

Fire has always fascinated man. A crackling fire adds to the outdoor experience. But it can also cause untold damage if not handled in the right way. The common right of access to private land does not give you an automatic right to light a fire – only the opportunity to do so in safe conditions.

In the event of
an emergency:

Call 112

For further information contact
the local fire brigade.

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

SE-651 81 Karlstad, Sweden
Telephone +46 (0) 771-240 240.
Fax +46 (0) 10-240 56 00
www.msbmyndigheten.se

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

SE-106 48 Stockholm, Sweden
Telephone +46 (0) 8-698 10 00
www.naturvardsverket.se

In collaboration with



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency



MSB Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
SE-651 81 Karlstad Tel. +46 (0) 771-240 240 www.msbmyndigheten.se
Order number MSB 0045-09

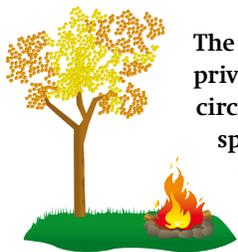


Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency

Lighting fires and the common right of access to private land

What to remember when lighting fires





The common right of access to private land means that in certain circumstances and on your own responsibility you can light fires in open country. In some places however, there may be a ban on the lighting of fires, for example, in nature conservancy areas (Local by-laws should be consulted for information about any possible bans).

Occasional bans on lighting fires

During the summer, it can sometimes be forbidden to light fires in the countryside because of the enormous risk of the fire spreading. Information about any bans on the lighting of fires is normally broadcast in conjunction with local radio news bulletins, in traffic reports and published in the local press. You can generally also obtain current information from the websites of the relevant county council and county administrative board, at camping sites, tourist offices and from the local fire brigade. Some municipalities have a telephone information line that provides details about the current fire risk; you can find this phone number in the telephone directory under the headings *Brandförsvar*, *Räddningstjänst* or *Brandkår* (these are various names for the fire brigade). When there is a ban on fires, all types of open fire are forbidden, even at places specifically set up for open fires. Municipal fire brigades update local variations.

If you light a fire

- You should preferably use a camping stove. But if you do light a fire, it is important to choose the right place such as a gravel or sand patch with access to water, which can be used to extinguish the fire. Be aware of the wind, which could carry sparks into the forest and onto dry grass. Either dig a hollow or lay a circle of stones around the fire, and keep the fire itself small.
- Do not light a fire if the wind is strong! Do not light a fire on peat or moss. There is also a huge

fire risk in earthy, forested areas. The fire could smoulder in the ground for a long time before suddenly flaring up. Avoid lighting a fire near anthills or tree stumps.

- Do not light a fire directly on or next to flat rocks. They become discoloured and can crack.
- The fireplace is not the place for rubbish. Do not put any rubbish that cannot be burnt into the fire.
- You may use branches, twigs and pinecones that you find lying on the ground as fuel for the fire. You must not damage live plants or trees.

How to extinguish the fire

Let the fire burn itself out completely. Extinguish it properly with water and then poke it so that the embers die out. Dig up the earth under the ashes until there are no signs of glowing embers or smoke left. A small shovel and a container for carrying water are useful items to have with you.

If the fire spreads

If possible, alert the fire brigade by phoning 112. Try to prevent the fire from spreading in the direction of the wind. Use bunches of branches from small pine or juniper trees which can be broken off up to about 1 metre from the top of the tree. These are better than leafy branches. It is best to wet the branches. Do not beat at the fire with large strokes as the sparks will fly around and spread the fire. Sweep burning material towards the fire, while at the same time pressing the branches against the ground to smother the flames. Throw branches and twigs out of the way, and pull up moss in the path of the fire.



If your clothes catch fire

- If your clothes catch fire throw yourself quickly to the ground and roll around.
- If someone else's clothes catch fire, lay the person on the ground and smother the fire using a blanket or jacket. Cover the person from the head downwards so that the flames are prevented from reaching the face. Remember that nylon and

similar fabrics can flare up or melt and cause even worse injuries.

- Cool down burning clothes and burns with cold water. Do not remove clothes that are stuck to the skin. Continue cooling the injuries until the pain stops (about 10 minutes). Seek medical attention.



Be careful when camping

- Never have an open fire or glowing coals inside a tent or under a canopy! The smoke from fires contains very toxic gases.
- Never pour fuel into the camping stove's burner until you have made sure the flame has burnt out and the burner has cooled down, otherwise the fuel could flare up and you run the risk of sustaining severe burns.
- At the campsite it is important to maintain a proper safe distance between tents, caravans, and motor homes to reduce the risk of fire, if possible, at least 4 metres.
- A tent can quickly catch fire. Ensure that grills, hot plates etc. are at a safe distance from the tent material. Always have a knife handy so that you can quickly cut your way out and escape.
- Check that all pipes and connections for bottled LPG gas are undamaged and properly tightened to prevent any leakage.
- Pay attention to where firefighting equipment and alarm systems are located.

