

## **Launch of Summer Fire Safety Campaign**

A campaign to highlight the grass fire risk posed during warm summer months has been launched by firefighters in Northamptonshire.

Last year Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) attended 378 fires affecting grassland, woodland and crops in areas ranging from people's gardens to roadside vegetation and farmland.

NFRS launched its Summer Fire Safety Campaign to highlight the fire risks posed during hot, dry weather and promote the safety steps people can take to prevent blazes breaking out.

The launch was held at Brixworth Country Park where a fire broke out last year in a composting area, which it is believed could have been caused by a barbecue thrown away while still hot. The fire damaged the composting area and surrounding fencing.

**Steven Swan, NFRS risk intelligence officer, said:** *"The British weather can be very hard to predict and periods of heavy rain can very easily be followed by prolonged periods of hot, dry weather. What so many people do not recognise is the difference a change in weather makes to the conditions in the environment around them. Grass and shrubbery can become tinder dry, which means fire can take hold and spread more easily.*

*"We would ask people to please respect their environment and think twice about where and how they use barbecues or put out cigarettes."*

Last summer, Northamptonshire experienced long stretches of hot, dry weather which made grass, trees and shrubbery across the county extremely dry. Although there have been recent periods of heavy rain in Northamptonshire, a hot spell of weather has been predicted and NFRS are keen to encourage people to think about fire prevention in the coming summer months.

In the last 10 years, NFRS attended 3676 fires in farmland, gardens, woodland and cropland.

**District Liaison Officer Tina Collett said:** *"We would like to use this opportunity to remind people about how they can help prevent potentially serious fires from breaking out in Northamptonshire's areas of countryside, parks and in their own gardens.*

*"If going out and about to have a barbecue, make sure you only use safe, designated areas and, when disposing of a barbecue, make sure it is cold and thoroughly extinguished. Barbecues can remain hot for a surprising amount of time.*

*"We want people to enjoy their summer, but also to take steps to ensure they are keeping themselves and the countryside safe."*

### **Summer safety prevention messages:**

- Only have barbecues in designated areas and avoid setting any open fires in the countryside.
- Always stay with a barbecue and do not leave it unattended. Never use accelerants such as petrol or paraffin on or near barbecues or fires.
- Whether at home or elsewhere, make sure barbecues are kept away from sheds, fences, trees, shrubs or garden waste.

- Avoid setting fire to garden waste.
- Barbecues can remain hot for a very long time. Ensure they are cold and have been extinguished properly before disposal. Keeping a bucket of water handy, or having a garden hose nearby is a useful precaution.
- Do not empty ashes into dustbins or wheelie bins. If they're hot, they can melt plastic and start a fire.
- In hot, sunny conditions, glass items like bottles can start fires if left in the sun. If having a picnic, it's best to take bottles and jars home and recycle them properly.
- Make sure cigarettes are extinguished properly. Never throw cigarettes out of car windows, they can ruin whole fields of crops.
- NFRS recommend you do not use sky lanterns. People have no control over them once they've been set off. They can litter the countryside and even start fires.
- If you see a fire in the countryside, please alert the emergency services by ringing 999.



**Think HEAT  
Think DRY  
Think FIRE**

**Don't throw cigarettes on the ground or out of car windows**



**When conditions are dry, this can lead to serious grass fires**



**#ThinkHeatThinkDryThinkFire**

**Think HEAT  
Think DRY  
Think FIRE**

**Carry on camping but remember...**



**...never cook or use candles in or near a tent**



**#ThinkHeatThinkDryThinkFire**

**Think HEAT  
Think DRY  
Think FIRE**

**Don't let your caravan holiday go up in smoke**



**Never use a cooker or heater while a vehicle is moving and turn off all appliances before you leave or go to bed**



**#ThinkHeatThinkDryThinkFire**

**Think HEAT  
Think DRY  
Think FIRE**

**Sizzle sausages not shrubbery at your barbecue**



**Keep barbecues away from sheds, fences, trees, shrubs or garden waste**



**#ThinkHeatThinkDryThinkFire**