

Bonfires

Bonfires are controlled outdoor fires as part of a celebration only. Follow the guidance below to ensure your bonfire doesn't pose a risk to people and properties. Before you light your fire

Check the fire season - Visit [checkitsalright.nz](https://www.fireandemergency.nz/checkitsalright) to find out the current fire season for the area where you plan your bonfire. You will be prompted to apply for a fire permit if one is required. Bonfires are not allowed in a **prohibited** fire season. You must have a permit to light campfires in a **restricted** fire season.



Open fire season

Fires are allowed, but **must be safe**



Restricted fire season

Fires may be allowed **with a permit**



Prohibited fire season

No fires allowed.

Weather - Check the latest weather and wind speed and direction. Only light your fire when there is little or no wind forecast.

Select the right spot - Select a sheltered site at least 10 to 30 metres from, and downwind of shelter belts, hedges, fences, buildings, neighbouring properties or anything else that could catch alight and burn. Build your bonfire several days before you light it. Cover it, and leave it to dry out.

Smoke - Make sure smoke from the bonfire will not be a nuisance to your neighbours or affect visibility for road or air traffic.

Neighbours - You may choose to let your neighbours know the date and time of your fire as a courtesy. Letting them know about your fire might avoid unnecessary emergency calls to Fire and Emergency.

Extinguish - Have a way to put out your bonfire when you are finished, if it gets out-of-control, or if any embers or burning material escapes. This could include a hose, water sprayer, a shovel and dirt or a mechanical digger. These must be within easy reach.

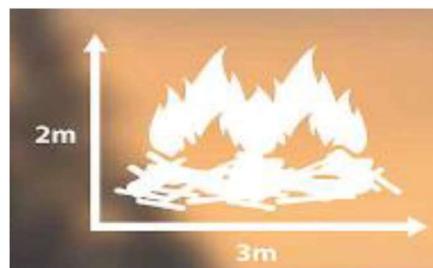
Insurance - Make sure you have enough insurance cover for property loss and public liability.

Don't light your bonfire if you have any doubts that it is safe.

When your fire is lit

Lighting your fire - Never use accelerants such as petrol to start your fire. These release highly flammable vapours that can explode.

Fuel - Make sure you burn clean dry wood or vegetation on your bonfire. Never burn green vegetation, stumps, large diameter logs and soil content within your piles.



Establish a safety zone - 'Damp down' a 3-metre area around the bonfire, to prevent any unplanned fires. The fire should not exceed 2 metres high x 3 metres wide.

A fire of this size should be sited 15 to 30 metres away downwind of shelter belts, hedges, fences, buildings, neighbouring properties. Smaller fires require less distance.

Supervise - At least one person equipped with a shovel must monitor fire at all times. Have a 'no go zone' around the bonfire to keep children and pets safe.

Weather - If a change in the wind direction or speed makes your fire unsafe — put it out.

Be responsible - You're responsible for controlling any fire you light. You need to be able to take charge if there's an emergency and should not be impaired.

After your fire

Extinguish - Your fire must be completely extinguished before leaving the area. Mix up the water with ashes and embers with a shovel and repeat these steps until the fire is completely out.

Monitor - Keep an eye on your bonfire for two days after you put it out.

Dial 111 immediately in an emergency. Anything that could cause loss of life, serious injury or loss of property is a fire emergency.

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