# UK councils warn of fire risks as disposable vape ban sparks stockpiling



Councils across the UK are sounding alarms regarding the dangers posed by stockpiling disposable vapes as the products prepare to vanish from store shelves. Effective from this Sunday, the ban will prohibit all retailers, from local corner shops to major supermarkets, from selling these single-use devices. This regulatory move is aimed at curbing their popularity among youth and tackling the substantial litter problem they generate.

Recent research from the online nicotine retailer Haypp highlights a worrying trend, with 82 per cent of disposable vape users planning to hoard these devices ahead of the ban. In light of this, the Local Government Association (LGA) has issued a stark warning about the fire risks associated with improperly stored lithium batteries found in these vapes. Councillor David Fothergill, Chairman of the LGA's Community Wellbeing Board, stated, “Failing to store disposable vapes correctly could cost lives, given the significant fire risk they pose.” Lithium batteries can enter thermal runaway, a situation where they heat up to around 600°C, releasing toxic gases and potentially igniting fires, as noted by the charity Electrical Safety First.

The environmental implications of disposable vapes are dire, with an estimated 8.2 million of them thrown away every week across the UK. Many vapers are unaware of the hazardous nature of these devices, which are often discarded incorrectly. The disposal process for disposable vapes is particularly problematic; they are usually treated as general waste, where they contribute to ongoing issues, including fires in bin lorries and recycling facilities. Research from Material Focus revealed that these batteries are responsible for over 700 fires within waste management systems due to their inability to be effectively separated from the plastic casing.

The ban, which applies across all UK nations, extends to all varieties of disposable vapes—whether they contain nicotine or not—leaving retailers free to market reusable alternatives. Failure to comply with the ban can lead to severe penalties, including fines of up to £200 and, for repeat offenders, unlimited fines or even imprisonment. Both the government and the LGA hope this legislative move will deter rampant youth vaping, which has become a significant issue in schools and public spaces.

Despite the challenges posed by this ban, there is concern from the vape industry about a potential rise in black market activities following the prohibition. Circular Economy Minister Mary Creagh underscored the ban's necessity, highlighting the environmental damage caused by millions of discarded vapes. With ineffective disposal practices at the forefront of the problem, consumers are urged to use designated recycling programmes. Yet, only about one in three disposable vape users reportedly recycle their devices safely.

As the legislation comes into effect, not only will it reshape the retail landscape for vaping products, but it also represents a pivotal step towards addressing both public health and environmental destruction linked to disposable single-use vapes.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/vape-ban-single-use-disposable-fire-warning-b2760583.html), [[5]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-crackdown-on-single-use-vapes)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/vape-ban-single-use-disposable-fire-warning-b2760583.html), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/may/13/single-use-vapes-sparking-surge-in-fires-at-uk-waste-plants), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jun/18/disposable-vapes-cause-fires-and-cost-taxpayer-english-and-welsh-councils-say)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/5569ed1e-c812-44ee-a62f-10249c91b76c), [[3]](https://www.zurich.co.uk/news-and-insight/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes-as-three-dumped-every-second), [[7]](https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/vape-ban-single-use-disposable-fire-warning-b2760583.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/5569ed1e-c812-44ee-a62f-10249c91b76c> - The UK government has announced a ban on disposable vapes in England and Wales, effective from June 1, 2025. This decision aims to protect children's health and address environmental concerns related to single-use e-cigarettes. The legislation grants businesses until June 1, 2025, to sell existing stock. Circular Economy Minister Mary Creagh highlighted the wastefulness of single-use vapes, noting a significant increase in usage among young people. Environmental issues include millions of single-use vapes discarded weekly and substantial lithium usage. The vape industry has expressed concerns that the ban may lead to increased black market activities. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/5569ed1e-c812-44ee-a62f-10249c91b76c?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.zurich.co.uk/news-and-insight/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes-as-three-dumped-every-second> - Research by insurer Zurich Municipal reveals that two million single-use vapes are discarded incorrectly in the UK every week. This improper disposal has led to a 62% increase in bin lorry blazes over two years and a 108% rise in house fires caused by vapes. Nearly 75% of vape users are unaware of how to safely dispose of these devices, and a similar proportion do not realise vapes contain lithium batteries. Laid end to end, the number of disposable vapes thrown away incorrectly each week would circle all 117 miles of the M25. ([zurich.co.uk](https://www.zurich.co.uk/news-and-insight/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes-as-three-dumped-every-second?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/may/13/single-use-vapes-sparking-surge-in-fires-at-uk-waste-plants> - The Guardian reports that around 1.3 million single-use vapes are discarded each week in the UK, leading to a surge in fires at waste processing facilities. These devices contain lithium-ion batteries, which can easily catch fire if damaged. Research by Material Focus found that more than 700 fires in bin lorries and recycling centres were caused by batteries dumped into general waste. Waste management companies have reported an increase in the number of disposable vapes being collected, leading to more frequent fires. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/may/13/single-use-vapes-sparking-surge-in-fires-at-uk-waste-plants?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-crackdown-on-single-use-vapes> - The UK government has laid legislation to ban the sale and supply of single-use vapes in England, effective from June 1, 2025. These devices are non-rechargeable and often discarded as general waste, contributing to environmental pollution and posing fire risks due to their lithium-ion batteries. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs estimates that nearly five million single-use vapes are either littered or thrown into general waste each week in the UK. ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-crackdown-on-single-use-vapes?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jun/18/disposable-vapes-cause-fires-and-cost-taxpayer-english-and-welsh-councils-say> - The Local Government Association reports that disposable vapes are increasingly causing fires in bin lorries and recycling centres, leading to significant costs for taxpayers. These single-use e-cigarettes are difficult to recycle and often end up in general waste, where their lithium-ion batteries can cause fires. Research by Material Focus found that more than 700 fires in waste facilities were caused by batteries dumped into general waste. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jun/18/disposable-vapes-cause-fires-and-cost-taxpayer-english-and-welsh-councils-say?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes> - Zurich Municipal reports that the number of e-cigarette users in the UK has risen from 800,000 in 2012 to 5.6 million today. Incorrect disposal of vapes has led to fire and rescue services tackling 241 vape-related fires in the last year alone, up 119% since 2022. Approximately five million vapes are thrown away every week in the UK, with only one in three vapers recycling disposable devices through designated e-waste recycling programmes. ([zurich.co.uk](https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/single-use-vapes-spark-surge-in-blazes?utm_source=openai))