

Glasgow City Bonfire/Fireworks Protocol 2023

Fireworks misuse and bonfires are serious problems and can have a detrimental effect on community safety and those living within our communities.

Bonfires traditionally accompany the November 5th celebrations; however, they are frequently a source of danger due to their location or construction and can also be a focus for anti-social behaviour.

To minimise the cause and effects of fireworks misuse and the associated dangers, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), Glasgow City Council (GCC), Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS), Police Scotland (PS), Trading Standards, Crimestoppers, Scottish Burned Children's Club and other partner agencies have agreed this joint protocol for identifying, reporting and the removal of bonfires/bonfire material alongside a bold education and youth engagement strategy. This protocol will ensure consistency, building on good practice and therefore increasing safety in public spaces.



OUR AIMS

- To **reduce** the instances of bonfires being constructed in public areas, with a particular focus on deliberate fire setting.
- To **minimise** the effect of reckless and indiscriminate use of fireworks and to identify those involved in this type of activity.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- To identify locations where bonfires are being or have been constructed, or where materials for bonfires are being gathered and stored.
- Partner agencies to liaise with NRS to ensure that on being informed of bulk uplifts, that they will clear the site concerned.

- To identify persons responsible for illegal possession and use of fireworks.
- To identify retailers storing or selling fireworks in contravention of the legislation.
- To educate young people on the dangers and misuse of fireworks.

Bonfire Safety Advice

SFRS advice, is to attend an organised event, although it is acknowledged that events may be limited this year. If you are unable to attend an organised display, we would ask you to consider the impact of bonfires and fireworks on people and animals.

It is often children rather than adults who are injured by fireworks. The noise and lights that fireworks emit can also be overwhelming for people with sensory impairment and those with neurological differences e.g., Autism. Animals can also find fireworks particularly distressing.

If you have a bonfire at home, make sure it is well away from buildings, vehicles, trees, hedges, fences, power lines, telecommunications equipment, and sheds - and you must ensure that smoke does not cause a nuisance to neighbours or flying embers do not endanger neighbouring property.

Additionally:

- Never drink alcohol if you are tending a bonfire or setting off fireworks – remember it is an offence to consume alcohol in a public place.
- To reduce the emission of harmful smoke and combustion products bonfires should comprise of untreated wood and paper-based materials.
- There is a danger of explosion from pressurised containers or sealed vessels amongst bonfire material, or when irresponsibly thrown on burning bonfires.
- Never throw fireworks on bonfires.
- Never use flammable liquids to ignite bonfires – use proprietary firelighters.
- Smoke from bonfires must not pose a public nuisance, affect visibility on roads or otherwise inconvenience vehicles.
- Sparks, flying embers or burning debris must not endanger nearby property.
- Never leave a burning/smoldering bonfire unsupervised – make sure it is completely extinguished.

Any bonfire failing to satisfy safety conditions or where people are behaving irresponsibly, may be deemed dangerous and as such, subject to being either removed, extinguished or otherwise made safe. For more information click [here](#)

Bonfires and the Law

It is an offence under Section 56 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 for any person to lay or light a fire in a public place, so as to endanger any other person, or give them reasonable cause for alarm or annoyance, or so as to endanger any property.

It is illegal for anyone under 18 years of age to possess fireworks in a public place.

Throwing fireworks or setting them off in a public place is illegal.

You are only permitted to use fireworks between the hours of 6pm and 11pm on any day except on 5th November, when the curfew extends to midnight.

It is an offence under section 80 of the Explosives Act 1875 to throw or ignite fireworks in any highway, street, thoroughfare or public place. The power to enforce this section of the act rests with **Police Scotland (PS)**. Anyone convicted of this offence may be subject to a fine.

If you have any information regarding fires that have been started deliberately in your area, you can call the Crimestoppers Scotland hotline on **0800 555 111**. All calls are completely anonymous and do not require names or personal details and you will not be asked to give evidence in court.

Fly tipping during the Bonfire and Fireworks season is a major cause of fire and it is also a criminal offence. If you see fly tipping or know of an area where there is a build-up of refuse or combustible material, contact your local authority cleansing or environmental department to arrange uplift.

For more information, or to report on the above, you can contact **Glasgow City Council: 0141 287 9700**

Anti-Social Behaviour

- It is an offence under section 80 of the Explosives Act 1875 to throw or ignite fireworks in any highway, street, thoroughfare or public place. The power to enforce this section of the act rests with **PS**. Anyone convicted of this offence may be subject to a fine
- Regulations made under the Fireworks Act 2003 make it an offence for any person under 18 years of age to possess fireworks in a public place and for anyone to ignite fireworks out with the period of 6pm – 11pm. **PS** also deal with these offences.
(The exceptions to this are 5th November when fireworks can be set off until midnight and until 1 am on New Year's Day, the night of Diwali and at Chinese New Year)
- Under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to any domestic or captive animals. This is enforced by the **Scottish SPCA** (03000 999 999).

Fireworks Safety

Watching fireworks can be great fun for children. However, figures show that often, it's children rather than adults who are injured by fireworks.

