



**Division of Fire Safety**  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**  
J. William Degnan, State Fire Marshal



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office Offers Campfire Safety Tips**

Summer and fall are prime times for getting outdoors and cooking over an open fire. But campfires can pose a serious threat if not handled responsibly. Campfires, or rather people who light them, are responsible for more than half of all forest fires. New Hampshire State Fire Marshal J. William Degnan and the New Hampshire Association Fire Chief's President and New London Fire Chief Jason Lyon caution that even the smallest fire can sometimes get out of hand. Whether you are camping under the stars in the backcountry miles away from anyone, enjoying a campfire in your backyard, or hooking up your RV in a full-amenity trailer park, you can't afford to be careless with fire. "Even with the recent rains, all it takes is one spark for things to go wrong," says Marshal Degnan. "A carelessly abandoned campfire or a campfire built without safe clearance can turn a small fire into a dangerous and fast-moving blaze."

Marshal Degnan offers a few guidelines for making and maintaining a safe campfire:

- In recreation areas, use the designated fire ring or picnic grill.
- Build campfires where they will not spread, away from dry grass and leaves.
- Keep campfires small, and don't let them get out of hand.
- Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Stir it and douse it again with water.
- Never leave campfires unattended.
- A buried fire is not an extinguished fire.

Chief Lyon advises "in an emergency call 911." Lyon also states that "residents should contact their local fire department or forest fire warden as permits are required for any outdoor burning such as campfires." State Fire Marshal Bill Degnan states "All fires are preventable and we need your help".

For additional information on campfire safety please contact your local Fire Chief or visit the following web sites; [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) and [www.firesafety.gov](http://www.firesafety.gov) or contact us at [FMO@dos.nh.gov](mailto:FMO@dos.nh.gov) . The New Hampshire State Fire Marshals Office and your local Fire Chiefs encourage you to practice fire safety at home and away every day.

