



Government of  
Northwest Territories

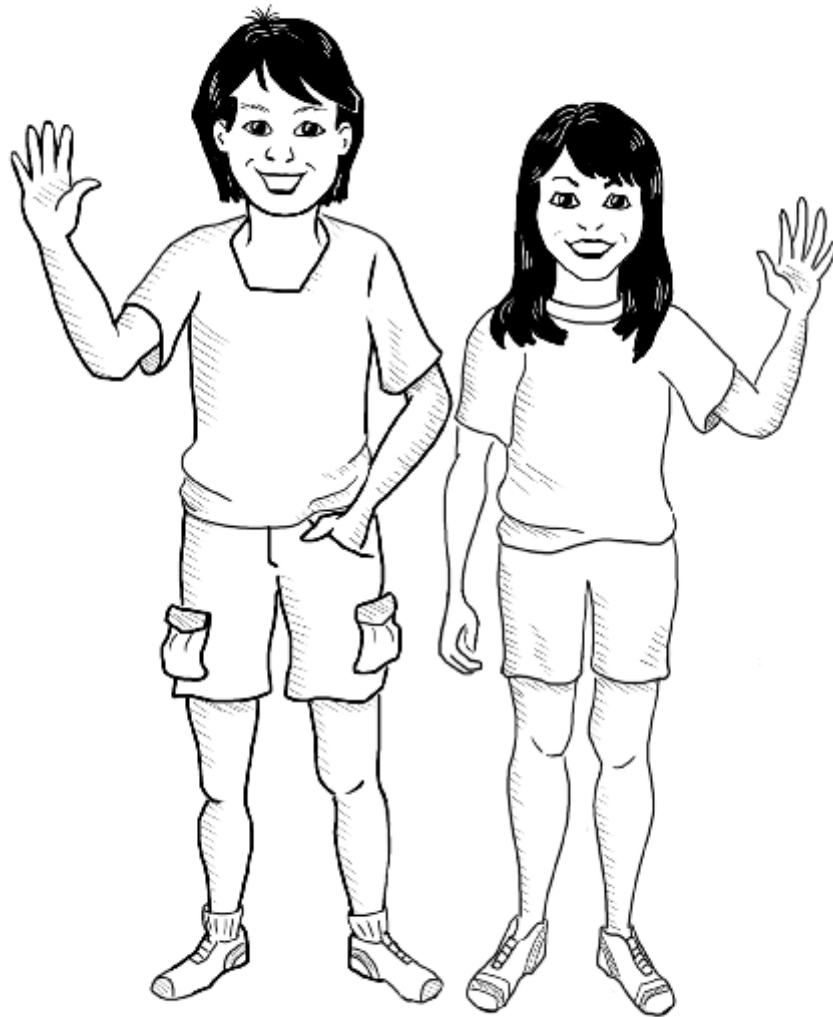
# FireSmart Ambassador Booklet



# Table of contents

Meet the FireSmart Ambassadors .....	Page 1
Information gathering .....	Page 2
How wildfire starts.....	Page 3
Value of wildfire .....	Page 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Change that occurs after a wildfire</b></li></ul>	
Preventing unwanted human-caused wildfires .....	Page 6
Campfires and fire pits	
Burning barrels	
Kids lighting fires	
Protect your home and yard from wildfire.....	Page 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: FireSmart home inspection checklist</b></li></ul>	
In case of an evacuation .....	Page 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Circle objects that you would take away with you</b></li><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Create a family emergency evacuation plan</b></li></ul>	
Test your knowledge .....	Page 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Case files</b></li></ul>	
Wrapping up .....	Page 18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Decipher the secret message</b></li><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Fire prevention poster contest</b></li></ul>	
FireSmart Ambassador Certification Card.....	Page 20
Answer Page.....	Inside Back Cover

# Meet the FireSmart Ambassadors



Hi, we're Reggie and Tammy, and we're **FireSmart Ambassadors**. We both took a pledge to use our FireSmart knowledge to keep our families and communities safe. We think you have what it takes to be part of our FireSmart team, and with a little bit of practice, you can become a **FireSmart Ambassador** too!

Follow along with us in your very own FireSmart booklet, which is yours to keep and look at whenever you need to. There's lots of cool stuff in here, and important tasks for you to accomplish. Use the information in this booklet to teach your family how to be FireSmart.

Once you've reached the end of this book, YOU will be a **FireSmart Ambassador** — a very important responsibility!

# Congratulations on taking your first steps towards becoming a FireSmart Ambassador!

**First, let's find out what you already know about being FireSmart.....**

Don't panic – you may not be sure of the correct answers. That's okay, just do your best. This booklet is going to teach you everything you need to know.



**1. How could a wildfire start and destroy this cabin?**

---

---

**2. If this was your cabin and you spotted a wildfire, what would you do?**

---

---

**3. You are being evacuated from your home because of a nearby wildfire. What should you take?**

---

---



# How wildfire starts

A wildfire needs a mix of fuel (twigs, grass, trees) and oxygen (air) to burn, and something to get them started, like lightning or a match. When all these things are present, a fire can easily start and spread out of control. Before you know it, an entire forest is ablaze, and any nearby homes and communities are threatened.

Every year, humans are responsible for a large number of wildfires in the province. Most of them are preventable. Wildfires can and do occur everywhere in the province, in the southern grasslands, and within the boreal forest in the central and northern portions of the province.

Fires can also start and spread on cooler days because of several factors:

**Wind** – Windy days dry out forest fuels, making them easier to ignite. Wind will also cause a fire to spread much faster.

**Lightning and Rain** – Rain reduces the risk of a fire igniting, but if lightning strikes in an area that does not receive much rain, or in a dry area, it can start a fire just by hitting a tree.

