

Fireworks safety laws come into effect

The Scottish Government has given local authorities powers to reduce the effect of fireworks. From today any council can designate an area as a Firework Control Zone making it a criminal offence to ignite a firework or knowingly throw a lit firework in such an area.

Councils will set the zones up where there are gardens and private properties to keep the public safe. The penalties are fines of up to £5,000 or imprisonment of up to six months.

This will not prevent organised firework displays which is considered a safe way to enjoy the spectacle.

The act which has come into effect is the Fireworks and Pyrotechnics Articles (Scotland) Act 2022. The zoning is only one of many measures introduced by the government. It is now illegal for anyone to possess pyrotechnics in a public place or at a sporting or live music event with more than 1,000 in the audience.

Minister for Victims and Community Safety, Siobhian Brown said: "Evidence and engagement with communities shows strong public support for tougher action on fireworks, which along with other pyrotechnic articles can cause harm, serious injury and distress to people, pets and the wider community."

“Giving local authorities additional powers to create Firework Control Zones, with input from the local community, marks a significant step in tackling the issues caused by fireworks, which are dangerous when used inappropriately.

“This change to the law demonstrates our absolute commitment to further improve public safety and wellbeing for our communities.”

Police Scotland Chief Inspector Nicola Robison said: “Fireworks Control Zones allow local authorities the power to designate areas where fireworks cannot be possessed or set off and ultimately restricts the improper use of such items in Scotland.

“It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, or setting off, fireworks within a Fireworks Control Zone and I would urge all members of the public to be aware of designated zones within your local area to ensure you are not in breach of the legislation.

“Police Scotland is committed to keeping the public safe from the risk of harm associated with the reckless and criminal use of fireworks and we welcome the addition of Fireworks Control Zones within Scotland.”

Review Group member, and Director of Innovation and Strategic Relations at the Scottish SPCA, Gilly Mendes Ferreira said: “We warmly welcome introduction of Firework Control Zones. The restrictions are much needed to prevent unnecessary suffering among pets, farm animals and wildlife. They will help to alleviate distress caused by fireworks and also prevent any firework debris that can be harmful to, or ingested by, animals.”



Scottish Parliament. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com