



Ver 06/2016

CAMPFIRE & CAMPING SAFETY

Why do you need to read this information?

Doctors and firefighters are concerned at the number of children burnt by campfires. On average, 40 children a year are treated by the Royal Brisbane Children's Burns Unit for burns from outdoor fires.

5 Campfire Rules

Rule 1: Positioning

Campfires should be positioned in cleared areas, where there are no overhanging branches, minimal grass and scrub. Ensure the campfire is a safe distance from tents, and that any other camping equipment is stored well away from it - especially flammable items such as gas cylinders and fuel cans.

Rule 2: Building

Where possible use a fireplace such as a barbeque pit or build a fire pit and surround it with large rocks. When selecting rocks, be aware that heated river or creek stones may shatter if cooled quickly. Ensure the fire stays a controllable size.

Rule 3: Starting

Start your campfire using appropriate ignition source and firelighter, paper and small kindling. Never use any kind of flammable liquids (such as petrol) on a fire to get it started.

Rule 4: Extinguishing

Put your campfire out with **water** when you have finished with it. Use the water from your washing up to put your campfire out.

Rule 5: Monitoring

Never leave unattended. Any campfire left unattended for any period of time, particularly overnight, should be extinguished by using a bucket of water.

How do we know water is better than sand or dirt?

Firefighters and doctors lit three campfires and let them burn for three hours, by which time they were hotter than 500 degrees. They then put one out with water, one out with sand, and let one burn out.

8 hours later...

- The campfire that was **left to burn** itself out was still over 100 degrees. This is easily hot enough to severely burn you. This campfire also spontaneously re-ignited the next morning.
- The campfire that was put out by being **covered with sand** was still nearly 100 degrees eight hours later. Easily hot enough to cause a serious burn. Most campfire burns are caused by contact with hot embers the morning after a fire.

Campfires that are covered with sand not only keep their heat for longer, but are also disguised – and can look like a sand-pit or sandcastle to small children. The “sand castle” at this point may have a temperature in excess of 300 degrees less than 10 centimetres below its surface.

- The campfire that was **put out by water** was cooled to less than 50 degrees after only 10 minutes, and to around 10 degrees after eight hours. These are safe temperatures and are unlikely to cause burns.

Save your washing up water to put your campfire out if you need to conserve your water supply. Care should be taken when pouring water on fires as the steam generated can also cause burns.

Did you know...

As little as one second of contact with a campfire 70 degrees or hotter will cause a significant burn?

What are the dangers?

Injury

Less than one second of body-contact with a campfire that has a temperature of over 70 degrees will result in a significant burn. Children severely burnt on their hands and feet can undergo months, if not years, of intensive therapy to reduce scarring and regain mobility in their limbs.

Did you know...

91% of burns caused by outdoor fires are as a result of contact with coals rather than flame.

Bushfire

When you put your campfire out with water you also reduce the risk of accidentally starting a grass or bushfire.

Grass and bushfires can burn out of control and be a serious threat to property and wildlife.

Campfire Essentials

- Water! Don't start a fire if you can't put it out with sufficient water.
- Locate the campfire away from bushes and trees.
- Never leave the campfire unattended.



In case of gas cylinder fire

1. Call 000.
2. Keep bystanders away.
3. Turn off cylinder valve if safe to do so.

First Aid for burns

Stop the burning process.

- Stop, drop and roll if their clothes are on fire.
- Smother the flames with water or a coat/blanket made of natural fibres.

Call Triple Zero (000).

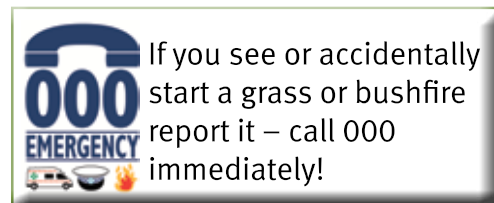
- Stay on the phone with the emergency operator until they hang up.

Cool the burnt area as soon as possible.

- Apply cool running water to the affected area for at least 20 minutes.

Did you know...

As little as a litre of water can help to cool an average size campfire to safe temperatures.



Remember, campfires should be extinguished using a good amount of water. Not sand or dirt.