**Dry Fine Fuels** – A fire needs small-sized fuels like grass, twigs and needles to ignite and burn. If these types of fuels are available and they are dry, a fire can start easily and spread quickly.



# Value of wildfire

Fire plays a very important role in the health of our forests. Fire cleans up the forest when it begins to get very old, infested with insects or diseases, or when strong winds blow down trees in large areas. Following the fire, nutrients from burnt trees and other vegetation are released back into the soil and the open areas allow the sun to warm the ground, making it a perfect site for a new forest to grow.

Several tree species need the heat of a fire to open up their cones in order to release the seeds that are locked up inside them. Other trees grow new shoots from the unharmed root system to start a new forest after a fire. Plants like fireweed take advantage of a burned site where few other plants are growing. They can flourish until new trees slowly take over the site.

Many species of animals seek out recent and older burn sites to eat the berries, mushrooms and lush grass that they can't find in areas that have not burned over in recent years. Humans are attracted to these sites for the same reason!

Canada's northern forest is part of the boreal forest that grows all over the northern portion of the earth. If you looked at all the fires that have occurred in this forest over the past 200 years, you would have a hard time finding any portion of the forest that has not burnt. Fire naturally occurs in our forests and it plays a very important role in keeping them healthy.



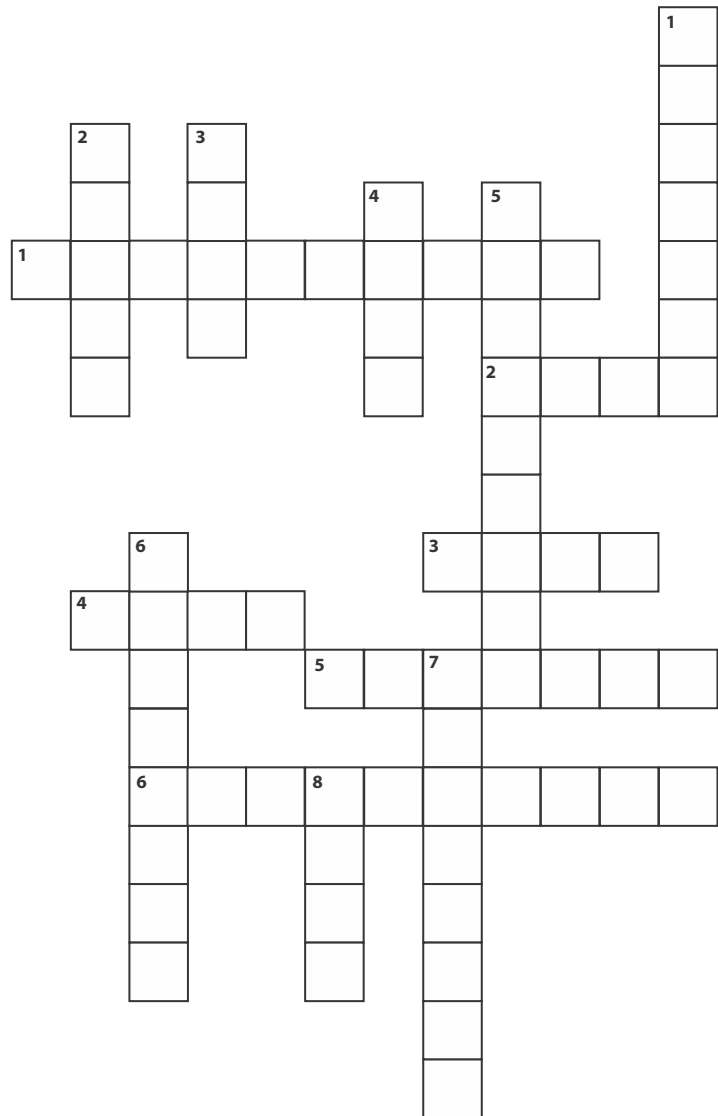
# Change that occurs after a wildfire

## ACROSS

- The ash left after a fire acts like \_\_\_\_\_ and helps plants grow.
- Some \_\_\_\_\_ live in dead trees and hunt mice.
- I hold seeds for a new forest after a fire.
- My name is 'jack' and I have needles. What kind of tree am I?
- \_\_\_\_\_ attack dead trees after a fire.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ looks for bugs in a tree by making holes.

## DOWN

- Lots of \_\_\_\_\_ grow after a fire. Bears eat them.
- Fire leaves some \_\_\_\_\_ unburned that help reforest an area.
- Some fallen trees are filled with \_\_\_\_\_ and bears eat those too!
- New plants on the forest floor help \_\_\_\_\_ hide from coyotes and foxes.
- Fallen trees \_\_\_\_\_ and give their nutrients to the new growth.
- My name tells people that I grow where fire has been.
- What do you call a very young tree?
- I like young plants.



## WORD LIST

Ants

Deer

Seedling

Fireweed

Woodpecker

Trees

Pine

Mice

Owls

Cone

Berries

Insects

Fertilizer

Decompose

# Preventing unwanted human-caused wildfires

We have learned that wildfires can be good for the environment and the plants and animals that live there, but unwanted human-caused wildfire can result in loss of our forests. Wildfires are very costly to manage, can result in burnt homes and can even injure or kill people.

It is important to respect the potential of a wildfire. A small campfire or even lighting a small piece of grass on fire can result in a large destructive wildfire.

As a **FireSmart Ambassador**, you should know how human-caused fires are commonly started.





