

Campsite Maintenance Know-How

Maintaining the fire ring



The fire ring is straightforward to maintain, as long as you are adequately prepared on your campsite visit.

Fire rings may be either concrete or steel. They are not provided at campsites with a year-round fire ban (Yourdamung, Blackwood and all campsites Mount Chance - Albany). This is to preserve fragile and important surrounding vegetation; only a fuel stove is permissible at these campsites.



Swinging steel cooking plates and billy hooks were originally used but are now considered less necessary by some. The presence and ongoing functionality of these tends to vary depending on the point of view of the local PaWS District office.

Fires should only ever be lit in the fire ring provided. Makeshift fire rings or campfires are sometimes constructed elsewhere by walkers, particularly at tent sites. These present an increased risk of wildfire, and all evidence should be removed to prevent others following this practice. If you find repeated evidence of makeshift fires, please report the details so we can follow up with PaWS.

Fire ring maintenance – on each visit to the campsite:

- Check and report on the condition of the fire ring – is the concrete cracked, is the metal developing large rust holes? Do you think it could do to be replaced?
- Clean out accumulated ash (see below).
- Clean out rubbish (hopefully there won't be much!) – take a robust rubbish bag to remove any unburnt packaging or food scraps. If there is too much to comfortably carry out, then tie off the bag, place it on the access road near the toilet, and clearly state this in your report so that the message gets through to PaWS for collection when convenient.
- Destroy makeshift fire rings or unbounded campfires – remove rocks/logs and return to the surrounding bush; remove and redistribute the ash as described below; rehabilitate the ground to remove the signs.

Removing ash:

- Wear gloves to protect your hands from heat or anything sharp
- Only remove ash if it is cold – remember it can remain heated for 24 hours. This protects you against burning and prevents the risk of a wildfire started by warm ash. If necessary, douse it with water.
- Removed ash should be scattered around in the surrounding vegetation, not heaped. Spread it in a different area each time.
- Use a metal dust pan if you have one, or a small tarp (see tip).
- Do not dig out the base of the pit below the ring.

Top Tip!

Take a small tarp on your campsite maintenance visit.

This can be used to collect and redistribute either leaf litter or ash.

Thanks to volunteer Judy for the suggestion!