

PE2175: Immediate ban on the sale and use of Disposable (Instant) Barbeques in Scotland

The petitioner is calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to table new legislation which will ban the sale of disposable barbeques by retailers and introduce on the spot fines for anyone using a disposable barbeque in Scotland.

Wildfires in Scotland

The [Scottish Fire and Rescue Service \(SFRS\) webpage on wildfires](#) sets out:

- Wildfires are classified as large, uncontrolled outdoor fires exceeding 1,000 square meters of burned area on appropriate land types.
- Wildfires “place a huge drain” on resources and pose a significant threat to the safety of firefighters and to communities. Climate change is making wildfires more dangerous and extending the period when wildfires happen.

The Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) monitors wildfire emissions and resulting smoke transport across the Atlantic. It [reported on 31 July 2025](#) that the total estimated wildfire emissions for the UK in 2025 are already the highest on record (over 23 years of data), and that this was “primarily driven by the large wildfires that impacted Northern Scotland during the final days of June and the beginning of July”. This is discussed further in [analysis published by CarbonBrief on 8 August 2025](#).

Wildfire risks and barbecues in Scotland

A [disposable barbecue is a barbecue designed for single-use](#), outdoors and generally comprising of a foil fuel tray, grill grid and charcoal.

The [SFRS advises](#) to avoid use of barbecues on flammable surfaces or near vegetation during prolonged dry weather, and have emphasised this recently in [communicating wildfire warnings issued to the public](#). The [SFRS webpage on wildfires](#) sets out that most wildfires are started by human activity, mostly commonly due to:

- Unattended flames including “barbecues, campfires, and bonfires”
- Glass bottles i.e. sunlight shining through a glass bottle.
- Controlled burns for land management, gone out of control
- Deliberate fire setting
- Careless cigarette disposal
- Weather conditions

[Guidance on barbecues and open fires in the outdoors has also been published by NatureScot](#) (prepared by a sub-group of the National Access Forum). It explains how fire is covered by the Outdoor Access Code and includes guidance on relevant regulations and visitor management.

The guidance recognises that lighting fires and having BBQs **are part of public enjoyment of the outdoors**, but states that “over recent years there have been heightened concerns about risks from a range of factors coming together”, including new types of fire related equipment, increased numbers of people, and concerns about risks to the environment and public safety. It also states that climate change is having an impact on weather patterns with associated higher fire risks, evidenced by some significant wildfire incidents.

Other **public bodies** are also raising concerns and taking action in respect of wildfire risks associated with disposable barbecues in vulnerable areas (for example [NatureScot](#) and [Forestry and Land Scotland](#)). The [Cairngorms National Park Authority has recently submitted a ‘fire management byelaw’ proposal to Scottish Ministers](#) which, if approved, would ban the use of disposable and other (non-gas) barbecues in the Cairngorms National Park (except from in certain circumstances e.g. on private property under control of the occupier) between 1 April and 30 September each year. Local authorities in Scotland also have byelaw-making powers which could be used to restrict the use of barbecues in public areas such as parks.

The Scottish Retail Consortium (SRC) has published [voluntary guidelines](#) for shops aims to support the responsible retailing of disposable barbecues during extreme heat events, which encourages shops to educate customers on the safe use and disposal of single-use barbecues and help prevent wildfires. In [April 2025 the SRC issued a press release](#) seeking to encourage consumers to dispose of barbecues safely (including after use, ensuring the product is completely cool before disposal). Some **retailers** have halted or restricted their sale of disposable barbecues e.g. during summer in response to concerns about wildfires (e.g. [the Co-op said in 2021 it would no longer sell disposable barbecues](#) in or within a certain radius of UK National Parks).

Disposable barbecues and the circular economy

Disposable barbecues are not recyclable as a whole product due to the combination of materials, although some parts may be recyclable e.g. if

brought home and materials such as foil tray separated. It is not clear what proportion of materials are recycled in practice (although [it was reported in the media in May 2025](#) that “Of the estimated one million-plus disposables sold in the UK each year, the vast majority are going straight to landfill”). Zero Waste Scotland (a public body) [encourages the public to use reusable barbecues](#).

Powers to restrict products for conservation purposes

Scottish Ministers can introduce regulations under section 140 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit or restrict the importation, use, supply or storage of injurious substances or articles for conservation purposes. These powers have been used a number of times to restrict single-use plastics, most recently to ban single-use vapes via [the Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2024](#).

New product restrictions, such as a ban on certain single-use items, may engage the market access principles in [the UK Internal Market Act 2020](#) (UKIMA) and as such require either a UK-wide approach or an agreed exclusion from the UKIMA principles in order for any restrictions in Scotland to be effective in practice. More information [is available in a SPICe blog](#).

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