

Bonfire and Firework Displays

Bonfire and Firework Events

If you do decide to hold an event this will require careful consideration and planning. The event organiser, who may also be the duty holder under health and safety law, has a legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare not only of any employees, but also other persons who could be affected by the activity such as the public. Please find enclosed information sheets which you may find useful.

In 2018 the CBI Explosives Industry Group took over publication of existing guidance for firework displays from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). They published the Red Guide 'Giving your own firework display' which replaced HSG 124. There is also now a Blue Guide 'Working Together on Firework Displays' (for those using a professional company to carry out the display for the event organiser) which replaced HSG 123. The guides illustrate, amongst other things, the space dimensions required for giving a firework display.

The document is free to download at: www.eig2.org.uk/new-guides-for-firework-displays/.

Unless you have the necessary knowledge, space and competence you should not consider having a firework display or bonfire event. However, if you still wish to hold such an event, space permitting, you must be either competent to do it yourself or consult a suitably competent person with the required expertise to operate a safe event.

If you proceed with an event which has a bonfire, please carefully consider its location to avoid damage to nearby property, ensure adequate barriers to prevent public access to the fire, ensure that it does not block or restrict any escape routes and only use clean wood. Under no circumstances should tyres, upholstered items, materials containing tar, chemicals or flammable substances etc. be burned.

Safety Advisory Group

Walsall Council also provides advice and guidance through its Safety Advisory Group. Information in relation to this Group and the size and nature of events it will consider can be found at www.walsall.gov.uk/event_planning. The 'application form' is a useful guide and provides assistance for the development of an event manual and the legal requirements associated with holding an event, however it has not been updated to include any Covid-19 controls as yet, so you will need to consult the relevant Gov.uk guidelines to assist you with that part of the event safety management system.

I hope that you find this information of use.

GUIDANCE ON BONFIRES

Location of Bonfire: -

- Downwind of spectators.
- Downwind of any firing site for fireworks.
- At least 15m from buildings, roads, footpaths, trees and shrubs etc.
- At a safe distance from flammable materials.
- Away from overhead power lines.
- Ensure that it will not affect the visibility of any vehicle roadways.

Crowd Safety: -

- Suitable continuous barriers at a distance of 1.5 x height of bonfire to be provided.
- Adequate number of easily identifiable safety marshals to be provided.
- Procedures put in place to prevent individual groups from mingling re Covid-19 risk.
- Access for emergency vehicles to be available.
- Two clear spectator exits to be provided depending upon the size of the event.
- Adequate firefighting facilities to be provided.
- First Aid Kit plus responsible person to be provided.

General Matters: -

- To be supervised at all times.
- To be constructed of wood – not upholstery, tyres and other materials which give off noxious fumes.
- To be stacked soundly and of manageable size.
- No accelerants to be used when lighting bonfire.
- Bonfire to be properly extinguished at end of evening.
- You must take account of the prevailing wind direction to prevent dangerous fallout from either the bonfire or the effect on aerial fireworks.
- Do not permit Chinese Lanterns or sparklers. They seem harmless fun, but cause serious burns to vulnerable people, children etc if improperly handled.

GUIDANCE ON FIREWORK DISPLAYS

Site Layout: -

- Ensure sufficient space available:
 - Aerial fireworks: minimum area of 100m x 95m required, which includes a fall out area of 50 x 100m for fireworks to land.
 - Non aerial fireworks: minimum area of 100m x 65m required.

NB. The above dimensions do not include your spectator area. Please ensure that the above dimensions are clear of buildings, roadways and public rights of way and are under your control. You can only fire fireworks where the site is suitable for your display, and a review of the individual fireworks is undertaken to ensure this.

- Ensure that there are no buildings, vehicles or accumulations of flammable materials within 25m of the display.
- Spectators must not be permitted within 25m of the firing zone. Place aerial fireworks at the rear of the firing site and angle them away from the crowd, between 5 - 15° off the perpendicular.
- Ensure that the smoke from the fireworks will not affect any vehicle roadways.

Crowd Safety: -

- Provide a physical barrier between spectators and the firework display.
- Provide an adequate number of safety marshals. (1 marshal: 250 spectators)
- Provide access for emergency vehicles. Provide adequate firefighting equipment. Provide a First Aid Kit plus responsible person.

