



Bonfires and Smoke Nuisance

Charnwood Borough Council
Environmental Protection

The Law

Every year the Council's Environmental Health Division receive a large number of complaints about bonfires causing a repeated nuisance. Such nuisances need never arise if due consideration is shown to our neighbours. This leaflet briefly outlines the law and gives some suggestions to help prevent a nuisance being caused.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows the Local Authority to take offenders to court should their bonfires cause a repeated nuisance to neighbours (i.e. have an unreasonable effect on their enjoyment of their home or garden). Persons complaining to the Council are initially asked to keep a diary of events to assist officers investigating the matter build up evidence.

Fires producing **black** smoke on commercial or construction sites are illegal. These should be reported immediately to Environmental Health so that we can try to visit and witness the problem. The Environment Agency also prohibit the burning of certain trade wastes

There are no byelaws which allow or prohibit burning.

Do's and Don'ts

Should you decide though to have a bonfire, kindly note these recommendations:-

- ! **DO NOT** burn damp grass clippings or 'green' material as this creates thick smoke
- ! **DO NOT** burn any oily rags, rubber, plastics, damp garden waste or other materials which would inevitably create heavy smoke or toxic fumes.
- ! **DO NOT** light a bonfire when your neighbours have washing drying, or are out enjoying their gardens or have windows wide open.
- ! **DO NOT** light bonfires one hour before dusk, or leave them burning overnight. Choose the time of day and weather conditions that will cause the least inconvenience to neighbours.

- ! **DO NOT** leave your fire to smoulder for long periods. Never leave a fire unattended. Hose it down until cold before you leave it.
- ✓ **DO** advise your nearest neighbours before you light a bonfire so they can be prepared for any minor inconvenience that may arise.
- ✓ **DO** burn material quickly in small quantities so the minimum amount of smoke is created. An incinerator makes this much easier.
- ✓ **DO** choose your bonfire site carefully, well away from trees, fences and windows. Beware of attempting bonfires on very windy days as it can so easily get out of control. Have a hose-pipe and buckets of water handy just in case.

The ashes, when cold, can be raked into the soil as a useful fertiliser. Small pieces of charcoal can be included, but larger pieces should be picked out first.

Alternatives to burning

Leicestershire County Council civic amenity sites accept all sorts of domestic refuse for disposal and recycling, including garden waste. Sites are at:

Railway Terrace, **Loughborough**

Hathern Road, **Shepshed**

Cemetery Road, **Sileby**

Tel 0116 2657240

Charnwood Borough Council Cleansing Services provide various recycling and waste collection services including:

Domestic waste collection

Garden waste collections

Bulky waste collections (e.g beds & sofas)

Home composters

Recycling centres and textile collections

Environmental Health Services
Charnwood Borough Council
Macaulay House
5 Cattle Market
Loughborough
LE11 3DH

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