



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



4 STEPS FOR BURNED AREA SAFETY



LOOK UP

Rocks, limbs and trees can fall at any time. Severely burned soil is less absorbent. Burned soil and vegetation loss increase water runoff in drainages below the burned area, which can cause erosion and increase the risk of flash floods and mudslides.



LOOK DOWN

Burned-out roots and stumps can leave deep holes, which may be hidden beneath a thin crust of soil. Coals can smolder deep inside logs, stumps, and below ground for months after a fire.



LOOK AROUND

Wind, rain and snow increase the risk of many hazards, including landslides, floods, falling limbs and trees, and falling rocks. Dead or damaged trees can stand for several years after a fire, then fall as roots decay – especially if it's windy, or wet.



LOOK BELOW

In water, a strong current can sweep limbs, rocks, even tree trunks and boulders along with it. Debris can snag or strike swimmers and boaters, and change current patterns in rapids. Look out for floating and submerged debris in rivers and lakes.