



# Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Public Service Announcement

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## **Reminder to deer hunters: Keep an eye on your campfire or it could cost you**

Last May, an out of control campfire at a Sailor Lake Campground fire ring burned almost 4 acres, including a tent at the site and other personal property. While the campsite fire was considered accidental, charges for detection were incurred. Recently, eight individuals from southeastern Wisconsin were implicated with causing this fire. They plead guilty for allowing a campfire to escape control and for leaving a fire without it being completely extinguished, and paid a claim of \$4112.37 for this incident.

Chequamegon-Nicolet Forest Supervisor Jeanne Higgins is hopeful similar incidents won't happen in the future. "Even though the weather is colder and some light snow is on the ground, conditions are still ripe for a wildfire if a campfire is not watched carefully. We ask hunters to be especially vigilant in keeping their campfires from getting out of control."

In the United States, 9 out of 10 wildfires are caused by humans, and the majority of these fires are accidental. People who visit the Chequamegon-Nicolet are advised on the correct way to build and put out a campfire:

### **Building a safe campfire:**

Build campfires away from overhanging branches, steep slopes, rotten stumps, logs, dry grass, and leaves.

Keep the campfire small. A good bed of coals or a small fire surrounded by rocks gives plenty of heat. Use an existing fire ring if it's available.

Never leave a campfire unattended. Even a small breeze could quickly cause the fire to spread.

Start with dry sticks and small sticks. Remember – a good fire builder never needs gas or kerosene to start a fire.

Add larger sticks as the fire builds up. Avoid using hatchets, saws, or breaking branches off trees.

Dead and down wood burns easily.

Put the big pieces on last, pointing them toward the center, and pushing them into the flames. Use wood no larger than the diameter of an adult wrist.

### **Putting out your campfire:**

Keep plenty of water handy and have a shovel for throwing dirt on the fire if it gets out of control.

Be sure your match is out cold. Break it so you can feel the charred portion before carefully discarding it.

Drown the fire with water. Make sure all embers and sticks are wet. Move rocks – there may be burning embers underneath.

Stir the remains, add more water, and stir again. Be sure all burned materials have been put out and cooled. Smaller pieces of wood are easier to put out than large logs.

Feel all materials with your bare hand. Make sure that no roots are burning.  
Campfires may be banned if wildfires likely. Watch for signs and obey them.

**REMEMBER, ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES!**

The remains of a tent from a runaway campfire