## Campfires and Fire Pits

Any time that you or your family has a campfire, you should be sure your fire does not escape to become a wildfire. You can do this by following some simple rules:

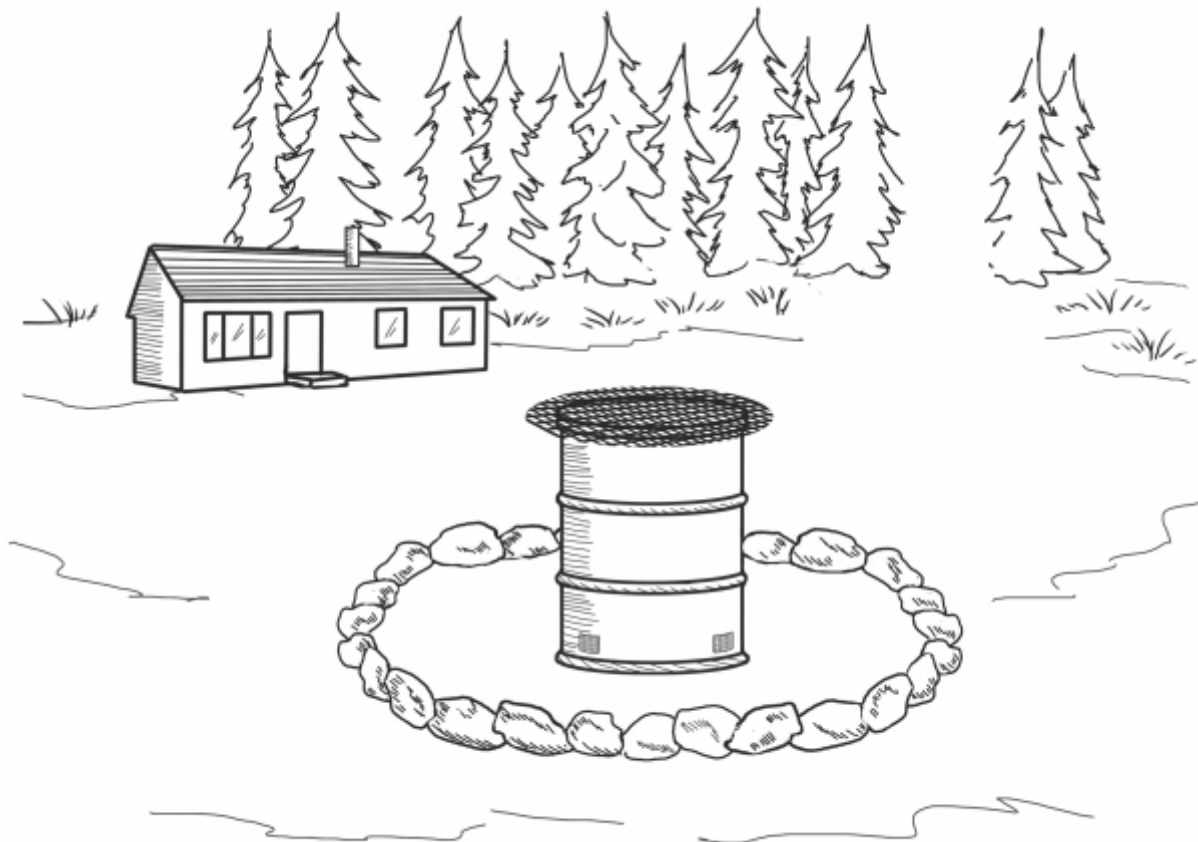
- Build your fire on sand, rock or within a container designed for a campfire.
- Clear away anything that can burn within one metre of your campfire.
- Keep your campfire small.
- Never leave your campfire unattended.
- Have a container of water and a shovel or long stick on hand for when you are done with your fire.
- Pour water over your campfire to be sure it is out. Stir the coals and pour water on it again, until the ashes are cold.



## Burning Barrels

Many families use barrels at their home or cabin. To ensure your burning barrel does not cause a wildfire, you should do the following:

- Check your burning barrel to make sure it has not rusted out, with holes for embers to escape.
- Make sure your burning barrel is surrounded by three metres of cement, sand, clay or rock.
- Cover the burning barrel with a heavy metal screen, making sure the mesh size is no larger than one centimetre.
- Only do your burning when someone is present to keep an eye on the fire.
- Hold off on burning anything when the surrounding vegetation is dry, especially if it is windy.

