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| **Activity:** | Fires and Backwoods Cooking | **Location:** | HQ and Off-Site | **Last review date:** | December 2022 | **Produced by:** | Alex Windows (Section Leader) |
| **Next review date:** | December 2025 | **Quality Assured by:** |  |

| **What are the hazards?** | **What are the risks?** | **Who is most at risk?** | **What control measures will be put in place?** |
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| **Location** | Burning.Smoke inhalation.Irritation. | All | * Fires should not be lit near tents, directly under low trees or other structures that could be damaged.
* Consider the wind direction when lighting fires, to avoid smoke or embers moving towards buildings etc.
* Fires should be built off the ground on a stable platform, such as an altar fire or in a designated fire area/pit.
* Fires must only be lit outside or in well-ventilated areas as part of an organised activity.
* Fires should always be controlled and never larger or more spread than they need to be.
* The fire should be easily accessible without obstructions or other dangers.
* For young children, a ‘safe zone’ could be established around the fire where young people do not move closer to the fire than this line.
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| **Fire Spread** | Burning.Smoke inhalation.Damage to property and equipment. | All | * Leaders should ensure firefighting equipment is available. Including extinguishers, fire buckets, spades, and beaters, as appropriate for the location.
* Fires should not be lit around dry grass or other vegetation.
* The fire must not be lit near other fuel sources, such as gas, oil, or other propellants.
* In case of fire spread to a building, the location of the fire exits and the procedure of exiting the building should be explained and practised by young people and adult leaders.
* In the case of a fire, high fire risk or smoke build up, all should evacuate buildings/enclosed spaces.
* The appropriate emergency services should be contacted as required.
* No attempt to fight fires should be made by young people.
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| **Food and Backwoods Cooking** | Burns.Allergies.Hygiene.Food poisoning. | All | * The allergies and dietary requirements of all involved should be considered when handling or using food.
* Natural and dry wood should be burned when cooking, where possible, to reduce smoke.
* Appropriate equipment should be available for young people to cook food safely, including fire gloves, and cooking utensils (e.g., tongs, spatulas etc.).
* Leaders should ensure hygiene standards. For example, Scouts should wash their hands before and after handling food. This is especially important when handling meat products.
* Food should be checked by an adult leader before eating to ensure food is cooked sufficiently throughout, this is especially important for meat products.
* Measures should be taken to avoid raw meat coming into contact with cooked meat or other food products.
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| **Ignition sources / Fuels** | Burns.Fire.Explosion. | All | * Leaders should supervise young people when they are using fires, fuels, and ignition sources
* Ignition sources must only be used in the fire area.
* Leaders should show young people the safe use of ignition sources and fuels before they use them.
* Leaders should brief young people on the possible dangers of fire lighting and using fuels.
* Ignition sources and fuels should be stored in a safe and secure location, away from fire or potential fire risk.
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| **Personal Safety** | Burns. | Young people. | * No one should wear loose clothing around fires, such as open coats, baggy sleeves, scarves etc. these should be tucked in or removed.
* Long hair should be tied back.
* Leaders should make sure that water is available nearby in case of burns.
* A first aid kit with a burns kit should be close by.
* Leaders should brief young people on the correct way of dealing with burns.
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| **Wood** | Splinters.Blisters. | Young people. | * Leaders should brief young people on the correct way of handling, carrying, and breaking up wood.
* Wood piles should not be stacked too high to avoid collapse.
* Extra care should be taken when handling and burning wood that might contain nails or other sharp edges. The use of these should be avoided where possible.
* Avoid burning wood that has been treated or painted.
* Try to burn dry wood where possible, to avoid smoke.
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| **Behaviour** | Injury.Misunderstanding. | Young people. | Leaders should explain the rules for fire lighting including: * No picking up or taking burning wood out of the fire.
* No throwing objects onto the fire – instead, hold wood by one end and lower it onto the fire.
* Do not run around the fires or woodpiles.
* Alert leaders in the event of fire spread or injury.
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