



## Risk Assessment: Fire Lighting and Campfires

### Activity: Fire Lighting and Campfires during Backpack Adventure

**Location: Outdoor Wilderness**

**Group: Children and Adults (Mixed group)**

**Assessor: Scott Lapworth**

#### Hazards Identified

**1. Burns (Hands, Face, Body)**

- **Source:** Contact with open flame, hot surfaces (rocks, metal utensils), or hot embers.

**2. Uncontrolled Fire Spread**

- **Source:** Fire spreading to nearby vegetation, clothing, or camp structures.

**3. Smoke Inhalation**

- **Source:** Prolonged exposure to campfire smoke, leading to breathing difficulties, especially for those with asthma.

**4. Tripping and Falling**

- **Source:** Uneven ground or obstacles around the fire area, resulting in falls into or near the fire.

**5. Tools & Equipment Use**

- **Source:** Handling of matches, lighters, or fire-starting tools by children or adults inexperienced in their use.

**6. Dehydration/Overheating**

- **Source:** Close proximity to heat sources for extended periods during hot weather.

**7. Improper Fire Extinguishing**

- **Source:** Fire not properly extinguished, posing a risk of later flare-ups or spreading after the group leaves.

#### Risk Rating (Before Controls)

Hazard	Likelihood (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Risk Level (L x S)
Burns	4	4	16
Uncontrolled Fire Spread	3	5	15
Smoke Inhalation	3	3	9
Tripping and	3	4	12
Tools & Equipment Use	4	3	12
Dehydration/ Overheating	2	3	6
Improper Fire Extinguishing	3	5	15

## **Control Measures**

### **1. Burns Prevention**

- Instruct all participants to maintain a safe distance from the fire (designated boundary using rocks or markers).
- Supervise children closely when lighting the fire and while it's burning.
- Use long-handled fire tools (e.g., tongs or sticks) for adding fuel to the fire.
- Ensure all participants wear long sleeves and sturdy footwear to minimise burn risk.

### **2. Preventing Uncontrolled Fire Spread**

- Clear the area of any flammable material (leaves, dry grass) within a 2-meter radius.
- Only build fires in designated fire pits or within a cleared fire circle with rocks.
- Keep water, a fire blanket, or a shovel nearby for emergency fire suppression.
- Limit fire size to manageable levels.

### **3. Smoke Inhalation Prevention**

- Position the group upwind from the fire to minimise smoke exposure.
- Monitor those with known respiratory conditions (e.g., asthma) and ensure they maintain an appropriate distance from the smoke.
- Discourage direct exposure by advising participants to move if smoke blows their way.

### **4. Tripping and Falling**

- Designate clear, safe walking paths around the fire area.
- Highlight any obstacles near the fire and provide instruction on safe movements.
- Ensure the area is well-lit during evening activities.

### **5. Safe Tool & Equipment Use**

- Provide clear instructions on how to use matches, lighters, and fire-starting materials safely.
- Allow only adults or trained supervisors to handle tools for lighting fires.
- Store matches, lighters, and accelerants out of reach of children when not in use.

### **6. Dehydration/Overheating Prevention**

- Schedule regular water breaks and encourage hydration during fire-related activities, especially in warm weather.
- Limit the time participants spend close to the fire.

### **7. Proper Fire Extinguishing**

- Instruct participants on proper fire extinguishing techniques (dousing with water, stirring embers, etc.).
- Ensure fire is fully extinguished before leaving the area by pouring water over the fire, stirring the ashes, and ensuring no heat or smoke remains.
- Designate a responsible adult to oversee fire extinguishing.

## Risk Rating (After Controls)

Hazard	Likelihood (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Risk Level (L x S)
Burns	2	3	6
Uncontrolled Fire Spread	1	5	5
Smoke Inhalation	2	3	6
Tripping and Tools & Equipment Use	2	3	6
Dehydration/ Overheating	1	3	3
Improper Fire Extinguishing	1	5	5

### Emergency Procedures

#### 1. In Case of Burns:

- Cool the burn with running water for at least 10 minutes.
- Cover with a sterile, non-fluffy dressing.
- Seek medical attention if necessary.

#### 2. In Case of Fire Spread:

- Evacuate all participants to a safe distance.
- Attempt to control the fire with water or dirt, if safe to do so.
- Contact emergency services if the fire becomes uncontrollable.

#### 3. In Case of Smoke Inhalation:

- Remove affected person from the smoke-filled area to fresh air.
- Administer first aid as necessary and seek medical attention if breathing difficulties persist.

#### 4. In Case of Tripping/Falling Incident:

- Provide first aid as needed.
- Remove participant from proximity to the fire if injured and assess the situation.

#### 5. Improper Fire Extinguishing:

- Ensure all participants are at a safe distance.
- Use water, dirt, or a fire blanket to fully extinguish the fire.
- Monitor for any signs of re-ignition before leaving the site.

### Person Responsible for Implementing Control Measures

- Lead Instructor / Supervisor: [Insert Name]
- Assistants / Adult Volunteers: [Insert Names]

### Review Date

- This risk assessment will be reviewed annually or after each fire lighting session to ensure the safety of participants.

**Sign Off:**

Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_