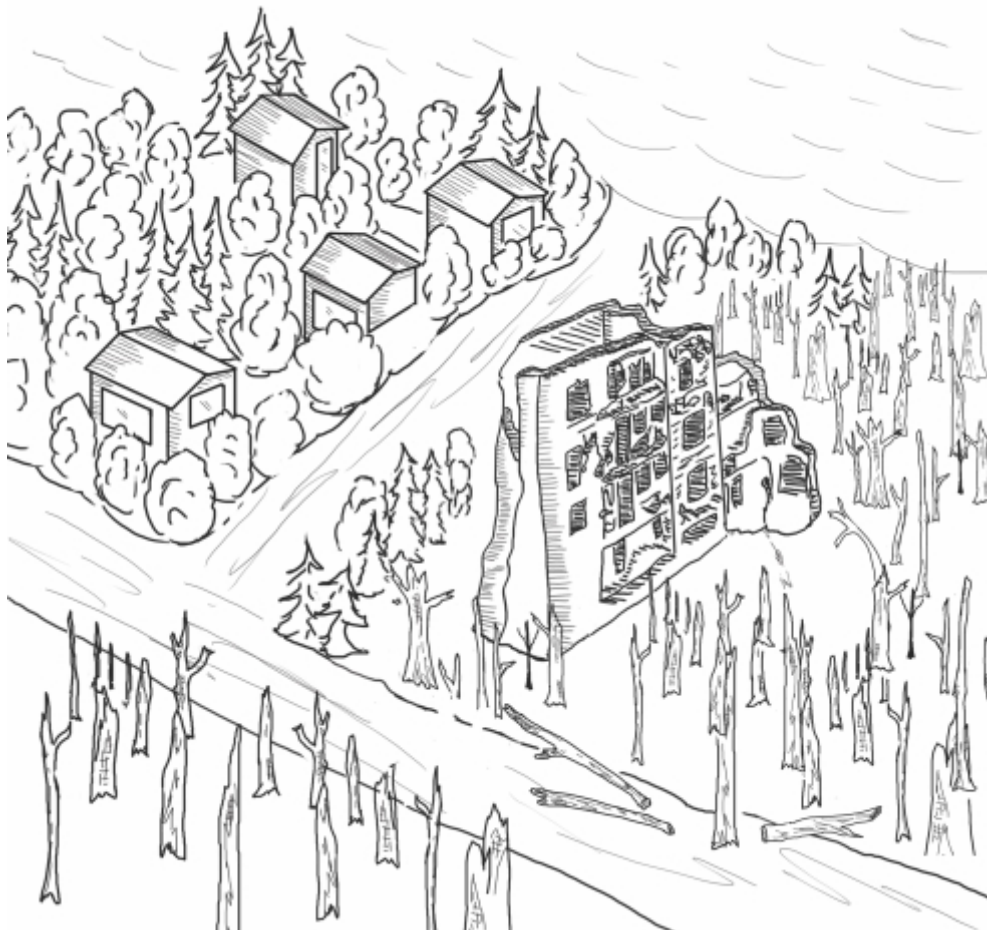


## Kids Lighting Fires: A Dangerous Game

Every year, kids start fires, sometimes by accident but sometimes on purpose, putting themselves and their whole community in danger. As a **FireSmart Ambassador** in your community, it's up to you to know the dangers of wildfire and to share these facts with others:

- Any fire has the potential to spread, to burn down someone's home, and to cause painful injuries or even death.
- You can't outrun a wildfire; wildfires will often travel faster than a person can run.
- Firefighters can't be everywhere and they may not always be able to get there in time to control a fire before it causes damage.
- Conservation officers and police investigate human-caused fires to find out who's responsible. The consequences for those involved can be very serious.

Remember, your work as a **FireSmart Ambassador** may help to prevent a destructive wildfire.



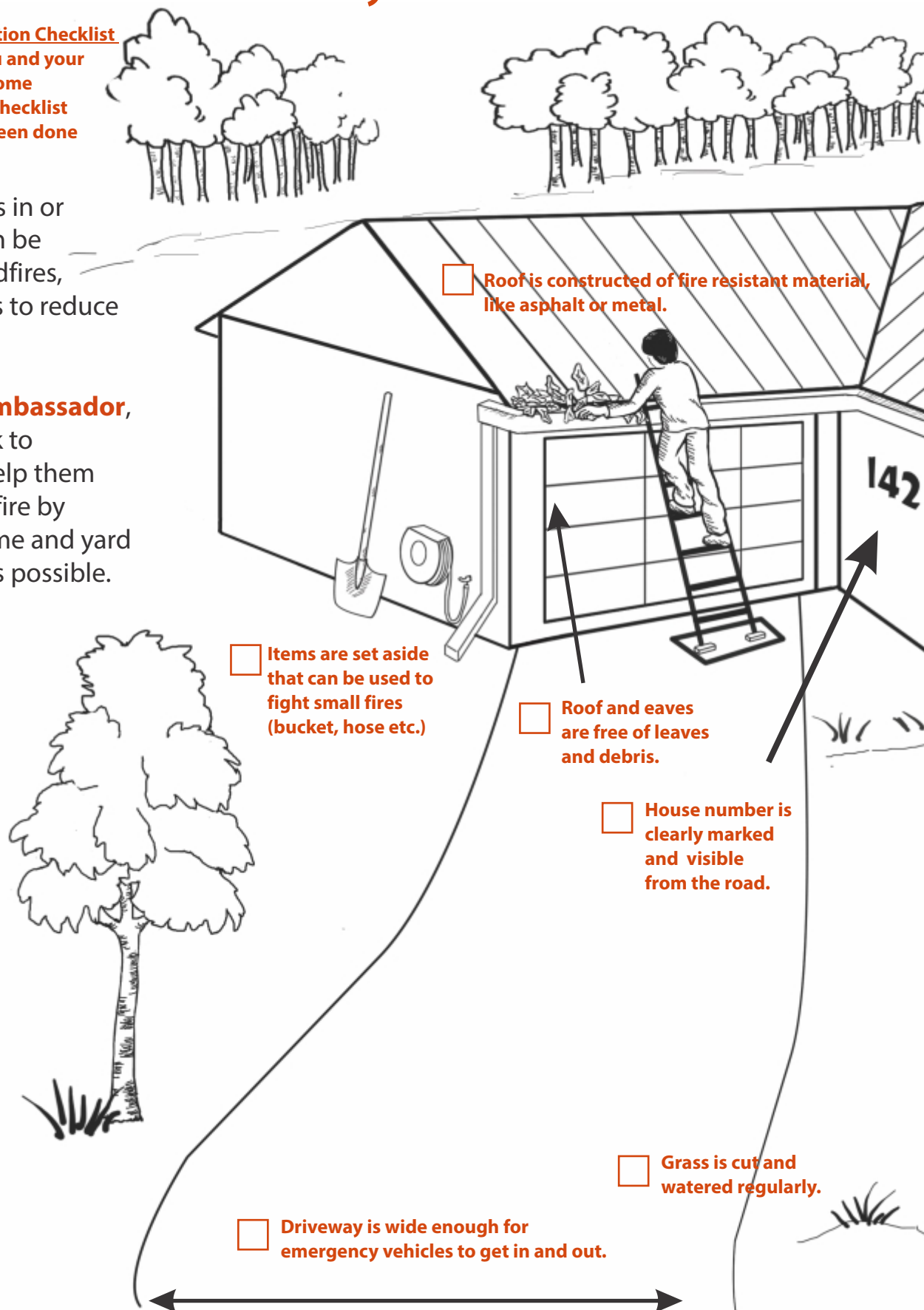
# Protect your home and yard from wildfire

