

Bonfire safety advice from SFRS

✖ If you're going to enjoy fireworks then The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) would like you to enjoy them at organised Guy Fawkes events to help ensure firefighters are able to quickly get to where they are needed.

Illegal bonfires and do-it-yourself fireworks displays can also go wrong in an instant and SFRS is clear everyone has a role to play in protecting their community.

Assistant Chief Officer Lewis Ramsay, the SFRS Director of Prevention and Protection, said: "We want everyone who celebrates Bonfire Night to have a great time without inviting trauma and tragedy.

"The best thing people can do to keep themselves, their families and others safe is to choose only to attend official and organised events, which are also far more spectacular than any do-it-yourself fireworks display or an illegal bonfire.

"Choosing to attend only official events helps to protect the wider community by ensuring resources aren't tied-up at needless incidents when they could be needed at a real emergency."

SFRS crews can be four times busier on 5 November than at any other night of the year and the service typically sees a 40 per cent increase in emergency calls throughout the Bonfire period.

While the service always has the resources needed to respond to emergencies, firefighters could have to be sent greater distances if nearby crews are dealing with bonfires.

ACO Ramsay explained: "When someone is trapped in a fire or

after a serious collision on the roads then it's vital firefighters can get to them quickly.

"Having to attend an unsafe bonfire means at least one crew is unavailable to respond to real emergencies, which could result in tragedy if someone urgently needs help."

As well as choosing to attend only official events this year, people are also being urged to report the build-up of unsafe bonfires or bonfire materials and the illegal sale of fireworks.

AC0 Ramsay added: "Everyone has a part to play in protecting our communities and there are things we can all do to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place.

"It's against the law for fireworks to be sold to children and young people so if anyone is aware of this happening then they should report it to Police Scotland or Trading Standards.

"We would also encourage the public to report any unsafe or dangerous bonfires, or the build-up of bonfire materials, so that everyone can have fun without experiencing the horrible consequences of things going wrong."

The public are requested to pass on any information about who may be responsible for fire setting to Police Scotland using the 101 non-emergency number or by calling Crimestoppers Scotland on 0800 555 111.

Daren Mochrie, Director of Service Delivery at the Scottish Ambulance Service said: "Every year our ambulance crews and hospital departments treat people for severe burns and other firework night related injuries.

"Fireworks are safe when used properly but the consequences can be tragic and life changing if the appropriate precautions are not followed and we recommend that people go along to a professionally organised display."

In the event of someone suffering from a burn or scald, the advice from the ambulance service is for people to act quickly and:

- Stop the burning process as soon as possible. Do not put yourself at risk!
- Use cool water to cool a burn and reduce pain (no more than 30 mins of cooling and be aware of hypothermia due to prolonged cooling).
- Remove clothing and jewellery but do not remove burnt clothing that has stuck to skin.
- Do not use any creams or oils on injuries. Cover with a clean dressing or ideally cling film

The majority of minor burns and scalds can be treated at home and if unsure you can contact NHS 24 on www.nhs24.com/SelfHelpGuide or phone 111 for further advice. If injuries are serious, seek urgent medical help and call 999 and ask for ambulance.

Chief Superintendent Paul Main, Head of Safer Communities for Police Scotland, said: "This is a time of year when we can all stay safe, enjoy the traditions and have fun. The best way of doing this is to attend local organised official bonfire events.

"Remember it is against the law for fireworks to be sold to children and young people. If you have any concerns about this report them to Police Scotland by calling 101.

"Enjoy the fireworks but do it safely and that way we can all stay safe help reduce the number of unnecessary call outs for Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service."

SFRS has produced guidance and safety tips about Bonfire Night

2015, available below.

The advice includes information about bonfire and fireworks safety, with a downloadable bonfire and fireworks safety leaflet available, along with links to TV, radio and press advertisements.

SFRS will be offering tips on staying safe in the lead up to Bonfire Night through its Facebook page and the @scotfire_east Twitter account.



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