

## Other Seasonal Advice

### Do:

- put a “no trick or treaters” sign at your door, if you don't want people coming to your door over Halloween. You can download a **'no trick or treat' poster** from [www.sthelens.gov.uk/goodguy](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/goodguy)
- check on vulnerable friends, neighbours or family members - they may appreciate you printing a poster off for them.
- lock all your doors and windows before you go out. Pay particular attention to the back of your premises - a popular entry point for burglars.
- keep your shed and/or garage doors locked. If your garage has a door which goes directly into your house, make sure that is locked too.
- close your curtains and leave a light on in the room (not the hall) when you are out for the evening.
- secure your letter box shut if you are worried about fireworks being put through your letter box.

### Don't:

- leave combustible materials such as paper for recycling or washing outside your home.
- leave door keys in hiding places such as under a door mat. Thieves know all the hiding places.
- leave a window open a few inches for the cat to get in or out. Burglars find this very useful too.
- leave ladders around. If you must leave them outside make sure they are padlocked to something secure.

## Useful Contacts

### Merseyside Police

Reporting anti-social behaviour or firework misuse:

Call: **101**

Facebook: **Merseyside Police CC**

Twitter: **@MerPolCC**

Visit: **[www.merseyside.police.uk/](http://www.merseyside.police.uk/)**

### Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Reporting the build-up of illegal bonfires on public land:

Call: **0800 731 5958** (between 10am and 4pm)

Visit: **[www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk)**

For more information, please visit:

**[www.sthelens.gov.uk/goodguy](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/goodguy)**



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Contact Centre

Wesley House  
Corporation Street  
St Helens  
WA10 1HF

**Tel:** 01744 676789

**Minicom:** 01744 671671

→ [www.sthelens.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/contactus)

Please contact us to request translation of Council information into Braille, audio tape or a foreign language.

Be a  
**GoodGuy**  
Prevent, Educate, Celebrate

Celebrating safely &  
legally this autumn.



**ST HELENS**  
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Safer!  
st.helens

## Legal Bonfires

**There are no laws against having a bonfire on your own land, but there are laws for the nuisance they can cause:**

- You cannot get rid of household waste if it will cause pollution or harm people's health. This includes burning it. You can get rid of household or garden waste by composting or recycling it.
- You could be fined if you have a bonfire and allow the smoke to drift across the road and become a danger to traffic.

## Private Parties

**Although we always recommend attending an organised display, if you do decide to have your own private party, here's some advice:**

- Warn your neighbours beforehand - so they are aware and can make necessary preparations.
- Only burn dry material, do not burn anything which is wet or damp, this causes more smoke.
- Check there are no cables (telephone wires etc.) above the bonfire.
- Build the bonfire well away from buildings, sheds, fences and trees.
- Do not use petrol or paraffin to start the fire - it can get out of control quickly.
- If you are planning a bonfire in your garden and live in a rented property (private or social landlord), you should get permission from them to do so.

**Once the bonfire is lit, make sure you:**

- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose nearby - in case of emergencies.
- Do not leave the bonfire unattended.
- Keep children and pets away from the bonfire.
- Do not throw any fireworks into the fire.
- Once the bonfire has died down, spray the embers with water to stop it reigniting and ensure it is completely extinguished.

## Illegal Bonfires

Lighting a bonfire in a public place is illegal. A public place is anywhere other than your own back garden, and includes streets, parks, playgrounds & grassland.

### What is the danger?

- Illegal bonfires can easily spread, especially if lit closely to nearby buildings, trees, fences and other flammable obstructions.
- Illegal bonfires are not regulated and may contain plastics, rubber or painted materials which produce toxic fumes once lit - endangering health.
- Lighting an illegal bonfire in a public place can prevent the fire service from attending to other serious emergencies - putting lives at risk.

**Did you know?**  
On grassland, fire can travel up to a speed of 14mph!

### What are the consequences of building an illegal bonfire?

Those caught building illegal bonfires could face:

- Criminal prosecution.
- A fixed penalty notice or on the spot fine.
- An acceptable behaviour contract.
- A civil injunction.

### Don't let other people put you, or your family, in danger.

If you know of anybody damaging your area to build illegal bonfires, call **Merseyside Police on 101** (in an emergency call **999**). Also consider reporting this to your housing provider if you have one.

### Help Prevent Illegal Bonfires

Report the build-up of illegal bonfires for removal before they have a chance to endanger your community. Call **Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on 0800 731 5958** (between 10am and 4pm)

## Fireworks - The Law

- It is an offence (punishable by fine) to let fireworks off in a public place.
- The age limit for buying most fireworks is 18.
- All sparkler packets must carry the parental warning: 'Warning: not to be given to children under five years of age'.
- It is against the law to sell or supply bangers, aerial shells, mini rockets and some types of bigger roman candles to the public. Some fireworks, such as party poppers, can be sold to people over 16 years of age.
- It is illegal for shopkeepers to break open retail packets of fireworks and sell them individually. This is because the instructions are printed on the packet and not on the individual fireworks. Fireworks for individual sale do not come in packs.

## The Firework Code

- Only buy fireworks marked BS 7114.
- Don't drink alcohol if setting off fireworks.
- Keep fireworks in a closed box.
- Follow the instructions on each firework.
- Light them at arm's length, using a taper.
- Stand well back.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode.
- Never put fireworks in your pocket or throw them.
- Always supervise children around fireworks.
- Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- Never give sparklers to a child under five.
- Keep pets indoors.
- Don't let off fireworks after 11pm, (except for Bonfire Night, when the cut off is midnight and New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, when the cut off is 1am).