



FIRE WISE

KENAI PENINSULA

JULY: SAFETY FIRST WITH CAMPFIRES

Every year, thousands flock to Alaska's shores, mountains, lakes and rivers to enjoy one of the great benefits of living in the Last Frontier — the great outdoors.

But camping in Alaska, particularly when the weather is at its best, brings with it responsibility. Campfires are among the biggest fire risks, but if they are constructed and maintained correctly, they can be relatively safe.

Check the burn restrictions in the area you will be camping before heading out. Areas sometimes implement a ban on burning due to high fire danger. Whenever possible, limit your campfire to the area where a fire ring is already in place. If no fire ring is available, and you must build a fire, follow these tips.

- Chose an area of dirt, sand or gravel instead of peat or duff, which can carry the fire down in the ground where it will keep burning. Clear a 5-foot area around the pit down to mineral soil.
- Place your fire away from hanging branches.

- Circle the fire pit with rocks.
- Keep a bucket of water and a shovel nearby in case a wayward spark ignites surrounding vegetation and to put the fire out later.
- Stack extra firewood away and upwind from the fire.
- Properly dispose of the match with which you light the fire.
- Never leave a campfire unattended, not even for a minute.
- When you are finished with your campfire, make sure it is completely out. Douse it with water well before your departure time. Then mix the coals around with a shovel. Once you are sure it is out, use the back of your hand to feel the coals for heat you missed.

Firewise team members to visit your home and offer advice. For more information on ways you can be FireWise, go to www.firewisekp.com contact FireWise Kenai Peninsula 260-4262 or sharon.roesch@alaska.gov.