



Feuerwehr
INFO Nr. 3.41

In an emergency, call the fire brigade and emergency services.



112

Published by:
Landesfeuerwehrverband Niedersachsen
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Do not obstruct ongoing firefighting or other rescue operations. Those operations, often involving fire-fighting aircraft and helicopters, attract people for good reasons - but those persons can disrupt the operations, endangering themselves and the emergency services. The same applies to fire engines, do not obstruct them either.

We would also like to point out that traffic cones are often knocked over at road forks. This is not an accident and they should not be replaced by passers-by. These cones are used to guide the emergency services to the site of an incident in a confused area of woodland.



Forest fires and emergencies - How to behave to be save

Emergency meeting points

In recent years, red and white signs have been installed at more than 2,000 emergency meeting points in the state forests of Lower Saxony. These are marked with an individual name consisting of the letter combination of the responsible district and the numbering of the point. In the event of an emergency, forest workers or forest visitors can call the emergency services using the emergency number 112 and give them the name of the meeting point to ensure rapid rescue. Forest emergency meeting points are defined access points for rescue vehicles in the forest that describe specific meeting points with coordinates. These marked meeting points can be used in emergencies when communicating with the emergency services to make it easier to find the scene of an accident and to guide emergency vehicles quickly to the right place in case of an accident. Coordinate meeting points are marked either with fixed signs in the forest or on a virtual level, i.e. as pure coordinates. Emergency meetings points can serve people unfamiliar with an area as orientation mark to describe their position in the forest.¹ In non-government forests, such emergency meeting points are still rather rare.



¹ <https://www.landesforsten.de/bewirtschaften/forsttechnik/rettungspunkte/> (Zugriff 04.04.2023)

A fire - the right behaviour



Stay calm!

Try to put out the fire if possible!

Call for help!

Leave the danger zone!

If there is a fire in the forest quickly consider whether you can damp it down with the means available to you, for example a bottle of water. However, most important is to protect yourself! Don't put yourself or others in danger, call the emergency services!

The emergency number is 112, applying in all European Union countries but also in other European countries such as Switzerland. If you see a fire in the forest and call the emergency number, listen carefully to the operator, answer his questions and follow his instructions. Generally, the first question asked in an emergency call is: "Where is

the emergency?" Particularly in the case of emergencies in the countryside or in the forest, it is not possible to rely on traditional address information such as town, street and house number. In this case, it is much more important to describe the exact location of the emergency. If you are close to the fire, in addition to a description such as the name of the forest area, you can also refer to signs you have seen at crossroads or landmarks such as shelters or other "points of interest". Providing coordinates that can be read by smartphones or GPS devices that walkers like to carry can also help.

A backup for control centre staff is the Advanced Mobile Location (AML) function that control centres can use. This locates the mobile phone. Experience in recent years has shown that this works very quickly and reliably in over 80% of cases, but not always and everywhere and with every phone/mobile phone.

If you have spotted a fire from a distance and all you can see is smoke, it is important to tell the control centre that you are not directly at the fire, but to tell them where you are and in which direction and at what distance you can see the fire.

In addition to that, emergency rescue points can help with orientation (see other page).

In addition to the location of the emergency, the staff at the phone will also ask "What happened?", i.e. what kind of emergency it is. In this case, a forest fire. Describe exactly what you see to the operator. What is burning, is it grass or several bushes and trees? How big is the fire?

The control centre staff may also ask other questions, such as whether there are any injured or endangered people. They will provide instructions on how to behave; please follow them. For example, you may be instructed to call the local fire brigade or to move away from the fire.

In addition to the classic emergency call by phone, you can also use the Nora app², the official emergency call app of the federal states. With the app, you can reach the police, fire brigade and ambulance service quickly and easily in an emergency. Anywhere in Germany. Nora uses the positioning function on your mobile device to transmit your exact location to the relevant emergency call centre. This makes it easier for emergency services to find you, even if you don't know exactly where you are. You can also use the app for emergency calls without having to speak. This allows people with speech and hearing impairments to communicate directly with police, fire and ambulance control centres.

Now that the emergency call has been made and professional help is on the way, you should leave the danger zone. Be aware of the wind and the direction of the fire.

An emergency - the right behaviour



Stay calm!

Call for help!

Give first aid!

Do not put yourself in danger!

A part from fires, other emergencies might happen in the forests, for example accidents. These are usually accidents involving injury to people or the search for people. If people have an accident in the forest, the first thing to do, as with a fire in the forest, is to stay calm. Then call the emergency services.

The procedure for calling the emergency services is the same as for a fire. Describe the exact location of the accident and what has happened to the control centre dispatcher. The operator will also ask additional questions, such as the nature of the person's injuries. No need for a medical diagnosis, but describe exactly what you see or recognise. Is the person bleeding, is he or she responsive? You might be asked specific questions; but the operator on the phone will provide also instructions how to behave and - if necessary - advice on first aid. Follow those instructions.

Once the emergency call has been made and professional help is on the way, look after the casualty or carry out the instructions given to you by the monitoring centre. Always remind not to put yourself into danger, e.g. during a well intentioned rescue operation.



² <https://www.nora-notruf.de> (available in DE and EN)