

Firework Noise Guidance

Fireworks are widely used to mark public and private celebrations, especially around Bonfire Night and New Years Eve.

What laws cover nuisance and danger caused by fireworks?

If a local authority officer judges noise from fireworks to be a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, they can issue an abatement notice.

However, as firework noise is short lived, in practice it can prove difficult to locate the source.

Under The Anti-Social Behaviour Acts local authorities have the power to issue an anti-social behaviour order to anyone causing 'harassment, alarm or distress'. Disobeying an order carries a prison sentence of up to 5 years.

When can I use fireworks?

These regulations also prohibit the use of fireworks at night (11pm – 7am) in England and Wales, with extensions for the following festivals:

- Until 1.00am on the night of the Chinese New Year
- Until 1.00am on the night of Diwali
- Until 1.00am on New Years Eve
- Until midnight on 5 November

Avoid firework frights

Fireworks don't have to be ear splitting to be fun. We can enjoy them in safety, without causing annoyance to neighbours and their pets and livestock, or to wildlife. If you have your own firework display, remember these simple guidelines:

- Tell neighbours – particularly important if they are elderly, have children or pets
- Use appropriate fireworks – when buying fireworks try to avoid really noisy ones. Your supplier should be able to tell you what they are selling
- Make sure pets and other animals are safely away from fireworks
- Consider timing – if you are using fireworks for a celebration a Friday or Saturday is preferable, and make sure they are over by 11pm
- Avoid setting off fireworks in unsuitable weather – if it is still and misty or air quality is poor, pollution could be a problem. Strong winds can be hazardous. Let off your

fireworks in an open garden area – noise bounces off buildings and smoke and pollution can build up in enclosed spaces

- If a neighbour complains that you are disturbing them, their pets or livestock, be considerate
- After your display, clear up firework fallout and dispose of it safely

By virtue of the cost of fireworks, few firework events last long enough to allow officers to reach them before they (and the evidence would we need) are over.

For information on firework safety contact the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, who co-ordinate national firework safety campaigns:

Address:

Department for Business,
Enterprise and Regulatory Reform,
1 Victoria Street,
London,
SW1H 0ET.

Phone: 020 7215 5000

Email: enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk