



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE**

Westbury Area Board Report 25th July 2019

Barbecues



Barbecues are great when the sun is shining and you have friends and family to visit, but they do carry a fire risk. Always position the barbecue on a level site, away from wooden fencing, sheds and hedges.

- Don't place the barbecue on dry grass or vegetation.
- Use firelighters or barbecue fuel to light the coals – NEVER use petrol or paraffin.
- Keep children and pets well away from the cooking area and never leave the barbecue unattended.
- Be careful when grilling fatty foods, as the fat can cause the coals to flare up.
- Don't move the barbecue until it is completely cool, and make sure any remaining charcoal is cold before disposing of it carefully. Ideally use water to damp down the ashes.
- If using a disposable barbecue, make sure it is completely cold before disposal.
- NEVER dispose of hot barbecue ashes in plastic rubbish bins as this can easily start a fire.
- Always have a bucket of water or garden hose to hand in case a barbecue gets out of hand.
- Make sure the controls and cylinder valves of a gas barbecue are turned off before you change the cylinder, which should be done in a well ventilated area. Always check the connections for leaks.
- Store gas cylinders outside and protect them from direct sunlight and frost.
- Make sure your gas barbecue is correctly serviced and that all joints are tightened, safe and secure.
- Never use a barbecue indoors or inside a tent, as they produce potentially lethal carbon monoxide.

Bonfires and garden safety



Bonfires are very common in the summer, but they can get out of control very easily. If you want to burn off garden waste, here's some safety advice:

- Site any bonfire well away from buildings, fences, trees and garden structures.
- Have a garden hose to hand in case the fire starts to get out of control.
- Don't light a bonfire on a windy day, as it could flare up more than you expect.
- Be courteous to your neighbours – if you're planning a substantial bonfire, let them know, and stay with it at all times to ensure that it remains safe.
- If you're intending to have a large bonfire, please advise Fire Control on 0306 799 0019 or use our [on-line form](#) – we often receive emergency calls from people who can see lots of smoke, and it helps us to know where this could be a controlled burn.
- Never use flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin to start a bonfire.

Garden equipment

- Refill garden heaters, petrol mowers etc in the open air and don't smoke while doing so.
- Deal with any fuel spillage by allowing it to evaporate, soak into the ground, or cover with an absorbent material.
- Take care when lighting garden heaters and never move when lit. Keep away from flammable materials, such as awnings or laundry lines.
- When using candles or flares, make sure they are firmly packed into the ground.
- Keep children and pets away from naked flames and hot lanterns.
- Make sure any candles, flares and lanterns are fully extinguished when you have finished with them.



Camping and caravanning



Whether you're out and about in a camper van, towing your caravan or sleeping under canvas for your holidays, venturing into the great outdoors can carry risks.

When you're on a campsite, make sure there's at least six metres (20ft) between caravans and/or tents and that you're away from parked cars – this will reduce the risk of any fire spreading. If mobile phone signal is poor, make sure you know where the nearest payphone is.

Never use barbecues inside or near the entrance to your tent or caravan, either for cooking or as a heat source – the carbon monoxide they produce is lethal.

Camping

A fire can destroy a tent in just a minute, so make sure you:

- Never use candles in or near the tent – torches are safer.
- Keep cooking stoves and barbecues away from the tent walls, as they can catch light very easily.
- Know how to escape by cutting your way out of the tent, should there be a fire.
- Don't smoke inside your tent.

Caravans

- Take special care when cooking and don't leave pans unattended.
- Turn off all appliances when you go to bed.
- Never dry clothes over the stove.
- Remove any litter and rubbish near the caravan to reduce the risk of fire spreading.
- Make sure the caravan is well ventilated and never block air vents.
- If there is a fire extinguisher or fire blanket within the caravan, read the instructions so you know what to do in the event of fire.
- Keep flammable liquids, such as petrol and gas cylinders, outside and away from children.
- Make sure the gas pipe connection is secure. If you suspect a leak, turn off the main cylinder valve.

On-call firefighters



As a Service, we are reliant on on-call (retained) firefighters – almost two thirds of our operational staff work this duty system to keep our communities safe.

Follow the menu links to find out more about being an on-call firefighter, the process of applying, and what's expected of you if you succeed in your application.

On-call firefighters are part-time staff who make themselves available for emergency call-outs depending on their other commitments. They are usually contracted for between 48 and 120 hours per week, but this can vary. Between them, each fire station team will provide cover for weekdays, evenings, nights and weekends.

How many firefighters are on-call?

Some 60% of firefighters in Dorset and Wiltshire work on an on-call basis, making them hugely important to both the Service and the communities that they serve. Of our 50 stations, the majority are crewed only by on-call firefighters and on-call staff work alongside their wholetime colleagues at many of our other stations.

Who can be an on-call firefighter?

Our on-call staff come from all walks of life: they may be employed, self-employed, parents at home or students. Some work in building or allied trades, whilst others are shop assistants, farmers, typists, factory workers or managers.

What they all have in common is self-reliance, confidence, respect, enthusiasm, team spirit and a willingness to be ready for anything when they are alerted to an emergency.

On-call and wholetime firefighters are expected to meet the same entry standards and they receive the same training and development to enable them to work to common standards.



Who can apply?

You can find out more about the role and current vacancies through these pages, but key requirements for applicants are:

- You must be at least 18 years old when you join us (you can apply once you are 17½)
- You must be able to respond and attend the fire station within **five minutes** (this can vary slightly dependant on location)
- You must have a good standard of physical fitness
- You must have the right to work in the UK

If you are unsure if you can apply, please contact our HR team on 01722 691444 or email recruitment@dwfire.org.uk

Will you contact my main employer?

If you are currently employed, we will need your employer's consent in order for you to become an on-call firefighter, regardless of whether you intend to be available during working hours.

'Aspirational to Inspirational' is our introductory film on being a firefighter – well worth a watch.

Response

Figures for June 2019

Category	Total Incidents
No. of False Alarms	2
No. of Fires	5
No. of Road Traffic Collisions and other Emergencies	1
Total	8

There were a further 7 incidents that Westbury were unable to attend due to insufficient crewing that were attended by neighbouring stations

Community Engagement

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service provides a free service called a Safe and Well visit. We will visit a person's home by appointment and discuss any safety issues in the



home. We will also have a conversation about improving an individual's health and well-being.

The South West Wiltshire area has a dedicated Fire Service '**Safe and Well**' advisor who can visit people, within their own homes, advising on home safety and wellbeing.

A Safe and Well visit is **FREE** and normally lasts about one hour covering topics such as:

- Using electricity safely
- Cooking safely
- Making an escape plan
- What to do if there is a fire
- Keeping children safe
- Good practice – night time routine and other points relevant to you
- Identifying and discussing any further support the occupier may need

If you have thatch property, are living alone, have a young family, are over 65 or a smoker please get in contact with us. We want to help make you safer in your own home. If you or someone you know has mobility or sight and hearing impairments, please suggest a Safe and Well visit.

If you or someone you know need a smoke alarm, some advice or are worried about what to do in an emergency, contact us for a free Safe and Well visit;

<http://www.dwfire.org.uk/safety/safe-and-well-visits/>

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