



# Scouts Australia - Greater Western Sydney Region

## Venturer Scout Council



### Fire Activity Policy

Beyond the normal section program, Venturer Scouts are encouraged to explore new skills to further their personal development. This policy recognises the availability of controlled fire activities to members.

Importantly, "Fire Ball Hockey", "Flaming Football" and similar activities involving the use of "fire balls" are defined as prohibited activities in the NSW Organisation and Information Handbook and must not be played by *Scouts* in NSW at any time.

The following skills are however permitted and are covered by this policy:

- Prop Manipulation  
*including juggling fire balls, poi twirling, staff twirling, fire whips, fire swords, fire snakes, fire fans*
- Fire Eating
- Fire Breathing

#### Hazards

There are many inherent hazards when using fire in Scout activities. These hazards include equipment failure, igniting ground cover, burns to clothing and skin, and accidental ignition of fuel supply, as well as the inhalation or ingestion of fuel.

Any *Scout* participating in such fire activities must be fully aware of these hazards and of the precautions and controls listed below for the respective skills. Participants under the age of 18 must ensure that their parents/guardians are also made aware of these hazards.

#### Activity Approval

Fire activities are reserved for registered and financial members of Scouts Australia that are currently invested in the Venturer Scout section or above.

Prior to engaging in any fire activity, participants under the age of 18 must ensure they are carrying approval from their parent/guardian as provided at the end of this policy.

Participants must ensure that an appointed adult leader will be in attendance and agrees to supervise the activity to ensure that all participants comply with the requirements stated in this policy. Furthermore, approval must be sought from the property owner, Group Leader or Camp Warden, prior to commencing any fire activity at the nominated location.

Consideration should be given to the current fire danger, and all fire activities postponed whenever Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger is reported.

*NB. Nothing in this policy restricts any participants from engaging in similar circus-style skills using non-flammable equipment (e.g. sock and tennis ball, LED glow poi, etc).*

## Training

Novice participants must be under the direct supervision of an experienced performer who is already competent at the specified skill.

Training must be conducted away from all spectators.

Participants must be assessed by their peers as competent for the respective skills prior to being involved in any performance display.

Constant and ongoing assessment of participant skills prior to a performance should be completed ensuring that any performance is well within the ability of the participant.

## Common Precautions

There are several precautions that are mandatory for all fire activities as included below.

1. Fire retardant clothing is to be worn by all participants
2. Fuel supply is to be stored in suitable sealed containers and isolated from the activity area
3. A dedicated safety spotter must be nominated and available at all times during the activity to provide emergency assistance if required
4. Extinguishing equipment must be on standby, including dense wet cotton material, fire blanket(s) and water extinguisher(s)
5. At least one person qualified in Apply First Aid (HLTFA301B) must be in attendance

## Performance Displays

Performance displays may be conducted safely when the following additional precautions are taken.

1. Only skilled participants are permitted when spectators are present
2. Participants must be inducted to the performance space prior to any performance
3. A defined exclusion zone for spectators and other participants not directly involved in the performance must be established
4. The safety spotter is responsible for maintaining the exclusion zone (with assistance if required for larger audiences)
5. Verbal warnings must be issued to spectators not to touch any of the performance equipment
6. Verbal warnings must be issued to spectators that these are skilled performers and that members of the audience should not try to repeat these skills at home
7. Verbal warnings must be issued to children that they should not play with fire or matches unsupervised

## SPECIFIC SKILLS

### Prop Manipulation

*including juggling fire balls, poi twirling, staff twirling, fire whips, fire swords, fire snakes and fire fans*

1. Mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment including fire proof safety gloves where necessary
2. Participants must fuel equipment individually and away from the activity area
3. Inspect and tighten all performance equipment prior to performance
4. Check all equipment for damage or wear and tear prior to performance, replacing damaged parts where necessary
5. Warm up with practice equipment prior to activity

### Fire Eating

1. Participants must be at least 16 years of age
2. Mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment
3. Participants must confirm that where cotton balls are used, they are made of pure cotton with a visual inspection of the packaging and the product prior to use, and that the igniting candle is firmly attached in a candle holder

### Fire Breathing

1. Participants must be at least 16 years of age
2. Mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment
3. Restriction of fire breathing activity to a perfect weather environment, avoiding windy conditions at all times
4. Participants must fuel equipment individually and away from the activity area
5. Restriction of fire breathing to 2 breaths per session with a maximum of 6 breaths per day

*NB. **Petrochemical** fire breathing is **not** permitted by participants under the age of 18 years.*



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### Fire Activity Approval

There are many inherent hazards when using fire in Scout activities. These hazards include equipment failure, igniting ground cover, burns to clothing and skin, and accidental ignition of fuel supply, as well as the inhalation or ingestion of fuel.

To safely manage these hazards the Greater Western Sydney Region Venturer Scout Council has published a Fire Activity Policy containing precautions and controls to minimise the risks involved in participating in these activities.

The following approval must be carried and shown on request prior to participating in any fire activities.

I acknowledge that fire activities are not a normal part of the Venturer Scout Program, and rather an activity of personal choice for the individual members involved.

I am familiar with the Fire Activity Policy and understand the hazards as listed above. I acknowledge that whenever my child participates in any fire activities, they accept Duty of Care for their own actions despite the provision of safety spotters and adult supervision.

Acknowledging the above, I hereby agree to my child \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert name*)  
of \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert Venturer Scout Unit*) participating in the following fire activities:

Prop Manipulation	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Eating ( <i>at least 16 years of age</i> )	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Breathing ( <i>at least 16 years of age</i> )	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*