## FireSmart Home Inspection Checklist

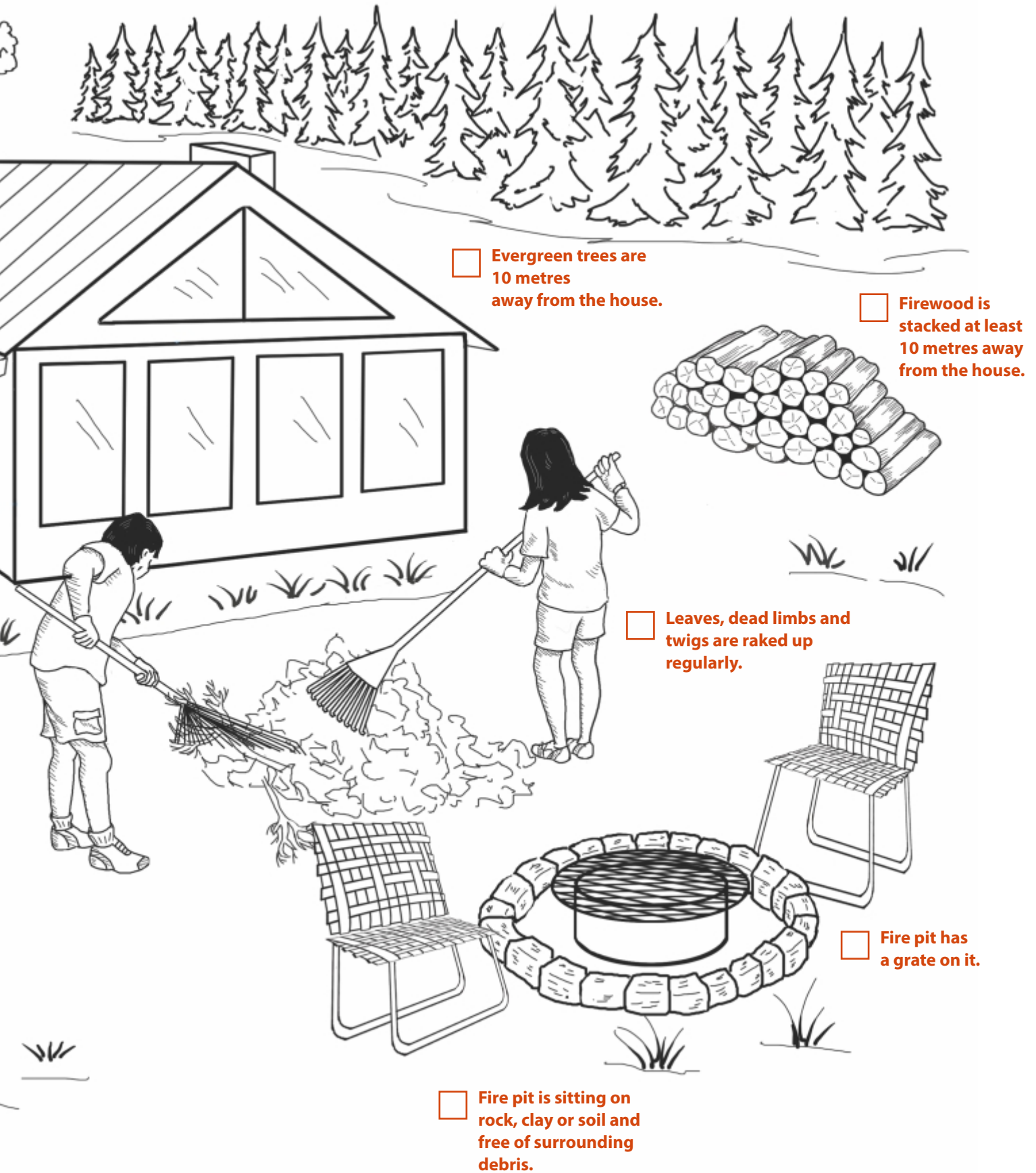
Below are ways that you and your family can make your home FireSmart. Revisit this checklist later when tasks have been done and check them off!

Houses and cabins in or near the forest can be threatened by wildfires, but there are ways to reduce the risks.

As a **FireSmart Ambassador**, it's your job to talk to your family and help them prepare for a wildfire by ensuring your home and yard are as FireSmart as possible.









# In case of an evacuation

In the event of a fire you and your family need to remain calm. More importantly, you should have a family evacuation plan in place. This plan is essential to keep you and your family safe during an evacuation event.

