Hempsted Lane, Gloucester, GL2 6HS