

Putting Out A Fire

By Steven Dykeman

Be safe
Have fun
Better yourself



Fire Danger



Facts:

- 1 90% of fires are caused by human carelessness
- 2 The human population in the U.S. has tripled since 1960
- 3 The number of fires since 1960 has tripled

We can see that human carelessness is a serious problem to our planet. More careless humans results in more fires. The 10% of fires not caused by carelessness are caused by lightning and electric power lines.

The effects of climate change on fires is unknown. Although there is a definite relationship between dry conditions and fires, there is no data that supports increased fires from climate change. It does make sense that there could be a small effect from climate change, but the fact still remains that 90% of fires are caused by human carelessness, and that is what needs to be the focus to reducing the number of fires.

The bottom line is that no one should be making a fire if they have not been properly trained.

Putting out a fire

A campfire can be a major part of camping; providing warmth, cooking, and a gathering place for reflecting on the day. Do not let your fire get too large. A large fire can get away from you and is difficult to put out.

Prior to extinguishing, spread the logs being careful to not create a lot of sparks. Turn you logs over letting the fire smother out a bit. Continue to do this every few minutes waiting in between. Pour water over the hot spots and wait a few more minutes. You should have no flame at this point.

Extinguishing your campfire completely to cold-out

Allow the wood to burn completely to ash, if possible. Pour lots of water on the fire. Drown ALL embers, not just the red ones. Pour until hissing sound stops. If you do not have water, stir dirt or sand into the embers with a shovel to bury the fire. Continue adding water, dirt or sand and stirring with a shovel until all material is cool. **If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave**





Drown fire with water
Repeat drowning and stirring as necessary



Stir



The fire is "Cold Out" when
you can put your hand over it

Clean up

Burn trash items only if they can be fully consumed by fire and turned to ash. Do not attempt to burn plastic, cans or foil. If you do burn something that's not fully consumed, collect the remains when the fire is out and either pack it out or put it in a trash receptacle. Using dirt or sand to extinguish a fire is problematic because it can insulate coals, which can become uncovered later and ignite a wildfire.

When you're in the backcountry, pack out any trash found in your pit. Extract any charcoal pieces left inside your ring, carry them away from your site, crush the chunks, then scatter the remnants and dust throughout a broad area. Dismantle any structure you might have built.

It is your responsibility to pack out everything that you packed in, including any trash

Clean your fire site to have it look nicer than the way you found it. If it was a pre-existing site, leave it clean. If it was a site you made, leave it to where no one can tell that you had a fire there.

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About the author:

Steve Dykeman is an experienced outdoorsman and survivalist. He has written many articles and produced many videos on subjects relating to outdoors and survival. He has been a course director and instructor to both youth and adults. He has also been a technical consultant to manufacturing companies relating to outdoor gear. He has over 40 years of experience working with space and defense related electronics. He brings his advanced technical abilities to the outdoors, exposing the many myths and fallacies.

In recent days he is educating people to survive into our uncertain future.

