

Safely using your chiminea

Chimineas are self-contained outdoor fires used for warmth. They are often made of clay or metal and use wood or charcoal as fuel. You don't need a fire permit to use your chiminea if you follow the guidance below.

Before you light your fire

Other agency requirements - Check council websites for air quality rules, restrictions including air shed zones and smoke nuisance guidelines. Chimineas are **not permitted** on Public Conservation Lands.

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

Smoke - Place your chiminea so that smoke won't impact others. A layer of gravel or sand in the bottom of the chiminea will help force smoke up the chimney.

Safety zone - Put your chiminea on a stable, level, non-flammable surface such as a metal tray, gravel, concrete or dirt. Keep your chiminea more than three metres from buildings and anything else that could catch alight and burn, e.g. plants, grasses, or branches.

Extinguish - Keep a garden hose turned on or buckets of water within five metres of your chiminea. You need to be ready to put out your fire and extinguish any hot embers that escape.

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

When your fire is lit

Fuel - Only burn clean, dry untreated wood or charcoal. Never burn rubbish, plastic, rubber or treated wood. These produce toxic fumes which are harmful to your health and the environment.

Fire control - Your fire should be less than 0.5m² or 80 cm diameter. Load small amounts of wood at a time and don't move the chiminea when it's in use.

Supervise - Ensure someone stays with the chiminea until it's put out. Have a 'no go zone' to keep children and pets safe.

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

Be responsible - You need to be able to take charge if there's an emergency, and should not be impaired.

After your fire

Extinguish - Leave the fire to burn out. Cover the opening with a mesh screen so sparks, embers, or burnt wood don't escape and start a fire. When cool carefully place ashes and embers into a metal container and saturate with water.

Stir them and check they are cold before you properly dispose of them. Extinguished coals and ashes should be placed a safe distance from all structures and combustible materials.



Store - If you store your chiminea inside, let it cool down completely before storing.

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

Related content

Learn more about how to stay safe on the Fire and Emergency New Zealand website.

- [Fire Types](#)
- [Urban home fire safety checklist](#)
- [Rural home fire safety checklist](#)
- Fire seasons and permits: visit checkitsalright.nz