



Campers: What is Wrong With This Picture?



Answer:

Campfires are for cooking, storytelling, warmth, and enjoyment; NOT for collecting or burning garbage.

- **Food scraps, cigarette butts, beverage containers, items used to store and cook food, toilet paper. Plus pet food and pet waste attract flies, wasps, and rodents to your camp.**
- **Garbage is smelly, dirty, unsafe, and spoils the area for other campers.**
- **Plastic, glass, and aluminum drink containers are garbage and should not be burned or left in fire rings.**
- **Children, pets, birds and other wildlife may be injured by garbage left at sites.**
- **Please be considerate and leave your camp area clean for the next occupants.**

Tips to make your campsite clean, pleasant and reduce your impact

No Trace Camping - Leaving a clean camp

- This is the idea that when you leave your camp spot, no one will know you have been there because all evidence of your stay is eliminated. The concept is when you find that perfect camp spot in the woods, you will never know that perhaps just a week ago, someone else was at the same spot. Everyone benefits! Take the challenge. Get kids involved. Make it a surprise.
- Take your trash home or to a garbage receptacle. There is no reason why you cannot carry out food and packaging materials that were brought with you in the first place. Trash and litter in remote camping areas ranks high as a problem in the minds of many visitors.
- Reduce litter at the source. Much trash and litter originates from food items. Easy ways to practice the principle of *pack it in, pack it out*, is to *plan ahead and prepare*. It is possible to leave most potential trash at home if you take the time to properly repackage food supplies. Repackage solid foods into plastic bags and liquids into reusable containers.
- Under no circumstances should food scraps be buried! Discarded or buried food scraps attract animal life. It is common to see chipmunks, ground squirrels, and various species of birds gathering around camp kitchens. These "camp robbers" have become attracted to campers as a food source. Human food is not natural to wild animals, and their natural feeding cycles and habits become disrupted when they are fed by humans.
- A conscientious no-trace camper always keeps and leaves a clean camp. Taking a couple of minutes to pick up all trash, even the "micro "trash" such as cigarette butts, popsicle sticks and little pieces of paper or aluminum foil, will leave the camp in great shape for your return visit, or the next person.

The Call of Nature - Dealing with Human Waste

- Managing human waste in the woods is challenging. Sun, rain, and soil organisms will break down human waste over time, but popular camping locations increase concentrated human waste at a rate that nature cannot assimilate and neutralize. When nature's ability to handle the waste is exceeded you - the user- need to do it differently☺
- **CAT HOLE's** - Choose a site at least 200 feet from water, trails and your camp. Using a small trowel, dig a 6 to 8 inch deep hole in which to do your business and bury your waste.
- Decomposition of fecal matter is accelerated when it is mixed with soil. Toilet paper is slow to degrade and may be dug up by animals. One method of dealing with toilet paper is to take a stick and poke the paper deep into the cat hole. Then cover the entire hole with dirt so nothing is visible when you leave. A better way in concentrated areas is to place your toilet paper in a plastic bag and pack out. Ideally use a duct tape-wrapped re-sealable bag to pack out your used toilet paper. You might want to have a paper or plastic bag, bucket or something to place it in so it is easier to transport from the site and to a proper receptacle.

The enclosed web link provides a short explanation of using a cat hole:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONHgMVcLxFM>

- **Diaper Tips** -If you are camping with a baby, create a system for diapers. Always pack out dirty diapers. Do not burn or bury diapers, which is very harmful to the environment. Pack more diapers than you think you will need and realize that they will be heavier (and bigger) when you leave. Dirty diapers wrapped tightly in plastic bags helps to keep the smell down. Cloth diapers can be laid out in the sun to dry before being wrapped.

Leave No Trace

It's a camper's code to leave nothing behind



Camping

Use an existing area and existing fire ring.

Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.

Keep the camp small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.

Waste Disposal

Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your camp for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

Deposit solid human waste in cat holes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cat hole when finished.

Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.

To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leaving the Area as You Find It

Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic artifacts.

Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.

Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.

Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Campfires

Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand. Burn all wood and coals to ash and put out campfires completely by using lots of water, stirring the ashes, and adding even more water.

Dishwater

Strain dishwater through a small strainer or bandana. Put the food particles in a sealable plastic bag and pack them out. Broadcast the strained dishwater over a wide area at least 200 feet from the nearest water source, campsite, or trail. Scattering dishwater in a sunny area will cause the water to evaporate quickly, causing minimal impact.

Toilet Paper

Use toilet paper sparingly and use only plain, white, non-perfumed brands. Toilet paper must be disposed of properly! It should be either thoroughly buried in a cat hole or placed in plastic bags and packed out, which is the best way to practice Leave No Trace. Never burn toilet paper because it could easily start a wildfire.