

MAGNESIUM FIRE STARTER INFO

From: Cindy

Subject: Re: Magnesium Fire Starter

Date: 26 Jan 1997 16:53:54 GMT

A while back I bought one from an army-navy store, thinking it would be a neat item to have. Let me tell you: it SUCKS!!! The magnesium dulls your knife miserably when you try to shave it. The magnesium shavings fly all over the place when you try to shave them off. It will take you a long time to get a "quarter-sized pile" of shavings.

The flint chips off into giant chunks. When you do get the shavings burning, they burn up so fast you don't even have time to put any tinder on the fire.

And last, if you ever put water on a magnesium fire, the 5400 degree temperature will cause the separation of the water molecules into their individual elements (hydrogen and oxygen-both explosive) and you will cause a huge explosion. (see below for other info)

There is one flint- oriented firestarter I would recommend. It's the one from Chris Janowsky of WSI. I personally use a Gerber "Strike Force" firestarter, which uses a flint and striker to ignite a gelled alcohol cube that burns for 5-10 minutes. It works MUCH better than any flint/magnesium firestarter. Mr. Janowsky's uses Vasolene-soaked cotton as an inexpensive but effective tinder.

Nope, Mg doesn't explode in water, it just burns faster, perhaps much faster, but never at a rate that could be called explosive. Sometime magnesium fires can be extinguished with large volumes of water, but if it fails, its too late to reach for the Class D fire extinguisher.

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The cotton balls are an old, but good, trick. And I prefer the Strike Force also, but the mag block has it's place (some where in front of the bow drill). Pat