

Firelighting Risk Assessment



Hazard Identified & Risks Arising	Persons at Risk	How is the Risk Controlled? What Further Controls Are Needed?	Person Responsible for controls	Review
Rough wood – risk of splinters or blisters from handling. Injuries from nails or staples in hands. Injuries to feet from standing on nails embedded in wood in the wood pile	All present	Leaders should tell everyone to take care when collecting, cutting or snapping wood. Participants should wear strong gloves if they can. Have appropriate gloves available. Care must be taken when standing on wood and can only be done if strong foot is worn.	Leaders and competent adults present	
Sharp items (saws, axes, and knives) – risk of injuries from mistakes or misuse.	All present	Leaders should be competent and ensure training and information given to young people before they use sharp items. Leaders should supervise young people and continue to assess their competence. There should be at least one adult or Young Leader for each group taking part. Count out the sharp items and be clear on how many are being used. Then count the	Leaders and competent adults present	
Axe and saw – risk of injury to non-participants or observers.	All present	Create a safe cutting area (check guidance for safe size and distances). Follow the 'blood circle' advice	Leaders and competent adults present	

Fires

Heat sources – risk of burns from mistakes or misuse. Starting fires - creating sparks	All present	Leaders should supervise young people when they're using hot items (such as ovens, stoves, candles, and fires). Ensure young people are monitored (YL or adult) .Consider appropriate size of group in relation to the equipment/heat source or fire in use. Restrict access to the fire/equipment/heat source by using them in a defined area. Brief young people on the safe use of the equipment or fire before they use them and on the possible dangers of firelighting. Explain the rules for firelighting including: no picking up burning wood, no throwing objects onto the fire, and hold wood by one end and lower it onto the fire with your fingers near the ground. Do not add other items to the fire such as rubbish. To start a fire only use kindling or bought fire lighters. Do not use accelerants on the fire (any substance or mixture that accelerates or speeds the development and escalation of fire) – such as petrol, lighter fuel and other spirits. Avoid loose clothing around fires – watch out for open coats, sleeves and scarves. Tuck them in and keep coats, hoodies fastened. Tie back loose hair. Do not reach over fires or flames. Make sure there is an appropriate first aid kit available and that leader training is up to date. Make sure that cold water is available nearby – there should be at least a bucket	Leaders and competent adults present	
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Fires

Fire – risk of uncontrolled spread of fire.	All present	Leaders should make sure fire fighting equipment is available. such as extinguishers, fire buckets, spades, and beaters. Everyone should think about location of their fire. It shouldn't be near tents or directly under low trees that could be damaged. They should also consider wind direction. If possible build fire off the ground on a stable platform.	Leaders and competent adults present	
Smoke - inhalation leading to breathing difficulties or eye injury	All present	Leaders should supervise young people, and remind them to remove themselves from the smoke if wind direction changes.	Leaders and competent adults present	
Pollutants from wood – risk of ill health to participants.	All present	Use natural wood preferentially for cooking. Avoid treated wood, such as some pallets or old fencing and furniture. Check campsite wood pile and decide whether it's suitable.	Leaders and competent adults present	
Behaviour – risk of overexcitement, especially at the start and end of the meeting.	Young People	Everyone should follow the safety instructions that sets clear expectations of behaviour.	Leaders and competent adults present	
Camp Fire- Camp fires are usually larger than normal cooking fires. Major burns	All present	Ensure the fire is the right size for the area, watch for sparks in the main camp area. At least two Full picket buckets should be present,	Camp fire leader	

Fires

Open Cooking Fires- Minor/Major burns, scalds, sparks in eye, toxic smoke inhalation and basic smoke inhalation	All present	No fire should be lit without a full safety picket bucket present. Ensure young people have been instructed by a competent person. Ensure loose clothing & neckers do not overhang fires when cooking. Ensure hand protection when removing hot billy's etc. Do not burn inappropriate rubbish such as plastics. Try to keep young people out of prolonged exposure to smoke(alternate cooking duties etc) Limit and then point out remaining trip hazards. If possible raise fire on a stable platform (altar fire). First aid kit available	Leaders and competent adults present	
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