

## Backcountry Campfires

Each year a number of campsites are damaged or destroyed by careless campers. Adhering to the following guidelines will help reduce these instances.

### Use Only Official Fire-pits

Each backcountry campsite in Algonquin Park, is equipped with a fire-pit. Typically, park staff have actually excavated a pit, removed combustible organic materials from it and then filled it with mineral materials (sand, gravel, rocks). This prevents the igniting of underground fires that can smolder for days on end, eventually erupting into full-fledged forest fires.

### Fire-pit Preparations

Altering an official fire-pit's stone-ring to suit the size of a grill or to provide a better windbreak is fine. However, do not relocate it or enlarge it to bonfire proportions.

The area surrounding the fire-pit, should be scraped clear of combustible forest and firewood debris, to avoid it being ignited by campfire sparks and embers. For this same reason, stored firewood should be kept well beyond the fire-pit area.

When a fire-pit becomes filled with accumulated ash, it should be emptied down to ground-level. The emptied ash must be absolutely cold to the touch and should be discarded in the same manner as dishwasher .. far inland, away from the campsite and any body of water.



Most campsites are provided with a standard large steel-legged grill. This grill is appropriate if a very large cooking area is required.

However, if only a small cooking area is needed, one may choose to adjust the volume of the fire-pit's stone-ring to accommodate one of the smaller wire grills that are usually left behind at campsites. Doing so will reduce both cooking times and the amount of firewood consumed.

### Firewood Supply

Gather firewood well back from shorelines and campsites, collecting only fallen dead wood. Desolate eye-sores result from cutting shoreline driftwood and dead growth close to campsites.

## Tending Your Campfire

It's sensible to always have a large container of water nearby your campfire, ready to deal with any problem at a moment's notice. Locate tents upwind from a fire-pit, as wind-blown sparks can quickly damage or destroy tents. Never pour flammable liquids into the fire. The resulting flare-up can cause injury and start an uncontrollable fire.

Once you've lit a campfire, it's your responsibility. Never leave a campfire unattended. Having too large a campfire or burning one during high winds runs the risk of sparks spreading the fire into the forest.

### Precautions When Cooking

Cooking over an open fire can be dangerous. Exercise care when cooking by using proper tools to keep flames and hot food at arms length. Because burns associated with cooking can be severe and painful, make sure your first-aid kit is properly equipped to deal with such injuries. Children and pets can easily wander to a campfire, so special care must be exercised in their control.

### Extinguish Your Campfire

When leaving the campsite unattended or going to sleep, extinguish your campfire. Douse it with water, and stir the coals with a stick and then repeat the dousing until your hand discerns no heat in the ashes. If you ever see an uncontrolled fire or smoke emanating from the ground (or from inside a tree) note the location and notify park authorities (and the local fire department) as soon as possible.

### Report Forest Fires ...

Pembroke: 1-800-853-4937 or 613-732-5541

Haliburton: 1-888-239-4565 or 705-457-2107

**You are invited to join the Algonquin Backcountry Recreationalists to help us more effectively advise park management and to help fill the void in educating new campers, canoeists and hikers in caring for the backcountry of Algonquin Park.**

**You'll not only help to improve Algonquin's backcountry wilderness-like qualities, you'll help stand against threats to those same values. We cannot be complacent in representing our interests concerning the wilderness-like nature of Algonquin.**

**The ABR does not require membership dues. Your name on the membership roll, your shared opinions and your commitment to Algonquin Park's backcountry will increase our strength. Visit our website at [www.ABRweb.ca](http://www.ABRweb.ca) and contact us to become a member.**



**Algonquin Backcountry Recreationalists**

**"Caring About Algonquin's Backcountry" [www.ABRweb.ca](http://www.ABRweb.ca)**