## **In the event an evacuation alert is issued for your area:**

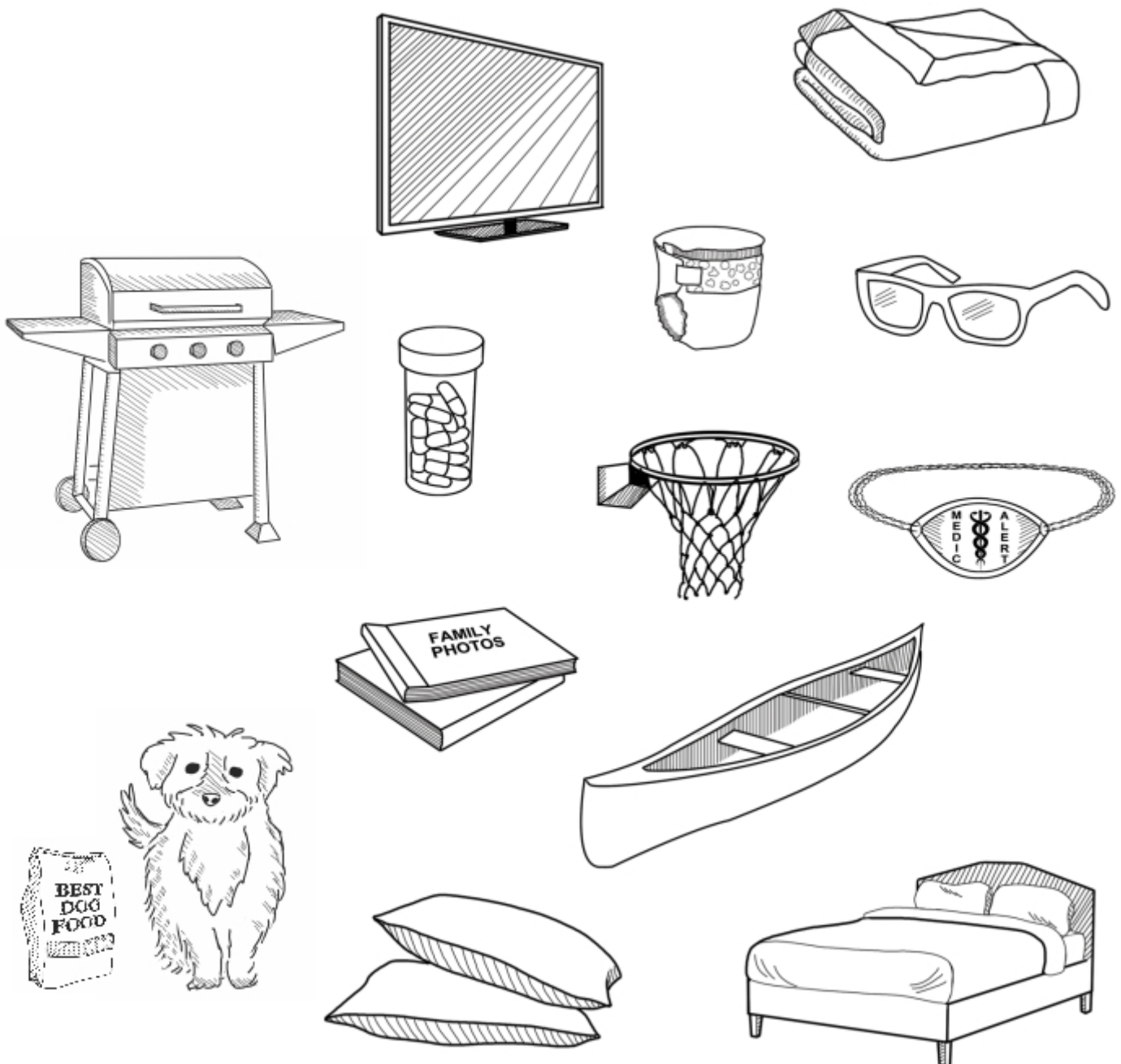
- You may need to leave your home on very short notice.
- Stay tuned for updates from your local authority — by radio, TV or community meetings.
- Have your emergency supply kit and important documents ready to go. Your kit should contain:
  - ~ Three-day supply of non-perishable food and three gallons of water per person
  - ~ Map marked with at least two evacuation routes
  - ~ Prescriptions or special medications
  - ~ Change of clothing
  - ~ Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
  - ~ An extra set of car keys, credit cards and cash
  - ~ First aid kit
  - ~ Flashlight
  - ~ Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
  - ~ Copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports, etc.)
  - ~ Don't forget your pet and their food and water!

## **You should also:**

- Bring some comfort items, like a favourite toy or colouring books.
- Remember to check on family, friends and neighbours who may have trouble evacuating.
- Collect precious photos and mementos that can't be easily replaced but can easily be carried out.

# Circle the objects that are important to take with you

There are certain objects that should be brought with you if you are evacuated from your home. However, there are also objects that are tempting to take, but really are not important.



# Create a family emergency evacuation plan

With help from your parents, fill out this form and place it where it can easily be found or seen by everyone in your household.

**If we have to evacuate, we will meet at:**

---

---

**Our out-of-area emergency contact person is:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**Other important numbers are:**

Emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

RCMP Detachment: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Test your knowledge



**Impressive!** You've made it through a lot of material and it seems like you really know your stuff! Before you can get your FireSmart Ambassador Certificate, you must test your new-found FireSmart knowledge as a Wildfire Detective.

**Can you find the actions that might lead to wildfire in the case files below? Change the characters' actions to prevent wildfires.**

### Case File #1

The Smith family spent their weekend camping at their favourite provincial park. At night, the family gathered around the campfire to roast marshmallows and sing songs. Mr. Smith tossed a couple handfuls of dirt onto the campfire when it was time for bed. Since the fire appeared to be out, the Smith family crawled into their tents to sleep.

What might happen next:

---

What I would change:

