



leave no trace

NEW ZEALAND

LESSON

Minimise the Effects of Fire



NOTE

Ensure that you check on local fire regulations and conditions before you cover this class. Choosing not to have a fire is often the best practice.

INTRODUCTION

What do you think of campfires? Line up on a continuum from one end (fires everynight if possible) to the other end (no fires ever). Explain why you are where you area (start at the extremes). This subject is controversial.

DISCUSS HISTORY

- Pre-history, Maori/Asian/European

ADVANTAGES OF NO CAMPFIRE

- You can hear night birds
- Look at the Milky Way

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF FIRES

- Soot scarred rocks
- Overflowing with ashes
- Partly burned logs
- Food and rubbish
- Alters environment alters organic matter to 6 cm below.
- Completely sterilizes the topsoil to 2 cm. ecological reasons
- Nurse log phenomenon
- Soils are robbed of important sources of nitrogen, carbon and organic matter
- Downed logs –help stop soil erosion
- Rotting wood holds greater water holding capacity

MINIMISE IMPACT

- Avoid Fires – environmental conditions, hot summer or fire ban
- Ask: Where is the wood from? Is it sustainable?
- Ask: Do we need a fire and can we minimise the impacts?

State what it means to “minimise campfire impacts”

Demonstrate the ability to minimise the impact of campfire including

- Camp stoves
- Established fire rings, fire pans, fire mounds

7 Principles of Leave No Trace

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimise Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife and Farm Animals
- Be Considerate of Others





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- Choice of fire wood (dead and dainty-small enough to be broken by hand)
Choosing the right site for fire constructing that will minimise the effect e.g. dry river beds, check wind direction.

DEMONSTRATE A MOUND OR PIT FIRE.

Ideally your fire will be in a dry stream bed or beach.

If this is not possible, then the mound fire allows you to have a minimum impact fire, but requires considerable work.

Gather inorganic soil (sand/gravel) and build a “volcano” with a crater. The bottom of the crater should be at least 15cm above the soil surface. This takes lots of gravel/sand.

The fire is made in the crater and by using small pieces of wood, you can burn the wood to ash.

After the fire, wet the area thoroughly and use bare hands to confirm that it is cool all the way through.

Disperse any ashes and return the gravel to the source.

There should be no trace left of the fire, and you can challenge people to find the location of the fire in the morning once you have cleaned it up.

REVIEW

Fire is potentially the biggest single impact we can have. Treat fires with respect and caution.