In the last five years, approx. 60 people in Scotland suffered injuries, because of fireworks, which required admittance to hospital. This doesn't include injuries suffered which were treated within A&E departments and large numbers of injuries which are not reported to emergency services. Be safe and always follow the fireworks code.

Firework Code

Firework Top Ten Safety Code for Adults – if you do decide to have a home fireworks display.

Young people should watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance and follow the safety rules for using sparklers. Only adults should deal with firework displays and the lighting of fireworks. They should also take care of the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used.

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable.
2. Keep fireworks in a closed box and use them one at a time.
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework.
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back.
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks.
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit.
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them.
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators.
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire.
10. Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.



Children suffer over half of all firework injuries and many of these are babies and toddlers. Children's scars may heal but the trauma for them and their parents can last for years.

We want children to enjoy fireworks however they need to know that they can be dangerous.

Children

- Supervise all children carefully and keep them well back from the bonfire and fireworks.
- **Never give sparklers to under 5's. (one of the most dangerous fireworks)**
- Show older children how to hold sparklers - away from their body and at arm's length - and teach them not to wave them at other people or run while holding them.
- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes that could catch alight easily and give children gloves to wear when holding sparklers.
- Avoid alcohol if you're running a display.

Sparkler safely

Did you know that sparklers get five times hotter than cooking oil? Sparklers are not toys and should never be given to a child under five.

- Store sparklers and other fireworks in a closed box in a cool, dry place.
- Always light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- Never hold a baby or child if you have a sparkler in your hand.
- Plunge finished sparklers hot end down into a bucket of water as soon as they have burnt out. Remember, sparklers can stay hot for a long time.
- Don't take sparklers to public displays, it will be too crowded to use them safely.

In an emergency

- Cool the burn or scald with cold water for at least 10 minutes.
- Cut around material sticking to the skin - don't pull it off.
- Don't touch the burn or burst any blisters.
- Cover the burn with clean, non-fluffy material - Clingfilm is ideal - to prevent infection.
- If clothing catches fire, get the person to stop, drop to the floor and roll them in heavy material like a curtain.
- Get advice from your doctor or accident and emergency department at your local hospital.

Sale and Retailer Issues (Trading Standards)

- Legislation is in place concerning the sale and storage of fireworks. Retailers must obtain a licence from Trading Standards to be allowed to store fireworks for sale. If they aren't licensed, or if they store products in an unsafe manner, retailers may be prosecuted. A list of licensed premises is regularly updated and sent to PS and SFRS.
- It is illegal for retailers to sell most fireworks to anyone under the age of 18. The minimum age for smaller fireworks, namely caps, cracker snaps, novelty matches, party poppers, serpents and throw downs is 16. Retailers must only sell fireworks that conform to European Safety Standards and/or UKCA marked as well as meeting certain noise conditions.

Unless they have a special licence to sell on an all-year-round basis, suppliers can only sell fireworks during the periods:

- **15th October to 10th November**
- **26th December to 31st December**
- **The first day of Diwali and the three days immediately before**
- **The first day of Chinese New Year and the three days immediately before**

The GCC, Trading Standards, will carry out test purchasing and can also arrange for safe storage of fireworks seized and can carry out inspections of premises selling fireworks to ensure compliance.

Dangerous Bonfire Reporting and Removal

If you know that a bonfire is being built in an open space and it is not part of an organised event, or a fire has been extinguished and the debris from a bonfire needs to be removed please use GCC's [online form](#) to report it or contact the **Bonfire uplift number 0141 287 9700**

We cannot remove bonfires which are lit, please contact the Crimestoppers Scotland hotline on 0800 555 111.

Appendix

Useful Contact Telephone Numbers

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

To report a fire contact **999**

Community Action Team

W.GLAHomeFireSafetyVisitReferrals@firescotland.gov.uk

Police Scotland

In Relation to: **Any Misuse of Fireworks** (e.g.: times, location)

Call 101 (**999** in an emergency)

Glasgow City Council

Bonfire uplift number 0141 287 9700

Trading Standards (In relation to: Underage sales (to under 18s), unsafe or unlicensed storage by shops, dangerous fireworks i.e., not made to European Standards) - **0141 287 1061**

ts.enquiries@glasgow.gov.uk



Scottish Burned Children's Club:

www.theburnsclub.org.uk
enquiries@theburnsclub.org.uk
Helpline: **07486 603 999 (Mark)**

Glasgow City Community Fire Stations Contact Telephone Numbers

Station
Cowcaddens
0141 302 3111
Calton
0141 553 4350
Polmadie
0141 423 2223
Castlemilk
0141 634 2223
Pollok
0141 882 4872
Govan
0141 445 2223
Yorkhill
0141 338 6400
Knightswood
0141 959 2223
Maryhill
0141 946 2223
Springburn
0141 558 2223
Easterhouse
0141 771 2223

You can contact the relevant Community Fire Station for general bonfire related issues/advice except in an emergency where you should dial **999**.