

Important Information



Help keep your farm safe during heatwave!

Now the summer weather has well and truly arrived, we want to help you keep your farm safe from potential fires and help reduce the risk of arson.

We often see an increase in fires during the summer months. In the last week or so our crews have attended five incidents involving large fires in the open, requiring more than 30 fire engines with more than 140 firefighters for around 16 hours.



Since April last year, crews have attended more than 60 farmland fires, many involving stacked or bailed crops. Also around 30% of the fires attended involving farms were started deliberately.

The temperatures being predicted for the coming weeks are similar to the summer of 2018, when the weather was hot and dry for an extended period. Our crews were called to around 100 fires in open farmland, which not only destroyed crop but also pushed our firefighters to the limits with heat and the size and spread of the fires.

By taking some simple safety steps you can help protect your farm and prevent these fires from happening.

When the weather is hot, particularly in the middle of the day, please take extra care using farm machinery. The heat can easily spread and set areas of land alight, which will then take hold of large parts of a farm.

We also encourage farmers to regularly maintain and clean any machinery, especially before use, and to follow [the HSE guidance](#).

Top tips for preventing fires on your farm

Considerations when choosing where to stack bales



- Select a site away from any potential fire hazards and sources of ignition.
- Provide sufficient space to allow tractors and other vehicles room to manoeuvre.
- If close to a fence or boundary, assess whether the stack needs to be fenced off.
- If there is public access to the field via a footpath etc, consider providing signage to warn people to keep away.
- Do not build stacks over underground services such as gas pipes or water mains and fire hydrants.
- Do not work or build a stack under or within 10 metres of overhead power lines.

Other precautions when storing stacks

- Select a site away from any potential fire hazards and sources of ignition.
- Multiple stacks should be sited at least 10 metres away from each other and any nearby buildings to prevent fire spread, as well as allow safe manoeuvring between them. However you may wish to consult your insurance company and local authority for advice.
- Where multiple stacks are sited together they should, if possible, be in line with the prevailing wind.
- Avoid sitting stacks near public access and roads as these are vulnerable to fires from discarded cigarettes, littered glass and deliberate arson.
- Ensure combustible materials such as fertiliser, fuel and vehicles are stored well away.
- Keep bale elevator engines free of straw and other debris to avoid causing a fire.
- Do not allow smoking near stacks.
- Be aware of spontaneous combustion.
- Do not carry out any works near a stack that could cause a fire.
- Do not allow children to play on or near stacks.

These useful documents can be downloaded and completed to help prepare a fire risk assessment and provide tips for reducing a deliberate fire on your farm.

- [Five steps to fire risk assessment](#)
 - [Arson reduction checklist](#)
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If a fire occurs dial 999 and ask for the fire service immediately

To make sure fire engines can arrive as fast as possible please have the information below when making the call:

- Where the fire is - give the full postal address including the postcode.
- If the fire is in a remote location that's difficult to find, consider using the what3words app to help pinpoint your location.
- Tell us exactly what is involved - especially chemicals that are involved or likely to become involved in the fire.
- Is the access to the fire location difficult for the fire engines?
- Will there be problems accessing water near the fire?
- Never attempt to fight the fire unless it is safe to do so.
- If possible, send someone to the farm entrance to direct the fire engines to the fire. Ideally they should have a torch and be wearing high visibility clothing so they are easy to see.
- Clear access routes to the location for the fire engines.
- Move livestock if necessary or be prepared to move them in case the fire spreads.
- Make yourself known to the fire crew on arrival and answer any questions they may have.



If you are interested in more fire safety information, please either email pressoffice@cambsfire.gov.uk or call our service headquarters on 01480 444500.

Stay **safe**
Stay **connected**



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together to improve community safety

