

2007

Nebraska Forest Service: Fire Prevention is Easy... It's the Little Things That Count!

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Vogltance, Bob and Wiles, Larry, "Nebraska Forest Service: Fire Prevention is Easy... It's the Little Things That Count!" (2007).
Publications, etc. -- Nebraska Forest Service. 50.
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In case of fire

When a fire is discovered, call the fire department immediately. Do not attempt to fight the fire before calling for help. Those precious minutes spent attempting to extinguish a fire can delay the fire department's arrival and result in unnecessary damage and losses.

Keep the fire department's phone number posted prominently near the telephone. If you live in a rural area, keep directions to your home near the phone as well for those not familiar with your area.

If you need to use a fire extinguisher, follow these steps:

- 1: Think!
- 2: Pull the safety pin
- 3: Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire
- 4: Slowly squeeze the handle
- 5: Sweep the spray from side to side

Remember

- Look for hazards every day.
- When you find a fire hazard, repair it or get rid of it.
- Good housekeeping is good fire prevention. A clean, orderly work place and well kept equipment and tools are less likely to cause fire.

For more information:

Nebraska Forest Service
Rural Fire Protection Program
P.O. Box 830815
Lincoln, NE 68583-0815
(402) 472-2944
(402) 472-2964 (Fax)
www.nfs.unl.edu



Nebraska Forest Service

Fire Prevention is Easy... It's the Little Things



That Count!



Nebraska
Forest
Service



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Photos courtesy USDA NRCS

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Each year fire damages or destroys many homes which could have been saved if simple precautions had been taken before the fire struck.

Plan to Prevent Fire

A fire in a rural area is far more serious than a fire in a town or city where the fire department and fire-fighting resources are readily available. The most effective fire prevention device yet invented is YOUR attitude. With a positive fire prevention attitude, and by following the prevention measures suggested here, you can enjoy your country home with confidence.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Make certain roads are wide enough for emergency vehicles to pass.
- Eliminate dead-end roads which prevent a fire truck from turning around.
- Know the location of the nearest water supply. In the event of a fire, stock tanks, ponds, lakes and swimming pools provide a water source for fighting fire. Maintain easy access to these water sources year round.
- Identify roads with names or numbers for ease in locating residences.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Fire extinguishers should be placed in areas where they are readily accessible.
- Check fire extinguishers monthly, making certain they are properly charged.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Check lightning protection and grounding.
- Check TV antenna stability and grounding.
- Have electrical wiring and fuse boxes inspected. Replace worn or damaged wiring and use only fuses approved for the wiring.
- Make certain stoves and heaters are installed in accordance with local and state fire codes.

In the Yard

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Treat wood roofing material with a fire-retardant material.
- Remove tree limbs that hang over your roof.
- Remove all leaves and clutter from house gutters.
- Install a spark arrester on your chimney.
- Inspect chimneys each year and keep them in good repair.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Fuel storage tanks (LP Gas, welding gas, oxygen cylinders, gasoline, diesel, etc.) should be located at least 30 feet from buildings and at least 10 feet from any combustibles.
- Fuel storage tanks should be securely fastened to a firm support and resting on a solid foundation.
- Aboveground fuel storage tanks should be set on non-combustible supports. Underground storage is best.
- Keep vegetation mowed around fuel storage tanks.
- Store flammable liquids in approved containers. Never store flammable liquids in plastic milk jugs, glass jars, coffee cans or other unapproved containers.

- Allow hot engines on lawn mowers, etc., to cool 15 minutes before refueling. Never refuel vehicles or equipment with the engine running.
- Display "No Smoking" signs as a reminder to extinguish smoking materials before refueling.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- If burn barrels are allowed, place the barrel in an area cleared of flammable materials at least 10 feet around the barrel.
- Cover your burn barrel with a top screen made of ¼" wire mesh.
- Never remove the top screen when you have a fire in the barrel. Refill with trash only after the fire is out.
- Keep water and fire-fighting tools handy.
- Before doing any open burning, check with local fire officials to see if open burning is allowed in your community. If allowed, be sure to get all the proper permits from your local fire department.
- Only burn debris in clear areas away from buildings or flammable vegetation.
- Never burn on windy days.
- Never burn upwind from buildings or hazards.

It's the Little Things That Count...

- Stack firewood at least 30 feet away from your home and other structures.
- Clear away flammable vegetation within 10 feet of firewood piles.
- Mow your yard regularly to reduce flammable vegetation.
- Remove all debris piles.