



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

**Carry out appropriate intervention:
Fires in waste sites**



NFCC
Fire Central
Programme Office

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Control measure knowledge

The timing and level of intervention will be determined through having knowledge of the site and the materials involved, whether there are rescues to be carried out, the extent of the fire and immediate risk to life or property, and the environmental impact of fire service operations. It is important to gain knowledge of any fire protection systems and facilities for firefighters within the site, including how they are operated and whether they are functioning.

To make an effective deployment, incident commanders should be aware of all the capabilities of available resources. Appropriate intervention should not be delayed, whilst seeking advice from the environmental or other agencies.

Priority objectives include saving life, preventing the incident from escalating, extinguishing the fire and protecting people and the environment. Guidance to determine appropriate intervention and tactical actions can be found in National Operational Guidance: [Fires and firefighting](#) and National Operational Guidance: [Performing rescues](#).

Early liaison with the environmental agency and public health agency is recommended, as a decision will need to be made as to whether the fire should be extinguished or allowed to burn, taking into account the impacts of that decision. Guidance on environmental issues can be found in the [Environment Agency and DCLG environmental handbook](#) and National Operational Guidance: [Environmental protection](#).

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Assess the level of risk within their service ground and provide fire and rescue service personnel with suitable and sufficient equipment and firefighting media to deal with fires in waste sites
- Gather information and pre-plan for incidents on waste sites, making relevant and up to date risk information available for attending personnel

Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Carry out an initial incident assessment and the resultant risk assessment
- Use risk-critical information to identify priority actions, where intervention will be required, as part of the overall tactical plan
- Manage water run-off carefully, to avoid polluting watercourses and groundwater
- Implement environmental protection measures to control, reduce or eliminate environmental damage or pollution, using pollution control hierarchy:
 - At source
 - Close to source
 - On the surface
 - In drainage or along a pathway
 - Contain, manage, treat pollution at the receptor
- Ensure that protection measures are robust and sustainable
- Request any further resources required to maintain protection tactics
- Consider the possible recirculation of fire water run-off, to reduce water used, as well as the quantity of water being disposed through the foul water drainage system. Refer to the [Environment Agency and DCLG environmental handbook](#) and National Operational Guidance: [Environmental protection](#).
- Develop a media strategy, in liaison with other agencies, to achieve clear and concise communication to the local community
- Ensure regular communication with the environmental agency, preferably on-site if possible
- Consider the potential for undetected subsurface firespread creating hidden voids
- Consider the use of aerial or reach appliances to avoid crews working on unstable ground