



Department
for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

Reducing air pollution from outdoor burning





Outdoor burning

Before burning any materials outside, remember that doing so can cause air pollution. If you decide to burn outdoors, **you must not:**

Burn household waste, and other types of waste, if it will cause pollution or harm your health or that of others (Section 33 (c) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990). For example, plastics, paints, rubber, furniture, treated wood, kitchen units, and old decking are likely to produce hazardous smoke. Household waste should be disposed of or recycled via your local authority waste service.

Allow the smoke to drift across the road and become a danger to traffic (Section 161A of the Highways Act 1980).

Produce smoke that will interfere with others living nearby, preventing them from using or enjoying their homes or affecting their health (Section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990).

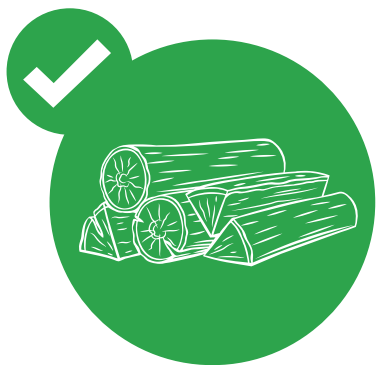


Did you know?

Air pollution is one of the greatest environmental threats to public health in the UK



Outdoor burning

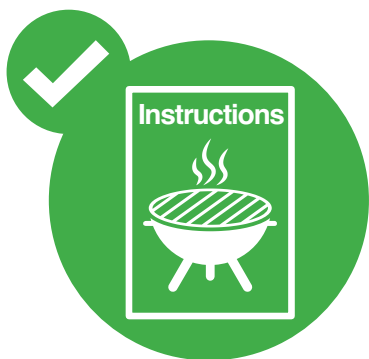


If you decide to burn outdoors, **you should:**

Only burn dry materials, such as dry wood, or smokeless fuels as you would if you were burning indoors. Wet wood creates more air pollution than smokeless fuels or dried wood. Garden waste is also often wet and will create lots of smoke. Instead of burning garden waste, compost at home or use your local authority's garden waste collection service. Contact your local council to find out how to dispose of garden waste.



Be considerate of your neighbours - smoke may blow into their garden or into their house.



Use outdoor burning appliances in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and ensure they are not creating excessive smoke that might count as a nuisance. This includes appliances such as barbecues, pizza ovens, chimineas, and fire pits.



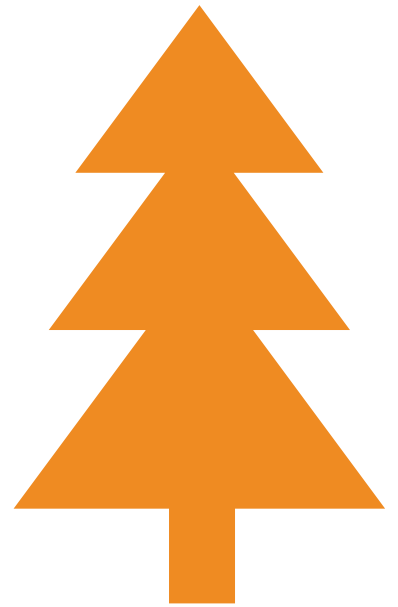
Did you know?

Annual mortality of human-made air pollution in the UK is roughly equivalent to between 29,000 and 43,000 deaths every year



Burning away from the home

Laws on burning away from the home may vary depending on the area. Ensure you are following local laws before having bonfires, barbecues, or engaging in any other outdoor burning activity in places other than your home.

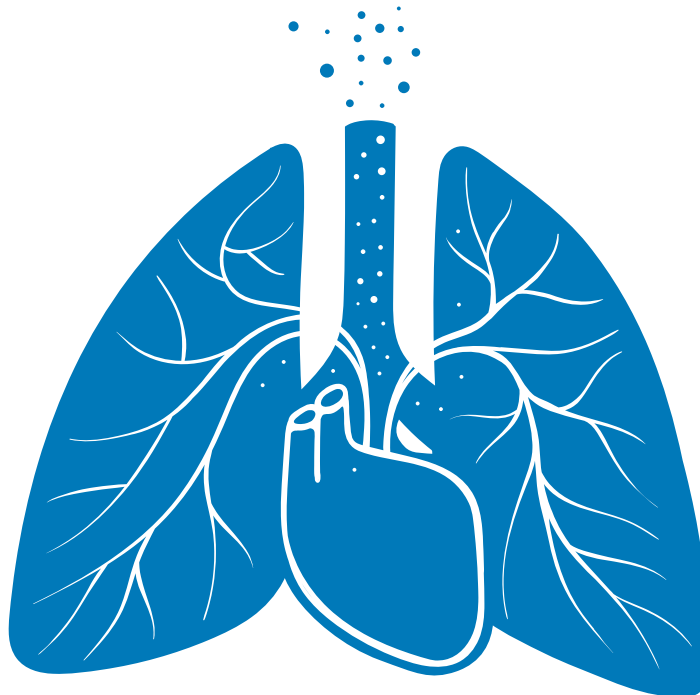


If you witness smoke emissions that are a nuisance or harmful to human health, you can complain to your local authority. If your local authority considers that a statutory nuisance has happened, they can issue an abatement notice to the person responsible. Failure to comply with the abatement notice could result in prosecution and a fine (the amount is set by the court). Search [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) for Nuisance smoke: how councils deal with complaints – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) to find out more.



Did you know?

Burning of any kind produces particulate matter (PM), which is the pollutant of greatest harm to human health. Fine PM (known as PM_{2.5}) is a particular concern as it may pass through the lungs into the bloodstream.



Long-term exposure to PM can shorten life expectancy and cause cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. It is also linked to a wide range of other health effects including adverse birth outcomes, diabetes, dementia and cancer



Preventing wildfires

During dry weather, there is an increased risk of wildfires, which are dangerous, damaging to the environment and contribute to poor air quality. Although they are called wildfires, most are human made, so it's important you understand **how to prevent them**:

Take your litter home.

Don't leave bottles or glass in woodland – sunlight shining through glass can start fires (take them home and recycle them).

Extinguish cigarettes properly and don't throw cigarette ends on the ground – take your litter home.

Never throw cigarette ends out of car windows.





Preventing wildfires

Only use barbecues in a suitable and safe area and never leave them unattended.



Avoid having bonfires in very dry weather.

Avoid having bonfires in areas with long grass. Tall and dry grass will burn more intensely than short grass.



Talk to your children about the dangers of playing with fire and matches. Keep matches and lighters stored well away from children and teenagers.



If you see a fire in the countryside, report it to the fire and rescue service immediately. When visiting the countryside, follow The Countryside Code: advice for countryside visitors - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).



Department
for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

