

Rescue Line 0300-10-26-999



- CHECK BEFORE YOU LIGHT - TOP 10 BONFIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR WILDLIFE

A pile of wood and leaves can look like a safe shelter to a hedgehog or other small animal. A few simple checks before lighting could save a life.

The safest choice: Build the bonfire on the day. If it has been standing, move the entire stack to clear ground before lighting.

Before you light it:

1

Relocate the entire bonfire before lighting whenever possible. This is the most reliable way to uncover hidden wildlife.

2

Lift sections with broom handles, look underneath with a torch and listen for movement or signs of life.

3

For larger bonfires, use a mesh fence with an outward overhang to help stop small mammals getting inside.

KEEP THE WHOLE AREA SAFE

Bonfires, fireworks, and wildlife

4

Never ignite the pile all the way round. Starting on one side gives hidden animals a possible escape route.

5

A week before building, move bird feeders and other wildlife food away from the planned bonfire site.

6

Position bonfires well away from overhanging trees, hedges, shrubs, sheds, and other places where wildlife may shelter.

7

Avoid fireworks where possible – they can be very frightening for wildlife. If you do use them, set them off away from trees, woodland and dense vegetation.

8

Place a hedgehog house or small hutch elsewhere, filled with clean straw, hay and hand-shredded paper as an alternative place to stay.

9

Have a bucket of water or hose nearby so the fire can be put out quickly if wildlife is found or an animal is burned.

10

Save the number of your local wildlife rescue before the event. Do not delay if an animal has been burned or injured.

If you find an injured animal: Do not put yourself at risk. Use gardening gloves or a towel to place the animal in a secure container. Contact your local wildlife rescue or emergency veterinary centre.

wildlifeambulance.org