

What Kind of Stoves are Permitted under Fire Restrictions

Know Before You Go:

The Klamath National Forest has now entered Fire Restrictions. A valid California Campfire Permit is required to use a portable **contained** gas or liquefied-petroleum stove with an on/off switch or valve.

Issue:

Certain types of ultralight stoves have high potential for being a source of wildfire ignitions. These types of ultralight stoves do not prevent fuel from spilling and may be handcrafted or homemade from aluminum cans. Stoves fueled with wood (“twig stoves”) also have similar issues with fuel spilling. Additionally, where campfires are prohibited due to limited sources of wood, such as in sensitive alpine environments, twig stoves should also be prohibited.

Alcohol Ultralight Stoves

Alcohol stoves come in many forms and are commonly homemade. They tend to be slow to cook with and use up more fuel than other stoves. Generally made of aluminum or tin cans, many weigh less than an ounce. These may work poorly in the cold without an insulating platform and/or preheating. See the photos below for example examples of alcohol stoves that are homemade from aluminum cans:



Examples of alcohol ultralight stoves

Wood “Twig” Ultralight Stoves

Wood stoves generally reflect a great deal of the heat back into the fire and keep it hot. It is easier to set a pot on a wood burning stove than it is to balance it over an open fire. You will need a fraction of the wood to cook up a meal in a stove compared to an open fire. Wood stoves also generally protect the fire and fuel from wet and/or cold earth. Homemade versions of this stove can be made from various sized tin cans, pots or sheet metal (such as aluminum flashing) and an electric fan (computer fans work well) with a power source. Air output to the stove can be controlled by adding variable resistors to your electrical circuit or by just moving an unattached fan further away from the stove opening. These types of stoves are not enclosed and the ashes and embers can spill. (See photos on next page for examples)





Examples of wood “twig” ultralight stoves

Miscellaneous “Cooking and Heating” Devices

Charcoal grills, Smudge pots, and Sterno also have non-enclosed fuel containers.

Regulations

36 CFR 261.2 Definitions:

Campfire means a fire, not within any building, mobile home or living accommodation mounted on a motor vehicle, which is used for cooking, personal warmth, lighting, ceremonial, or esthetic purposes. Fire includes campfire.

Stove fire means a campfire built inside an enclosed stove or grill, a portable brazier, or a pressurized liquid or gas stove, including a space-heating device.

Fire Restriction Orders

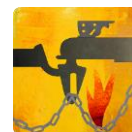
Fire restrictions are pursuant to 36 CFR 261.52(a), which allow prohibition when provided by an order: “Building, maintaining, attending a fire, campfire, or stove fire.” On most Forests in California, the following language is used as the exception to the prohibition: “portable stove using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel with a valid California campfire permit.”

Public Interest - Non-government Organizations Policy regarding Stoves

The Boy Scouts of American have a national policy titled: Policy on the Storage, Handling, and Use of Chemical Fuels and Equipment. (<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-013WB.pdf>). Defined within this document are prohibited chemical-fueled equipment which include includes alcohol stoves.

Prohibited Chemical-Fueled Equipment—Equipment that is handcrafted, homemade, modified, or installed beyond the manufacturer’s stated design limitations or use. Examples include alcohol-burning “can” stoves, smudge pots, improperly installed heaters, and propane burners with their regulators removed.

Background: Comprehensive information regarding ultralight stoves can be found at <http://zenstoves.net/>.



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