



Environmental Health

BONFIRE ADVICE LEAFLET

Essential information & advice for anyone planning a bonfire

www.gov.je/environmentalhealth

November 2013



BONFIRES AND BURNING WASTE

Health, The Environment & the Law

Air pollution in Jersey is an issue that should concern us all; garden bonfires can make it worse and the burning of waste is a common cause of complaint each year. Garden bonfires produce smoke and pollutants which can cause nuisance and be harmful to both health and the environment.

Rather than burning your garden waste it should be taken to the green waste disposal facility at Bellozanne. Other flammable waste such as timber and old fencing should be taken to La Collette bulk waste facility for reclamation or environmentally friendly disposal.

Brief exposure to bonfire emissions is unlikely to have a long-term detrimental effect on health; however, frequent exposure may adversely affect persons suffering from asthma, bronchitis, heart conditions, the elderly, the immuno-suppressed and children.

Government advice is to compost green waste, recycle materials at home or take to the Bellozanne civic amenity site / La Collette (if commercial waste) for recycling or energy recovery. Do not burn waste in open bonfires.

Bonfires and the Law

Bonfires set to burn natural material from the site where the fire is taking place are not illegal in Jersey but where possible they should be avoided in order to prevent complaints about smoke. Environmental Health can address complaints about smoke, smell and ash affecting domestic properties due to bonfires if they occur regularly (ie daily or weekly). If a bonfire interferes with normal daily activities such as enjoyment of gardens, hanging out washing or opening windows, the **Statutory Nuisances (Jersey) Law 1999** may be able to be used to prevent the nuisance occurring.

If you are affected by smoke try approaching the person having the fire as they may not realise they are causing a problem. If domestic bonfires are a regular occurrence and the matter cannot be resolved amicably, contact Environmental Health who will be able to investigate.



Under the **Road Traffic (Jersey) Law 1956** a person responsible for lighting a fire which causes smoke to drift across a road faces a fine if it endangers traffic. The law is enforced by the States of Jersey and the Honorary Police and you should contact them in the first instance.

The open burning of wastes other than natural plant matter, wood or vegetation, as a means of disposal is not acceptable practice. This does not prevent a householder burning clippings from their garden a few times a year, provided that the burning is done considerately and without causing pollution. However, the open burning (on ANY land) of anything other than wood/natural plant material or untreated demolition wood is illegal (unless exempt) under the **Waste Management (Jersey) Law 2005**. This law is enforced by the Environment Department and they will respond to complaints about the burning of commercial waste.

Fire Service advice

When you are planning a bonfire on your property, whether to get rid of garden waste or as part of an event like Guy Fawkes Night you can contact the Fire Service enquiry line on 445906 with the location and duration of the bonfire



Follow these simple tips to be sure that you and others stay safe and don't cause nuisance to your neighbours:

DO:

- ✓ Consider your neighbours and let them know in advance of having a bonfire
- ✓ Keep a bucket of water, or a garden hose, nearby in case of emergencies
- ✓ Keep children and pets away from fires.
- ✓ Check for hibernating animals
- ✓ Only burn clean, dry material
- ✓ Keep the fire small, add material to the fire frequently and make sure the stack is stable
- ✓ Make sure that the fire lasts a short a time as possible
- ✓ Remove any rubbish from the area around the bonfire
- ✓ Check there are no cables, such as telephone wires, above the bonfire

DON'T:

- X Leave fires unattended and douse them with soil or sand as soon as the fire is finished, especially overnight.
- X Burn anything other than wood or plant material
- X Bring in material from elsewhere to burn
- X Have a fire near fences, trees, buildings or overhead cables
- X Throw fireworks into a bonfire
- X Burn household rubbish, treated or painted wood, manure, rubber tyres, or anything containing plastic, foam or paint. (This is illegal)
- X Use an accelerant such as oil, Methylated spirit, or petrol to light the fire. (Also illegal)
- X Light a fire in unsuitable weather conditions – smoke lingers in the air on damp, still days and in the evening. The best weather conditions allow the smoke to disperse upwards quickly.
- X Light a fire when the wind will carry the smoke over roads or into other people's property.
- X Burn at weekends or on bank holidays when people want to enjoy their gardens
- X Build a bonfire too big

To report a nuisance bonfire or for further information regarding bonfires, please contact us using the details below:

Environmental Health

Maison Le Pape Tel : 443712
The Parade Fax: 445773
St Helier Web: eh@health.gov.je
JE2 3PU

Office hours:

Monday – Thursday 9am - 4.30pm
Fridays: 9 am – 4.00pm

Transport & Technical Services

P.O. Box 412 Tel : 445509
States Offices Fax: 445529
South Hill Web: tts@gov.je
St Helier
JE4 8UY

Bellozanne/La Collette opening hours:

Monday to Saturday 7.30am – 4.15pm
Sunday 8am - 12.45pm
Public Holidays Closed

Department of the Environment

Howard Davis Farm Tel: 441600
La Route de la Trinite Fax: 441601
Trinity Web: envprotection@gov.je
JE3 5JP Environmental Protection
Hotline: 709535

Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

States of Jersey Police

Police Headquarters Tel: 612612
Rouge Bouillon Fax: 612613
St Helier Web: sojp@jersey.pnn.police.uk
JE2 3ZA

24 hour emergency – 999 or 112

States of Jersey Fire & Rescue Service

SJFRS Headquarters Tel: 445906
Rouge Bouillon Fax: 441601
St Helier Web: s.admin@gov.je
JE2 3ZA

Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5pm
Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

24 hour emergency – 999 or 112