

Campfire Safety



Campfire Safety

The number of children burnt by campfires last year doubled, meaning that 33 of the 250 children seen by the Burns Unit last year had been burnt by campfires.

Did you know that as little as one second of contact with a campfire 70 degrees or hotter will cause a 3rd degree (full thickness) burn?



Campfire Safety

Doctors and firefighters were concerned at the number of children that were being badly burnt by campfires, so they decided to get together and do something about it.

The majority of children were burnt the morning after a fire, and as a result of contact with hot ashes and embers rather than with active fire.



Campfire Safety

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.

Did you know that the average size campfire can get as hot as 500 degrees after burning for only three hours?



Campfire Safety

The campfire that was left to burn itself out was still over 100 degrees eight hours later. This is easily hot enough to severely burn you. This campfire also spontaneously re-ignited the next morning.

Ensure campfires are of a controllable size and are contained to a safe, cleared area.



Campfire Safety

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.



Campfire Safety

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.

This “sand castle” at this point has a temperature in excess of 300 degrees less than 10 centimetres below its surface.



Campfire Safety

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.

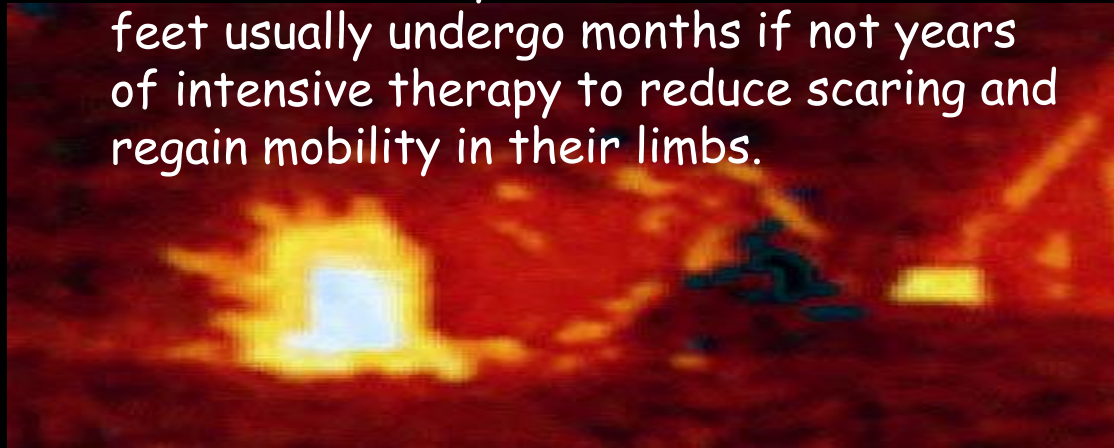
Care should be taken when pouring water on fires



Campfire Safety

Remember, less than one second of body-contact with a campfire that has a temperature of over 70 degrees will result in a third degree (full thickness) burn.

Children severely burnt on their hands and feet usually undergo months if not years of intensive therapy to reduce scarring and regain mobility in their limbs.



Campfire Safety

Campfires left unattended for any period of time, particularly overnight, should always be extinguished using a bucket of water. Not sand or dirt.

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



Campfire Safety

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 Safety

Firefighters say there are five basic rules for building a safe campfire:

Every year, firefighters are called out to hundreds of fires that could have been prevented by basic precautions and commonsense.



Campfire Safety

Rule 1:

Fires should be lit in cleared areas, where there are no overhanging branches and minimal grass and scrub.

If you see or accidentally start a grass or bushfire report it - call 000 immediately!



Campfire Safety

Rule 2:

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, fuel cans etc.

Do not use a gas stove or heater inside your tent - and be very careful if using a gas-fueled lantern - make sure it is not in a position where it could be knocked over or touch the tent.



Campfire Safety

Rule 3:

Where possible use a fireplace such as a barbeque pit or build a surround out of large rocks.

When choosing rocks, be aware that heated river or creek stones may shatter if cooled quickly.



Campfire Safety

Rule 4:

Never use any kind of flammable liquid on a fire – even when you are trying to get it started.

Common flammable liquids include petrol, lighter fluid, kerosene, methylated spirits and turpentine.



Campfire Safety

Rule 5:

Put your campfire out with water when you have finished with it.

Any kind of water can be used - dirty water, salt water, creek water, bottled water...



Campfire Safety

Ensure gas cylinders, hoses and camping equipment is tested before you set off on a trip

In case of fire: Call 000, keep bystanders away, turn off cylinder valve, cool cylinders with water if safe to do so, if not, stand well away from cylinder and gas discharge.



Campfire Safety

To help make your camping trip a safe and enjoyable one, use basic commonsense and follow the simple safety rules outlined in this presentation.

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

