



A Message from Cork County Fire Service



Summer Fire Safety

Barbeque Safety

Having a barbeque should be a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. But cooking over hot coals can be hazardous. It's easy to be distracted when you have family and friends around you whilst cooking.

- Make sure that your barbeque is in good working order.
- Keep a bucket of water, a bucket of sand or a garden hose nearby in case of emergencies.
- Make sure your site is flat and well away from sheds, fences, trees and shrubs.
- Use only enough charcoal to cover the base of the barbeque to a depth of about 50mm (two inches).
- Keep children, garden games and pets well away from the cooking area.
- When you've finished cooking, make sure the barbeque is cool before trying to move it. Empty ashes onto bare garden soil.
- Never leave the barbeque unattended.
- Never put ashes straight into a dustbin or wheelie bin.
- If they're hot, they can melt the plastic and cause a fire.
- **Remember – Barbeques should never be lit indoors!**
- **Enjoy yourself, but remember – too much alcohol and fire never mix!**

Gas Barbeques

- Bottled gas barbeques need special care when being turned on and off.
- Make sure the tap is turned off before changing the gas cylinder.
- Change gas cylinders in the open air if possible or open doors and windows to provide good ventilation.
- When you've finished cooking, turn off the gas cylinder before you turn off the barbeque controls, to ensure any gas in the pipeline is used up.
- Store gas cylinders outside.
- Keep gas cylinders away from frost and direct sunlight.

Barbeque gone out?

- **Never use petrol or paraffin to start or revive your barbeque.**
- **Use only recognised lighters or starter fuel, on cold coals.**

Gorse Fires

Over the last few years firefighters from Cork County Fire Services have attended a large number of gorse fires each year, and an alarming percentage of these fires are started deliberately.

Gorse fires are at their most devastating during periods of hot and sunny weather when the grass and undergrowth is particularly dry. Fire can travel through gorse and dry undergrowth at astounding speed. Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts restricts the cutting, grubbing, burning or destruction of vegetation growing on uncultivated land or in hedges or ditches during the nesting and breeding season for birds and wildlife, from 1 March to 31 August. The forest fire danger rating can be found on <https://www.teagasc.ie/crops/forestry/forest-fire-risk/>

Consequences of uncontrolled fires

Uncontrolled gorse fires threaten property, livelihood as well as leisure activities such as camping and caravanning. But as well as being potentially fatal to humans, the fires threaten wildlife and many areas of beauty across the county.

How to prevent wild fires

- **Fires** – Don't light fires without checking the forest fire danger rating.
- **Smoking**- If out walking or having a picnic, be sure to dispose of cigarettes and other smoking materials carefully and ensure that they are fully extinguished.
- **Barbeques**- On most lands, it is actually illegal to light any fire, including barbeques, without the permission of the landowner.
- **Litter**- Please take your litter home with you. Even a discarded glass bottle can start a fire.
- **Young People** - Please educate children about the devastating consequences of causing fires.

What to do if a fire does break out in the countryside

- Call the Fire Service without delay on 112/999
- Keep well away from the fire - gorse fires can spread fast
- Only attempt to put it out if you are certain it is safe to do so
- If you have livestock which may be affected, prepare to evacuate them if necessary