---

**Case File #2**

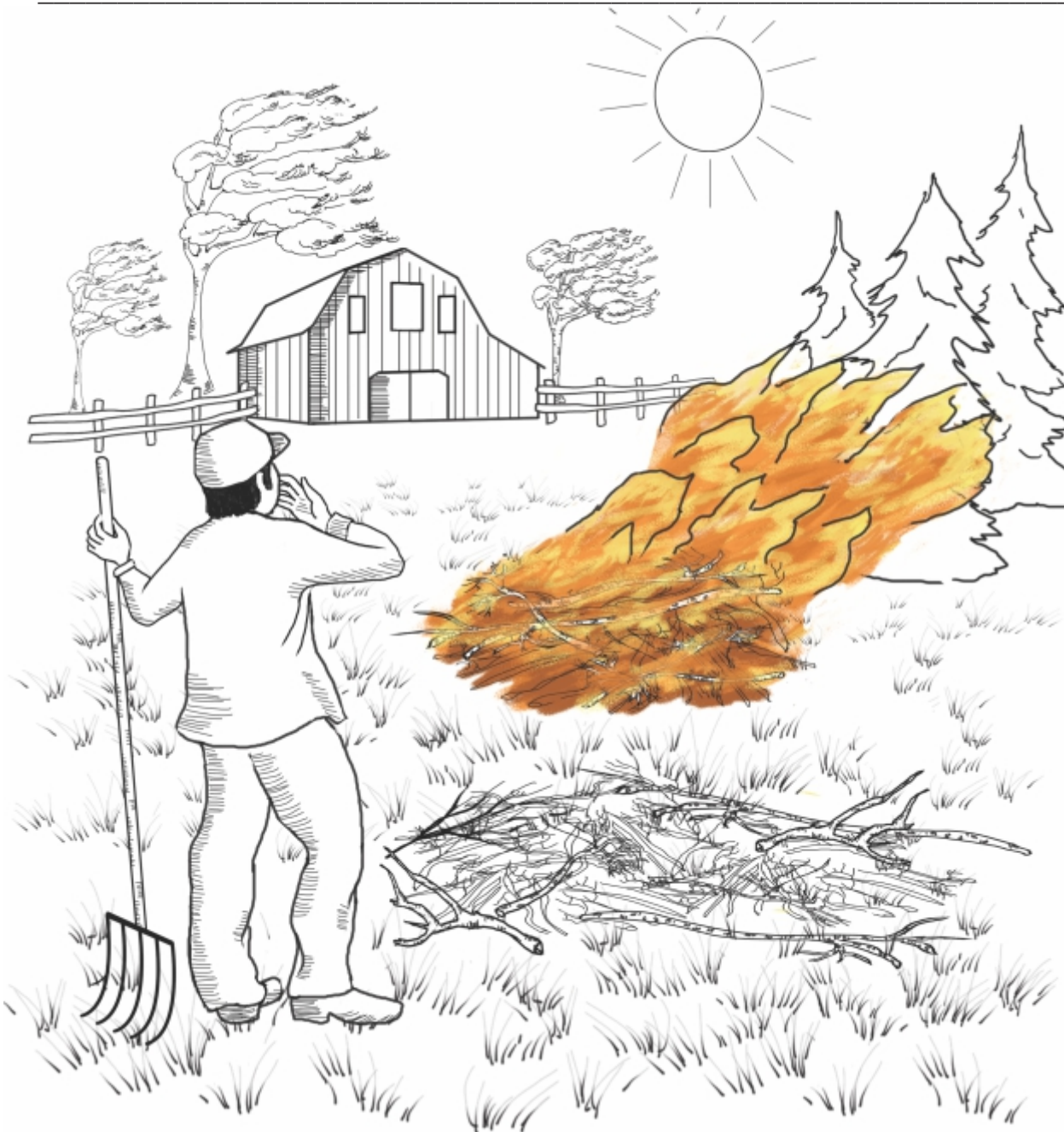
The day was hot and dry when Farmer Jones decided to do some open burning. He felt a slight breeze pick up as he lit a match, tossing it into a brush pile that lay close to neighbouring trees. He was shocked when he saw how quickly the brush pile caught on fire — and how rapidly the fire was beginning to spread!

What might happen next:

---

What I would change:

---





**Case File #3**

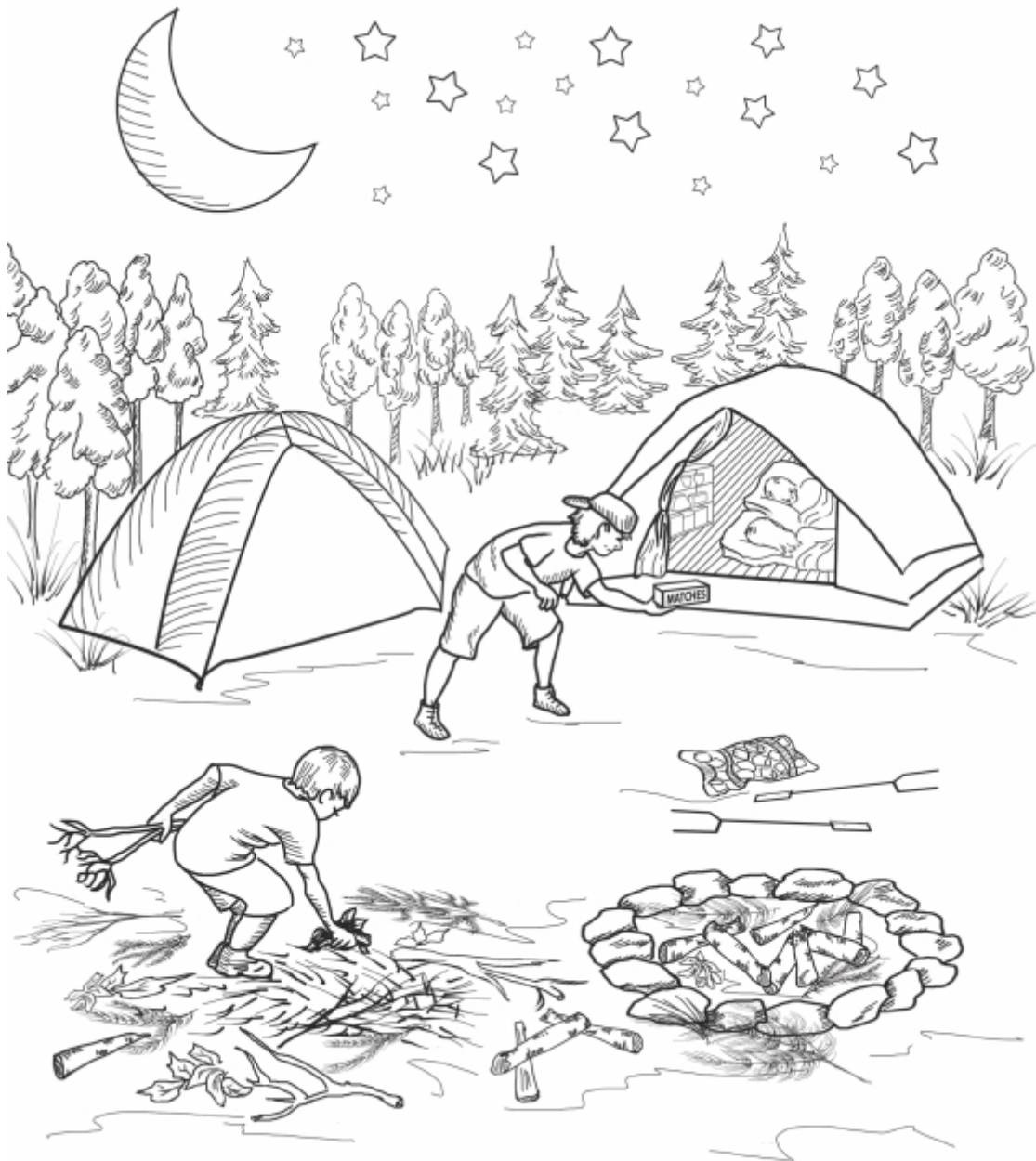
It was late when Jesse and Alex returned to their tents, and their parents had already gone to bed. Not yet sleepy, the boys decided they wanted to roast some marshmallows. Alex snuck into his parents' tent and grabbed some matches while Jesse gathered dry leaves and twigs.

