

10 August 2022

States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service is requesting the help of Islanders to reduce the risk of wildfires

The States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service (SJFRS) is urging Islanders to take action to prevent wildfires in the island.

The current hot weather and dry conditions are significantly increasing the risk with temperatures continuing to rise through the week. Because the ground is so dry, and with large amounts of gorse around the Island, a fire could catch easily and spread very quickly.

To help minimise the risk, SJFRS are requesting that Islanders refrain from having bonfires, campfires or burning garden waste in the current conditions.

Additionally, they're asking that when out in the countryside Islanders pick up all their rubbish and litter and take it home. Also, to be mindful of disposing of cigarettes and glass bottles carefully - glass can cause sun rays to magnify on dry grass and start a fire.

While not calling for Islanders to stop the use of barbecues, the Service is asking people to think very carefully about how they will avoid the risk of them causing a fire by, for example, keeping them far away from vegetation, including grass and, for disposable barbecues, cooling them thoroughly with water before throwing them in the bin.

Chief Fire Officer Paul Brown said: "We have lots of patches of gorse around Jersey which means these areas are especially at risk. With the amount of dry fuel currently and a breeze, any fire that takes hold has a good chance of growing rapidly into an incredibly significant blaze.

We really need the help of Islanders to help us reduce the risk. As well as taking your litter home with you, don't smoke or use any naked flames near gorse or heathland. By following a few simple steps, we can all do our bit to protect nature and prevent fires."

If you see a wildfire in the countryside, you should:

- Call the Fire and Rescue Service immediately
- Don't try to tackle a fire (unless it can be put out with a bucket of water)
- Leave the area as quickly as possible

The current Jersey Met Fire Severity index is rated as 'very high'. This refers to the severity of a fire if it did start, not the likelihood of it starting.

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Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or pressoffice@gov.je