

# Can we have an open debate about whether cigarettes cause forest fires?

The issues surrounding the connection between smoking in the woods and forest fires are so complex, and so emotional, it's hard to debate them objectively.

Over the years, you've heard so often that smoking in the woods causes forest fires — and so little challenging these reports — that you may assume that the case is closed.

Studies that conclude that smoking in the woods causes forest fires regularly ignore major arguments and findings to the contrary.

For example, many people who smoke in the woods never cause forest fires, and some forest fires occur even if no one smokes. So how can smoking possibly be a cause of forest fires?

Besides, if no one was there to see the fire start, and the fire burned the cigarette that supposedly started it, how can we be sure that a cigarette was the cause?

The evidence about cigarettes or smoking being a cause of forest fires is merely statistical. Simply because a large number of forest fires start where smokers throw their matches or cigarettes doesn't prove that the cigarette actually caused the fire.

Many of the independent scientists who work for us or hope to receive our lucrative grants believe that the issue is far from clear, and that more open debate and research are needed. That's why we spend millions of dollars each year on

research to see if smoking in the woods can possibly cause forest fires.

During the coming months we will raise a number of other key questions related to smoking in the woods and fires.

Some of the things we will say may surprise you, just as some of the things we said in this ad probably surprised you. We're even surprised that we had the gall to say them.

We recognize that these arguments may seem illogical and may even confuse the issue. But that won't stop us from saying them, because, quite frankly, that's our objective.

We believe that if we say these things often enough, some people will believe them. We'll spend huge sums of money for large ads like this one to make a common sense issue like this look controversial.

And we'll continue to maintain that there are lots of unanswered questions and no simple answers about any issue that affects our profits.

In future ads we'll try to convince you that smoking in bed doesn't cause fires, and that smokers are more likely to go to heaven. We'll also step up our efforts to convince you that ventilation systems can protect you from second-hand smoke.

We ask that you keep an open mind about our future ad campaigns. The best way to do that is to be sure that your mind is absolutely empty.

**Philip More Cancer Co (soon to become the All-Cancer Co),  
J. R. Renegade Tobacco Co., The Toblacko Institute,  
Brown Lung Co, and a few others  
who don't want to be named.**

## Facts About Fire Safe Cigarettes

Cigarette-ignited fires are a leading cause of fire deaths in the United States. They cause up to 4,000 injuries each year and over half a billion dollars in property losses. When you factor in health care and productivity losses, plus the human costs of pain and suffering, the total annual costs are estimated at \$4 billion dollars. Tobacco companies can design fire-safe cigarettes but have resisted doing so voluntarily and have opposed Congressional action. New York state recently passed a law requiring fire safety standards for all cigarettes sold in the state. Could the recent Snaking fire — which officials say was caused by a cigarette — been prevented if cigarettes were fire-safe in Colorado?

## Web sources about fire-safe cigarettes

[www.burnfoundation.org/](http://www.burnfoundation.org/)  
[www.ameriburn.org/](http://www.ameriburn.org/)  
[www.gasp.org/firesafe.html](http://www.gasp.org/firesafe.html)

*The above parody is a public service of the Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution (GASP of Colorado) paid by public donations to the GASP Education fund. GASP is a statewide nonprofit organization that has been promoting smoke-free policies since 1977. The text is based on a spoof created by Action on Smoking & Health (ASH).*

**For a free brochure about GASP call 303/444-9799  
or visit our Web site [GASPforair.org](http://GASPforair.org).**