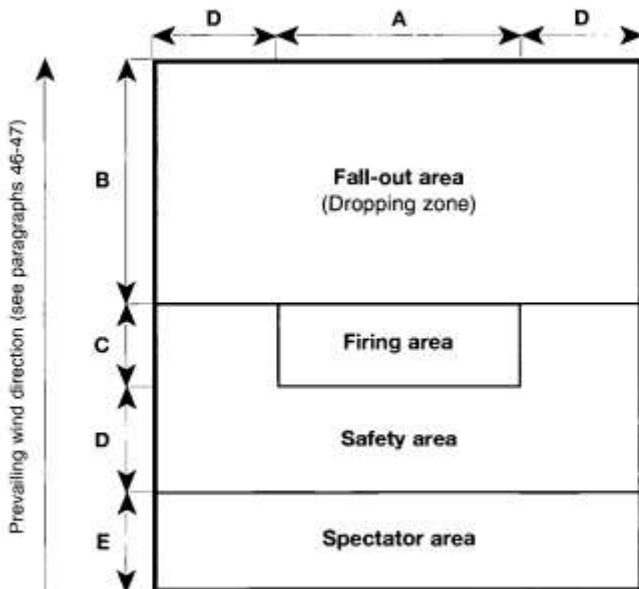
General Matters: -

- Fireworks are classified into four categories. You may fire Categories 1-3, but Category 4 fireworks are prohibited, and you can only fire fireworks where the area is suitable.

NB. Category 4 fireworks can include anything which is unlabelled, has been tampered with or is damaged.

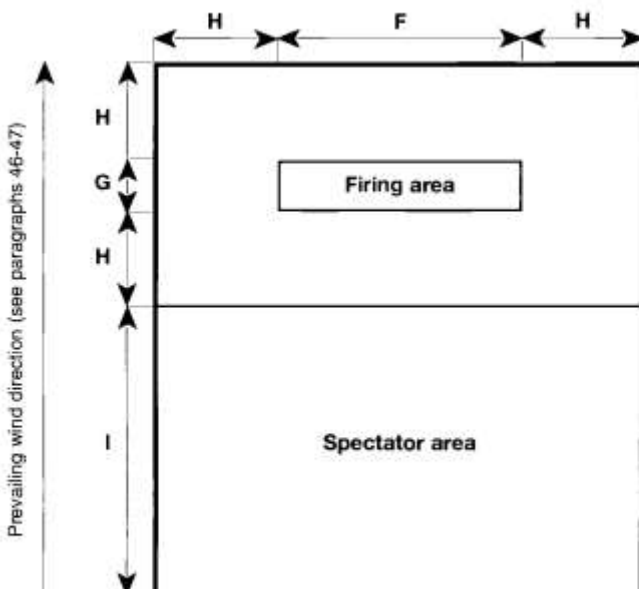
- Make one person responsible for firing the fireworks. Read the instructions very carefully. Provide them with appropriate protective equipment and do not permit them to smoke in the firing area. Read all instructions carefully.
- Leave misfired or partly spent fireworks for 30 minutes, then soak in a bucket of water before disposal.
- As the operator of the event it is your legal duty to carry out a risk assessment and to document it. You must ensure that all employees and marshals are suitably trained and familiar with their duties.

The above guidance is a general list of information which needs consideration and is not a comprehensive list. You should always carry out a suitable risk assessment and consult all relevant guidance. Health and Safety remains the responsibility of the business duty holder.



	A	B	C	D	E
Minimum distance (metres)	50	50	20	25	As required, to prevent overcrowding
Bonfire area					
Locate this anywhere, provided it is:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ at least 15 m from other areas, buildings, roads, railways and public rights of way ■ a safe distance from flammable or otherwise dangerous materials (eg petrol, fuel oil, liquefied petroleum gas) and overhead electric power lines, and ■ downwind of spectators 					

Figure 1a Site layout for displays including aerial fireworks (ie including rockets, mines or Roman candles)



	F	G	H	I
Minimum distance (metres)	50	15	25	As required, to prevent overcrowding
Bonfire area				
Locate this anywhere, provided it is:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ at least 15 m from other areas, buildings, roads, railways and public rights of way ■ a safe distance from flammable or otherwise dangerous materials (eg petrol, fuel oil, liquefied petroleum gas) and overhead electric power lines, and ■ downwind of spectators 				

Figure 1b Site layout for displays without aerial fireworks (ie without rockets, mines or Roman candles)