

CAMPFIRE TIPS

SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST



PREPARE YOUR SITE – Find a level spot away from overhanging branches, brush, dry grass, logs, pine needles, and heavy duff. Keep away from the base of a hill because escaped fires travel uphill fast. Do not build a fire on a windy day.

With a shovel, clear a circle 5 feet wide down to **bare dirt**. Hollow out a fire pit 6 inches deep and 2 feet across at the center of the cleared circle. Pile the dirt around the fire. **DO NOT** line it with rocks! They can explode when hot! The fire should be built no larger than necessary.

Use existing fire rings where available to reduce the number of disturbed areas and damage to soil cover and vegetation.

BEWARE OF THE DUFF – Duff is the layer of decomposing wood material that lies on the forest floor between pine needles and bare dirt. Many times it may look like dirt, but it isn't. Duff burns – dirt doesn't. It allows even the smallest ember to smolder for days, most times underground and unnoticed, until enough heat is built up to produce flames. Don't let the duff fool you!

ATTEND YOUR FIRE – Never leave your campfire unattended, even for a few minutes or if you take a nap.

Never leave children or young adults alone in attendance of a fire!

DROWN THE FIRE – Drown your campfire ½ hour before you break camp. Fill your bucket with water and pour it on the campfire while completely stirring and wetting all the ashes. Use your shovel to separate the burning pieces of wood in the fire pit.

Stir and mix water with the ashes until the fire is out. If you sense **any** heat with the back of your hand, continue to drown and stir! Don't try to bury the fire under dirt. It can smolder for hours and then escape.

DROWN BRIQUETTES – Charcoal briquettes should be extinguished by dumping into a pail of water, mixing thoroughly, and then placing into the fire pit.

FEEL THE ASHES – Feel the ashes to be sure the fire is out. Before you leave the campsite, check the area within 50 feet of the fire for sparks or embers that may have escaped.

IT CAN COST YOU – You will be held liable for the cost of suppression and damages caused by any wildfire that starts through negligence on your part.

COME PREPARED – Obtain your campfire permit, bring your shovel, and a pail for water.



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Forest Service
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Western Divide Ranger District
Sequoia National Forest

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