

Moorland safety

West Yorkshire is a diverse landscape of towns, villages, countryside and moorland. The moors are host to wildlife, are a natural store of global carbon and a leisure hotspot for walkers, fell runners and bikers.

Protection of Moorland areas is important for several reasons:

- **Nature and Wildlife** – the moors are home to a wide variety of wildlife and vegetation, any disruption to this can have a negative effect for several years.
 - **Leisure and Property** – the moors are often used for various leisure activities such as walking, running and biking. One burn can have a devastating effect on these activities including nearby property.
 - **Agriculture and Flood management** – the moors are managed for activities such as grazing sheep and nesting birds. These activities amongst others contribute a great deal to the local economy by way of employment.
- Moorlands also contribute to flood management; preventing flooding in lower valleys by acting as sponges to soak up water. When damaged by fire their capacity to hold water is reduced.
- **Pollution control** - Slopes which become exposed after a wildfire allow runoff into streams and reservoirs increasing the pollution suspended in the water. Airborne pollution is also released during a wildfire, smoke which can have serious effects on people's health.
 - **Carbon sink** – Moorlands store carbon dioxide (CO₂), the gas which contributes to the world's Climate Change. When the peat bogs of the Moors are damaged by wildfire they start leaking CO₂ rather than storing it.



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorksfire.gov.uk

- **Saving lives** – despite the various developments in wildfire fire fighting equipment, wildfires can be unpredictable, ferocious and can take a lot of time and resources, valuable resources which are taken away from other more serious incidents, often where lives are at risk.

Some simple steps you can take to help protect the wildlife and moors;

- Clear up and take your rubbish home after picnics.
- Observe all signs and notices – they are there for a reason.
- Follow the National Trust Countryside Code.

- Don't leave glass bottles. Not only can they hurt people and animals, but they can magnify the sun's rays and start a fire.
- If you notice anything suspicious report it by calling crime stoppers on 0800 555 111 or through the moor watch website at www.moorwatch.com
- Never throw lighted cigarette ends onto the ground, or out of the window of vehicles or trains. Always ensure that they are completely extinguished and disposed of responsibly.
- Never be tempted to light a fire in the countryside and only barbecue in authorised areas.

ANYONE WHO IS FOUND TO HAVE STARTED A FIRE DELIBERATELY WHICH DESTROYS A SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST COULD BE FINED UP TO £20,000



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorksfire.gov.uk