

Halloween Safety Statement

During the "run-up" to Halloween, Carlow Gardaí, Carlow Fire Service and Carlow County Council are warning about the serious dangers associated with fireworks and Bonfires.

Each year, Accident and Emergency departments are filled with children who receive horrific and painful injuries as a result of the misuse of fireworks and bonfires.

Hazardous Materials like tyres, aerosols, foam filled furniture and batteries will behave erratically and cause toxic fumes which is bad for our health, especially for asthma sufferers and those with respiratory diseases. Dangerous substances such as oil, petrol, diesel and spray cans are often used and result in terrible injuries, including burns, loss of limbs and serious eye injuries.

It should be borne in mind that the sale, possession or use of fireworks in this country is illegal. It should be also noted that it is illegal to possess any fireworks that may have been legally purchased outside of the jurisdiction and then brought into the State. Many of the fireworks that are offered for sale illegally here have not passed any quality control tests and are possibly defective. The Gardaí will confiscate any fireworks found in the possession of persons and such persons are also liable to prosecution.

In addition, there is a specific offence under law for throwing any ignited fireworks in public places. Apart from the risk of injury, fireworks can cause great distress and annoyance to elderly residents. They can also cause great distress to family pets and animals. Finally, there is always the possibility of outbreaks of fire in property if fireworks such as 'rockets' continue to burn after landing. All of this causes unnecessary extra demands on Gardaí, Fire Service and Local Authority resources.

The ongoing issues presented by the COVID 19 pandemic will have a significant effect on traditional Halloween celebrations this year. Chief Medical Officer Dr Tony Holohan has advised that public gatherings should be avoided, and children and families should not move between houses trick-or-treating in the way that normally happens at Halloween.

Tips for a safe Halloween:

- We ask Parents, businesses and households to be vigilant and to ensure that material is not left lying around that may be taken for a bonfire.
- If you see material such as pallets, tyres, old furniture or other combustible materials or waste being hoarded in advance of Halloween please contact Carlow County Council's waste enforcement section on environment@carlowcoco.ie
- Please adhere to national COVID 19 guidelines in relation to "trick or treat" visits, parties and events.
- Keep pets indoors on Halloween night.
- Do not buy, use or supply fireworks.
- Contact the Fire Brigade or County Council if you see a bonfire being built or lit close to buildings, trees, overhead cables, underground services or car parking areas.

Above All – Be Safe and Stay Safe