Safety Considerations When Using a Flame Thrower

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Flame throwers are powerful tools that require considerable attention to ensure they are used safely and with the desired results. Consider the following.

1. Flame temperatures are on the order of 1200°F. Be careful to avoid contacting the flame or the flame wand with anything that might combust, melt or scald, such as yourself, or the propane hose.

2. Prepare a plan (on reverse) for what you want to accomplish with the flame thrower. Plan for unforeseen conditions (wind, smoke, snags, poison ivy). Know how to react if someone is injured or a ground fire starts. Have access to the phone number for the local fire department. Consult the local fire department about your plans and seek their input.

3. Operators should wear personal protective equipment (PPE). These include: safety glasses/goggles (not regular sunglasses or eyeglasses), all-leather gloves, canvas pants, and flame retardant foot wear.

4. Do not operate the flame thrower if you are tired, sick, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

5. Check the forest fire danger report: http://www.ct.gov/dep/site/default.asp NEVER BURN IF THE FIRE DANGER IS 'HIGH', 'VERY HIGH', OR 'EXTREME'. The best time to torch is during or after a rain event. Avoid late afternoon torching when conditions are dry or windy. Be mindful of changing weather conditions.

6. Carefully secure propane tanks during travel. Use well designed pack frames to carry propane tanks. Inspect all equipment prior to use. Be sure to routinely check your lines for leaks. The inert component in propane, ethyl mercaptan, reacts with metal and over time loses its odor.

7. Keep children, unsafe adults, and pets away from the flame thrower.

8. Novice users should receive training and should practice under controlled conditions until they are comfortable with all equipment and procedures.

9. Observe area after treatment to ensure there are no hot spots that could ignite. Use the back of your hand to check the burned area.

10. Be familiar with local ordinances and regulations concerning the transportation of propane. Above all, USE COMMON SENSE.