

Outdoor Burning

Your Responsibilities

March 2007

Air pollution has become a major problem in Auckland. Each year millions of tonnes of pollutants are released into the air – as smoke, dust or invisible gases. Unpleasant smells, hazy days, damage to our health, environment, plants, buildings and property can all be caused by pollutants in the air.

Smoke can harm us!

The chemicals and tiny particles in smoke can make us sick, and even cause premature death. People can get irritation of the eyes, coughs and a runny nose. Asthma, heart and lung problems can also be aggravated by smoke.

Burning creates harmful gases such as dioxins, which cause cancer in humans and animals. Dioxins accumulate in our bodies, and can affect our immune and reproductive system, cause liver damage and even birth defects. In Auckland, domestic burning is a large source of dioxins. Burning plastics, oil, batteries, appliances, paint and chemicals is particularly bad because they contain many other harmful chemicals as well.

Every year the Auckland Region has around 3,000 air pollution complaints, with 70% of these related to outdoor burning. Each fire contributes to the 22,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) discharged into the air annually from waste and adds to the global warming problem.

The Law

Outdoor burning is known to have an adverse effect on the environment as well as potentially causing a nuisance to neighbours. It is also an offence under the Resource Management Act (1991). Consequently, you could be fined or prosecuted for burning rubbish or other materials outdoors.

You are NOT allowed to burn!

You are not allowed to light fires or burn anything outdoors in urban areas, whether it is in the open, in a drum, or an incinerator, unless the purpose of the fire is to cook food, such as a barbecue, hangi or umu, or for heating, such as an outdoor fireplace or brazier. Under no circumstances are you allowed to burn any kind of waste.



Having a Hangi, Umu or Barbecue? Then please remember these points:

- ☑ DO use only clean burning, dry wood, and extinguish these fires after cooking.
- ☑ DO check with your local council to ensure a rural fire ban is not in place.
- ☒ DO NOT light fires within 3 metres of property boundaries, buildings, trees, hedges and shrubs.
- ☒ DO NOT burn plastics, tyres, rubbish, used oil, treated wood, paint, appliances, chemicals, or construction or demolition waste.
- ☒ DO NOT light fires on reserves, beaches or coastal areas.
- ☒ DO NOT cause a nuisance to your neighbours.

Why burn your rubbish when there are so many other ways of getting rid of it?

Garden waste & food scraps

- Compost as much as you can! It benefits your garden and the environment.
- Garden waste collection companies will collect your green waste for their composts. Look under 'Garden Bags & Bins' in the Yellow Pages.

Old paints, oils, thinners, batteries and other household hazardous wastes

- Don't put these in with your rubbish because they can harm the environment when they go to the landfill.
- The HazMobile is a free mobile collection service provided by the ARC and your local councils. Check online at www.hazmobile.govt.nz or phone 09 366 2000 to find out when the HazMobile will be in your area and what it can collect.



Extra household rubbish and building wastes

- Take extra household rubbish and building wastes that do not fit in your weekly collection to your local refuse transfer station or contact a waste collection company. Look under 'Waste Disposal' in the Yellow Pages.

Contact the Auckland Regional Council for more advice on where to safely dispose of all types of wastes. Visit our website at www.arc.govt.nz or call us on 09 366 2000.

Sort it out!

Why worry about how to get rid of your rubbish when you can create less to begin with?

REDUCE your waste by:

- ☑ Buying only what you need.
- ☑ Buying products with less packaging.
- ☑ Buying in bulk to cut down on packaging.
- ☑ Buying durable products rather than disposable ones.

REUSE useful things such as glass and plastic containers, plastic bags, etc.

RECYCLE – Always! As much as 55% of your waste can be re-processed into new goods.

For more information or to report air pollution, phone 09 366 2000

FOR WAYS TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT, JOIN THE BIG CLEAN UP,
www.arc.govt.nz OR PHONE 0800 JOIN IN (56 46 46)

