

BSA SAFETY MOMENT

CAMPFIRE SAFETY

SUMMARY

Who doesn't love a glowing campfire at the end of the day? However, to make sure it won't be your tent that burns, let's look at some good fire safety practices.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Handbooks for each program have useful tips for campfires. Here are a few highlights:

Environmental conditions

- Leaders should understand the local campfire regulations or requirements.
- Beware of current fire conditions, especially if it has been dry and windy. Check for any active burn ban.
- Consider wind direction and projected size of fire before starting.

Maintain your campsite

- Use an established campfire ring, if available, and keep your campfire size appropriate.
- Be sure your fire is a minimum of 15 feet from tents, shrubs, trees or other flammable objects. Always check for low-hanging branches above the fire.
- Store matches, lighters, and items used as fire starters in a secure waterproof box or bag outside of your tent. In bear country store away from your campsite.

Additives and Fire Extinguishing

- Additives to the fire are [prohibited](#). This includes chemicals, accelerants, color-changers, and other flame-enhancing products like Magical Flames™.
- Avoid cooking over a fire where chemicals or additives have been previously used.
- Always extinguish campfires properly. Ensure campfires are completely cold-out. Do a test on cooled ash for any sign of heat before you consider the fire extinguished.

Emergency Response

- Never leave a campfire unattended. Prepare a unit fireguard, and practice it.
- Always have a shovel/rake and water or other extinguishing materials handy.
- Be prepared to respond to burns or someone on fire with "Stop, drop, and roll."

RESOURCES

- *Guide to Safe Scouting*: www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/toc/
- *Age-Appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities*: filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-685.pdf
- *Storing, Handling, and Using Chemical Fuels and Equipment*: www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/gss06/
- *Leave No Trace*: www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/resources/leave-no-trace/
- *Unit Fireguard Plan Chart*: www.scoutshop.org/unit-fireguard-plan-chart-616620.html