

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL – POLICY ON THE DISPOSAL OF HEDGES/BUSHES BY BURNING

Regulations are in place which have legally established the following:

1. The burning of waste is illegal. This applies to the burning of waste on ground, within the garden or dwelling, in a stove or in a waste burner.
2. The burning of hedge cuttings, branches and bushes arising from agricultural practices only may be undertaken once it follows defined steps, to reduce the waste volume, and the burning does not give rise to environmental pollution or nuisance.

These Regulations are called the ***Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal by Burning) Regulations 2009***. These Regulations include a Statutory Notice which may be submitted to Offaly County Council, in advance, providing information in relation to proposed burning of agricultural green waste.

To manage green waste such as uncontaminated wood, trees, tree trimmings, leaves, brush, bushes etc you should take the following steps:

Step 1: Producers of waste shall follow the waste hierarchy, as outlined below:

Reduce – remove firewood,

Reuse – fill gaps in hedges with branches where possible,

Recycle – shred and use compost or wood chip

Dispose – Only if other methods have been explored and have been found not to be viable, burning without causing nuisance or environmental pollution.

Step 2:

- Only hedge trimmings may be burned – no other wastes
- Measures shall be taken to avoid the generation of a nuisance, by checking the wind direction, proximity to nearest houses etc
- Measures shall be taken to ensure no risk of environmental pollution. No accelerants may be used - only the green waste may be burned.
- The practice may be subject to inspection by environmental enforcement staff.
- Should a risk be perceived then the activity must cease immediately and an alternative method of recovery or disposal must be found.

It should also be noted that the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 restricts the cutting of rural hedges to the period 1st day of September and to the last day of February.