

Fire pits and bowls

Home-made or manufactured fire pits (or bowls) are either in, or above the ground and use charcoal or wood as fuel for warmth.

Follow the guidance below to ensure your fire pit/bowl doesn't pose a risk to people and properties.

Before you light your fire

Check the fire season - Visit checkitsalright.nz to find out the current fire season for the area where you plan to camp. You will be prompted to apply for a fire permit if one is required. Campfires are not allowed in a **prohibited** fire season. You must have a permit to light campfires in a **restricted** fire season. When your fire is lit



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.

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

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

Smoke - Place your pit so that smoke won't impact others.

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

Don't light your pit 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 pit when it's in use.

Supervise - Ensure someone stays with the pit 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 pit 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 pit 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