

Be careful with camp fires this Easter



Over £40 Million goes up in smoke each year due to outdoor fires, many of which result from careless or irresponsible behaviour, with the Easter Weekend one of the busiest of the year for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

Firefighters attend over 22,000 calls every year to fires involving rubbish bins, refuse skips and grass or heathland. The incidents can spread to homes and business properties, placing people at risk.

Commercial skips, household waste bins and illegal dumping of waste materials provide a ready source of combustible materials for opportunistic fire setters and as the weather improves increasing numbers of people are accessing the countryside during the Easter Holiday period.

At this time of year – before new green growth appears – grass, heather, and forested areas are at particularly high risk from fire. SFRS is asking people to be aware of the heightened risk of fire and to act safely and responsibly if they visit the countryside this weekend.

Pro-actively supporting the Clean-up Scotland Campaign, the service is constantly working to protect communities from fire related antisocial behaviour and fire vandalism. It is keen to highlight the success of neighbourhood environmental clean-up activities, together with high profile fly tipping and enforcement campaigns which have resulted in the identification and prosecution of offenders.

Keeping the public safe is the main concern of SFRS officers, who are reminding anyone involved in deliberately starting

fires or in the illegal dumping of domestic and commercial waste that they face tough penalties. Householders and local businesses are being urged to manage and dispose of 'waste' safely and responsibly as many refuse fires involve skips, waste containers or illegally discarded domestic and trade waste.

Firefighters are working with communities, local authorities, businesses and the police to minimise the opportunity for deliberate fire-setting and see those responsible held to account for their dangerous, criminal actions. As well as risking lives, deliberate fire-setting wastes public money and also causes significant health and environmental risks.

To protect communities throughout Scotland, SFRS is asking communities and businesses to join Scotland's fight against fire by safely managing and disposing of waste to prevent fires and by helping identify and report offenders.

The public are asked to report any fly tipping or accumulations of rubbish and refuse to their local authority or to the national 'Dumb Dumpers' stopline – operated by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency – by calling 0845 230 4090.

Anyone who has information on people involved in deliberate fire setting should contact the police via the non-emergency number 101. Information can also be given anonymously by calling Crimestoppers Scotland on 0800 555 111.