What might happen next:

---

What I would change:

---



# Decipher the secret message

KEY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

			E	S				T
6	9	18	5	19	13	1	18	20

A				S	S					
1	13	2	1	19	19	1	4	15	18	19

		O	
11	14	15	23

20	8	1	20

P			V						
16	18	5	22	5	14	20	9	15	14

9	19

20	8	5

B			
2	5	19	20

		Y
23	1	25

20	15

P			T			
16	18	15	20	5	3	20

Y			
25	15	21	18

		M	
8	15	13	5

		O	
6	18	15	13

			D	F			!
23	9	12	4	6	9	18	5



# Fire prevention poster contest



We knew you would make a great **FireSmart Ambassador**, and your community is a lot safer from the dangers of wildfire with you around!

## DIRECTIONS:

Use a blank piece of paper to create your own fire prevention poster. It should include a drawing of what you think is important FireSmart knowledge. You don't have to include everything — you could draw a campfire safety scene, or maybe a scene of a FireSmart yard. Be creative and show that you know what it means to be a **FireSmart Ambassador**!

When submitting your poster, be sure to put your name and address on it. Your teacher or parents can help you send it to:

Forest Management Division  
Department of Environment and  
Natural Resources, GNWT  
Box 7  
Fort Smith, N.T X0E 0P0

**Note:** Everyone who sends in a poster will receive a signed **FireSmart Ambassador** Certification Card. You can also look for your poster at [www.nwtfire.com](http://www.nwtfire.com) or on our Facebook page at Nwtfire

# FireSmart Ambassador Certification Card

Congratulations! You are now an official FireSmart Ambassador, a title that deserves bragging rights!

**Here is what your FireSmart Ambassador Certification Card will look like.**



## FireSmart Ambassador Certification Card

\_\_\_\_\_ is recognized for  
participating and completing **FireSmart Ambassador Training**  
and is now a **FireSmart Ambassador**.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Government of  
Northwest Territories



# Answers

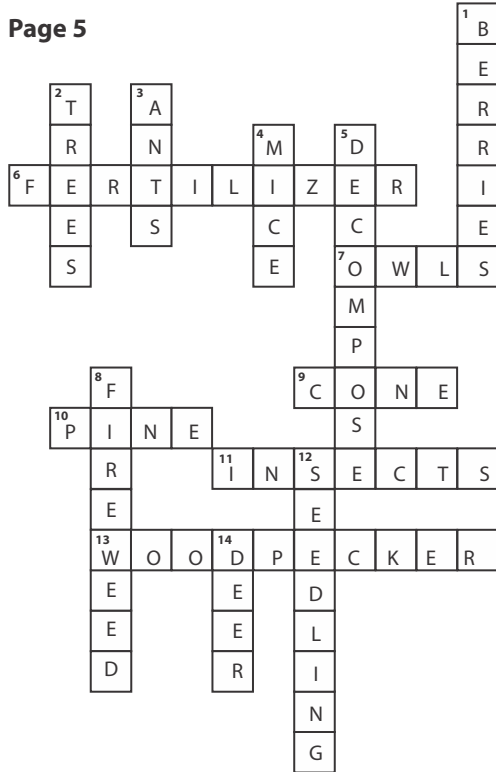
## Page 2

**1. Possible Answers:** lightning; the burning barrel; firewood; trees

**2. Possible Answers:** Tell an adult, call the FireWatch number, 911

**3. Possible Answers:** Pets, medicine, purse or wallet, pictures, cell phone, clothing, food, water

## Page 5



## Page 13

Things to take: pillows, blankets, medicine, diapers, eyeglasses, family photos, pet and pet food

## Page 15

What might happen: the fire doesn't go out and spreads throughout the campsite

What would I change: douse the fire with water, stir the coals, make sure it was out

## Page 16

What might happen: the fire could reach the fir trees and spread to the barn

What would I change: test the wind speed before lighting the fire, make sure to have a hose nearby to put the fire out

## Page 17

What might happen: the campfire gets out of control, boys burn themselves, a wildfire might start

What would I change: don't light a fire unless supervised by a parent or guardian

## Page 18

FireSmart Ambassadors know that prevention is the best way to protect your home from wildfire!



