

## Burning of waste on campfires and bonfires

**If you comply with the requirements below, we will allow the burning of waste on campfires at Scout and Guide centres and Guy Fawkes' night bonfires.**

### Background

The open burning of waste can be an offence under environmental legislation<sup>1</sup> because the uncontrolled and excessive burning of the wrong wastes can cause pollution and harm health. So having a campfire at a Scout and Guide centre or a Guy Fawkes' bonfire could in principle face prosecution.

We recognise that certain traditional cultural events need to be upheld so at the request of the Association of Scout and Guide Centres we have expanded our original Guy Fawkes' night bonfire position to include their activities. This is aimed at helping to ensure the spirit of such events can continue to be enjoyed whilst minimising their impact on the environment.

### Environment Agency's position

We will not pursue an application for an environmental permit for the activity where:

- the burning of waste is for a traditional cultural event such as campfires at Scout and Guide centres and Guy Fawkes' night bonfires;
- the waste is kept securely before being burnt;
- the material being kept and burned is suitable for purpose (i.e. untreated wood, branches, and small amounts of leaves, card and paper and not plastics, rubber, glass, metal etc);
- the size of the bonfire or campfire is appropriate for the event;
- the location is appropriate and does not indicate the involvement of waste operators in the course of, or as a result of, their waste business;
- the activity does not risk or cause pollution or endanger human health.

### Enforcement

In not pursuing an application for a permit, this means we will not normally take enforcement action unless the activity has caused, or is likely to cause, pollution or harm to health. For a more detailed explanation of this enforcement position, please refer to the public interest factors in *Guidance for the Enforcement and Prosecution Policy*. This document can be found on the 'How we regulate you' page in the Business & Industry section of our website.

This regulatory position will be reviewed by October 2011.

MWRP RPS 050  
Version:1  
Issued: November 2009

<sup>1</sup> the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2007