



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Open fires and wood-burning stoves

A practical guide

Open fires and wood-burning stoves have risen in popularity over recent years. Smoke from burning causes air pollution and can be harmful to health but together we can work to improve air quality.

This leaflet provides simple guidance for those that need to use wood burning stoves or open fires to reduce environmental and health impacts as well as benefiting you directly by burning less fuel.

By following these simple steps, you could reduce the potentially harmful effects to you and your neighbours by inhaling smoke.

- ✓ Think about why you are lighting your fire/stove as well as how much fuel you use. For example if you have an alternative and adequate source of heating can you burn less or, ideally, not burn at all?
- ✓ Buy 'Ready to Burn' fuel: If you want to burn immediately look for the logo as a guarantee of good quality dry wood.
<http://woodsure.co.uk/firewood-ready-to-burn>
- ✓ Season freshly chopped wood before burning. Wet wood contains moisture which loses heat and creates smoke and harmful particulates when burned that can damage your stove and chimney. For more advice on wood drying please see <https://bit.ly/3v4ViFr>
- ✓ If you use House coal, approved solid fuels are recommended that produce more heat and less smoke and other pollutants. Look for products on Defra's list of authorised/certified fuels: <https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/fuels.php>
- ✗ **Do not** burn treated waste wood (eg old furniture, pallets or fence panels) or household rubbish. They can emit harmful fumes and toxic pollutants into your home and the wider environment when burned.

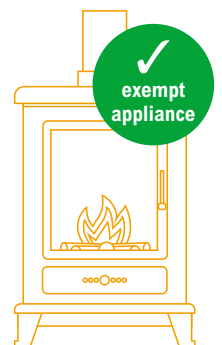


For more good practice tips, checkout www.Burnright.co.uk



Wood burning stoves

Wood-burning stoves produce much less smoke than open fires. If you are thinking of buying a stove please consider purchasing one that has a Defra exemption permitting its use in smoke control areas or is built to the new 'Ecodesign Ready stove' specification. These have been rigorously tested and demonstrate low smoke emissions. Stoves which have not undergone these tests do not carry this assurance and it is illegal to use a non-exempt appliance in a Smoke Control Area.



Smoke control areas

Most residential areas in Bedford and Kempston are in a Smoke Control Area where you can only use:

- Authorised/certified fuels
(see: <https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/fuels.php>)
or
- Exempted appliances
(see: <https://smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/appliances.php>)



You could face a fine of up to £1,000 if you do not comply with these requirements.

New restrictions on the sale and supply of solid fuels

From 1 May 2021 new legislation regulating the sale of solid fuels came into force that restricts the sale of certain solid fuels including traditional house coal (also known as bituminous coal), wood and manufactured solid fuels as follows:

For traditional house coal

Only registered coal merchants who are members of the Approved Coal Merchants scheme can legally sell traditional house coal (also known as bituminous coal) in England from 1 May 2021, and must be sold loose or in unsealed bags directly to the customers, it is illegal to sell bagged coal.



Further, sales of all traditional house coal for use in homes will be illegal in England from 1 May 2023. For more information see:

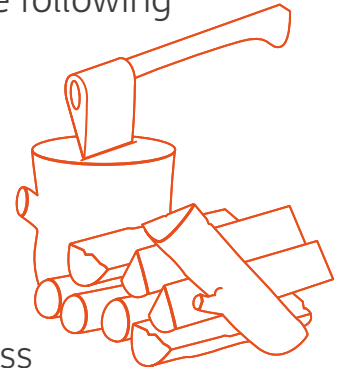
www.gov.uk/guidance/selling-coal-for-domestic-use-in-england

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For wood and manufactured solid fuels

Business should only supply or sell wood fuel in volumes of less than 2 cubic metres if it is certified as 'Ready to Burn'. This confirms it has a moisture content of 20%, and along with manufactured solid fuels, should have the following information either attached to packaging or clearly displayed

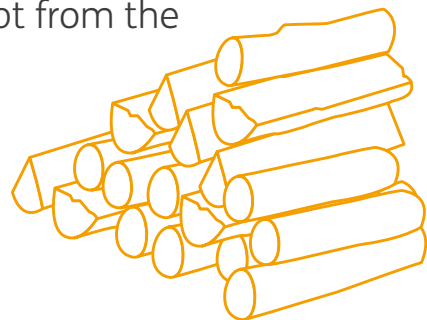
- ✓ the 'ready to burn' logo
- ✓ supplier/mannufacturer details
- ✓ unique certification number
- ✓ for wood confirmation it has a moisture content of 20% or less



All suppliers who sell wood in volumes of 2 cubic metres or more in England must provide customers with a notice that explains how to dry, store and check the moisture of the wood before it is used.

The following manufactured solid fuels are exempt from the certification requirements:

- coffee logs
- olive logs
- wine logs



For more information



www.gov.uk/guidance/selling-wood-for-domestic-use-in-england



www.gov.uk/guidance/selling-manufactured-solid-fuels-for-domestic-use-in-england

If you have any further questions or are concerned a business may not be following the above requirements please contact us via:



ehadmin@bedford.gov.uk

Fuel poverty: Advice and information around fuel poverty can be found on our web site:



<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/sustainability2/energy-advice-for-residents/>