

## **CAMPFIRE SAFETY**

### **BE AWARE**

Campfires usually become problems when campers fail to properly extinguish them before leaving the forest. The wind comes up and blows sparks into surrounding grass or fallen tree leaves or needles, and that can result in hundreds of acres of burned forest. To completely extinguish a campfire, it must be stirred with adequate amounts of dirt and water until it is cold to the touch of a bare hand. You can help by reporting suspicious smokes and putting out abandoned campfires you discover.

### **WHO TO CALL**

Fire Management Officer for the Appalachian Ranger District, Cleve Fox, recommends the following: If you come upon a campfire while you are hiking, and realize it was not properly put out, **call 911**. They will be able to properly determine if the land is public or private, and alert the correct authorities from that point forward. Even placing a cell phone call with a weak signal may, in fact, transmit your GPS points to emergency officials and assist in alerting help.

### **STEPS TO TAKE**

1. Drown the campfire with water.
2. Mix the ashes and embers with soil.
3. Scrape all partially-burned sticks and logs to make sure all the hot embers are off them.
4. Stir the embers after they are covered with water and make sure that everything is wet.
5. Feel the coals, embers, and any partially-burned wood with your hands. Everything (including the rock fire ring) should be cool to the touch.
6. Feel and look under the rocks to make sure no embers underneath.
7. Add more water.
8. Check the entire campsite for possible sparks or embers.
9. If it is too hot to touch, it is too hot to leave.