

Dangers of Deliberate Fire setting

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has a zero tolerance approach to deliberate fire setting because it puts our communities at great risk. Deliberate fire setting is an offence and we work very closely with Police Scotland and Local Authority partners to ensure that those responsible are identified.

Last year, Scottish Firefighters attended around 20,000 deliberately set fires in bins, skips, fly tipped waste, derelict buildings, dry grass and heathland. On average the cost to the emergency services and the community for attending a deliberate fire is £2,000.

You should never enter derelict premises. They can be extremely dangerous for crews who are called to extinguish fires within them. These buildings may be structurally unsafe, there may be trip and fall hazards and often there is broken glass and other dangerous debris lying around.

Deliberate fires present a danger to life, property and the environment, it is reckless in the extreme because we see all too clearly the loss and the devastation that can result from fire.

Even small fires can spread very quickly, and often much quicker than expected. What may have been intended to be just a small fire, or just a bit of fun, can quickly spread to become out of control.

Deliberately set fires can result in an injury to the person setting the fire, or others who may become trapped by a rapidly developing fire. People have died as a result of deliberate fire setting.

If Fire Service resources are tied up at this type of fire, it may mean a delay in attending a more serious incident such as a house fire or a road traffic collision meaning that someone's life is endangered.

How would you feel if the small bin fire you set to impress your friends meant the delay in the attendance of a fire engine to your home where a family member was trapped or had been involved in a road accident and had to be cut out of the vehicle.

Police Scotland work closely with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services and regularly share information to ensure people are kept safe. Should information come to light that persons have been involved in Fire setting we will take this very seriously and persons may be prosecuted.