



Standard Operating Procedure For Starting a Campfire

SOP CF-001

Release 3

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Standard Operating Procedure for Starting a Campfire CF-001, Release 3

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1. PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) instructs a user to safely light a campfire.

2. SCOPE

This SOP is applicable to recreational campfires within California State Park Campgrounds. This SOP is not intended for tangentially related fires such as beach bonfires, wilderness survival fires, and cooking fires.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 Campground Users are responsible for:

- 3.1.1 Sourcing this SOP from CA State Parks
- 3.1.2 Procuring material and equipment
- 3.1.3 Lighting the campfire
- 3.1.4 Fueling the fire
- 3.1.5 Supervising the flame and surrounding area
- 3.1.6 Extinguishing the firepit when ceasing recreation
- 3.1.7 Contacting Park Staff and emergency services if needed

3.2 California State Parks is responsible for:

- 3.2.1 Selling firewood to campers
- 3.2.2 Managing campground lots
- 3.2.3 Enforcing campground rules and regulations
- 3.2.4 Keeping log reports of camp activity
- 3.2.5 Managing emergency situations and contacting further emergency services if needed

4. ASSOCIATED FORMS

- 4.1 Campground Firewood Receipt
- 4.2 Campground Firepit Reservation Receipt

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Tinder: Easily combustible material needed to start a flame. Examples include leaves, bark, fluff, pine needles, and tinder fungus.
- 5.2 Kindling: Readily flammable material used to grow a flame. Examples include twigs, branches, pinecones, and fatwood.
- 5.3 Fatwood: Resin-soaked wood found within a tree. Highly flammable example of kindling.
- 5.4 Tinder Fungus: Various species of wood bark growing mushroom. Flammable when dry.
- 5.5 Spark: A luminous hot particle. Created from striking flint with steel.
- 5.6 Carbon Monoxide (CO): Colorless, odorless, and poisonous gas formed by incomplete combustion of carbon. Replaces Oxygen (O₂) within the lungs.
- 5.7 Gatehouse: A shack used by park staff to collect entry fees for vehicles as well as keep log of campground reservations.

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6. REFERENCES

- 6.1 Flint and Steel Fire Striker Instruction Set

7. SAFETY

- 7.1 Carbon Monoxide is a byproduct of the burning of firewood. Users should keep a comfortable distance from the burning fire and avoid inhaling the top of the fire column.
- 7.2 A bucket of water is needed to put the fire and/or the embers out. Do not leave a firepit unsupervised, even if there is no active flame. Embers have potential to reignite new material.
- 7.3 Lighter fluid is highly flammable and should be used from a distance. Squirt the fluid bottle from at least 3 feet away to ensure safe distance. Do not store the lighter fluid container near an open fire.
 - 7.3.1 If an accidental ignition of the lighter fluid container occurs keep a distance of at least 12 feet until the subsequent fire shrinks. Use a fire extinguisher to disable the accidental fire.
- 7.4 A fire extinguisher is crucial in putting out a spreading fire. If the fire is uncontrollable by fire extinguisher: save yourself and escape the reach of the flames.
 - 7.4.1 In case of emergency, contact 911 if possible. Notify Park staff immediately.

8. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- 8.1 Materials
 - 8.1.1 Logs — 1 bundle
 - 8.1.2 Tinder — 1 or 2 handfuls
 - 8.1.3 Kindling — A generous armful
 - 8.1.4 Lighter fluid – 1 container
- 8.2 Equipment
 - 8.2.1 Flint and Steel
 - 8.2.2 Bucket of water
 - 8.2.3 Fire extinguisher
 - 8.2.4 Firepit

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9. MAIN BODY OF SOP — CAMPFIRE STARTING PROCEDURE

- 9.1 Check in with CA State Park staff at the gatehouse
- 9.2 Tape the check-in receipt to your vehicle
- 9.3 Purchase firewood from the campground or bring your own
- 9.4 Set up the campsite and ready the equipment and materials for fire-starting
- 9.5 Utilize the metal firepit provided within the campsite
 - 9.5.1 See the section 7 for important safety information before proceeding.
- 9.6 Place individual logs against each other to form a conical teepee like shape
- 9.7 Pack the teepee with flammable tinder such as leaves and pine needles
 - 9.7.1 If you were provided with a receipt for firewood, you may use it as tinder
- 9.8 Place kindling amongst the logs of the teepee to support the structure.
 - 9.8.1 This should protect the middle of the teepee from wind.
- 9.9 Apply lighter fluid to the log teepee to ensure efficient ignition
 - 9.9.1 See the Safety section for guidelines on lighter fluid use.
- 9.10 In a spot sheltered from wind, strike the flint with the steel onto a bundle of tinder
 - 9.10.1 Refer to the instructions provided with your flint and steel, if necessary
- 9.11 Once a flame is created, lightly blow onto it to keep it oxygenated
- 9.12 Transfer the flame to the kindling at the base of the constructed teepee.
- 9.13 The teepee should catch and sustain flame
 - 9.13.1 If the flame is not catching or is fading, apply a 3 second squirt of lighter fluid to the flame.
- 9.14 After the fire has grown by at least 50% fuel the fire with additional logs.
- 9.15 Carbon Monoxide may be expelled from the top of the smokestack.
 - 9.15.1 Take care to not directly inhale fumes from the campfire. See Safety for more information.
- 9.16 Utilize a bucket of water to smother the flame and/or embers once the campfire is no longer needed.
 - 9.16.1 An unsupervised flame can cause a wildfire.
- 9.17 Utilize a fire extinguisher in case of a fire emergency.
 - 9.17.1 If the fire grows to unsafe levels: save yourself and vacate the area.
- 9.18 Clean and vacate the campsite when your stay is expired
- 9.19 Campground staff will ensure the campsite and firepit are serviceable for the next guest

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10. DOCUMENTATION

- 10.1 CA State Park employees must
 - 10.1.1 Keep log of guest's name and campsite number
 - 10.1.2 Ensure camp-lot and firepit cleanliness
 - 10.1.3 Record firewood sales

11. HISTORY

<u>Release No.</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Reason/Justification for Change</u>
1	10/21/24	First draft.
2	11/13/24	Second draft with updates to safety and procedures.
3	11/19/24	Third draft for final submission. Updated release info, increased references to the safety information, edited section 10.
4	«effective_date»	New

12. ATTACHMENTS

N/A