



VOLunteers in ACTION : “Raising Awareness For Volunteer Fire Fighters”

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Good Practice from OIKO.POLI.S

1. Title of the activity or event

Forest area examination

2. Objectives/aims expected by this action

Community participation in fire management preparation

Combine physical exercise with positive impact to the fire prevention field

Promote respect towards fire and civil protection infrastructure

Examination of fire hydrants in the specific forest area

Examination for garbage and dumps in the specified forest area

Examination of the road network

Examination of ponds and water tanks

Raise awareness of the need to maintain fire equipment

Raise awareness of the need to preserve accessible roads to fire vehicles

Promote respect for the security forces

3. Target group (or groups)

Local population

4. Description of the activity (methods, materials, human and physical resources, timing, etc.)

The examination is organized in large groups and takes place in several days during the year. The volunteers will have been informed by a specialist forest firefighter about their tasks.

The activity consists of visual examination of fire hydrants, garbage, water tanks and road network in a specified forest area. The four examinations take place simultaneously. For example, as the participants walk, they find a broken fire hydrant. Later, 200 meters down the road, they see that the road is blocked by a fallen tree. 300 meters further on, there is a pile of garbage next to the vegetation.

The examination takes place on foot in the specified forest area. The volunteers take photos and coordinates in the problematic sites. The examination is visual. Neither the fire hydrants nor the water tanks are touched



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by the participants. The information is sent to the local responsible authorities. In Greece, the information is sent to the local municipality and forestry authority.

5. Steps for the implementation (operative steps to implement the good practice)

Training of volunteers by an expert in forest firefighter prevention. The participants acquire the basic skills of taking photos and finding coordinates with the help of a GPS.

Fire hydrants: The participants examine for leakages or potential visible damage. Even in case of doubt, photos are taken. The fire hydrants are not touched by the participants. The examination is strictly visual.

Garbage and dumps: Examination for illegal piles of garbage or dumps inside the forest area. There is high danger of fire ignition and fire acceleration in such sites.

Water tanks and ponds: The volunteers examine for leakages or potential visible damage. The examination is strictly visual. Even in case of doubt, photos are taken.

Road network: Inspection for erosion damage, fallen trees or rocks.

The participants are informed that during the following month, there will be information gathering. In each problematic site, photos, coordinates and notes are taken.

At the end of the selected time period, the information is gathered and disseminated to the responsible authorities. In Greece, it is distributed to the local municipality and forestry authority.

6. Impact of the good practice and evaluation of the results achieved

Although there is thorough examination by the local authorities, damages may occur to fire hydrants, ponds/tanks or parts of the road network in the intervals between the authorities' inspections. The same applies with piles of garbage in forest areas. This good practice enhances the protection of the infrastructure, inside the forest areas. This infrastructure is critical for successful firefighting operations, as the fire brigade needs open, accessible roads as well as fast water access. Furthermore, this good practice supports the local authorities in the detection of dumps which are dangerous for fire ignition or acceleration.

7. Conclusions

The main aim is to raise awareness of the fire management preparation through protecting necessary infrastructure and through detecting dumps and piles of garbage inside the forest areas. With this good practice, people are encouraged to participate in forest walks, not only for their health but, more significantly, to provide substantial assistance to the local authorities on the fire preparation field. Thus, the local communities get involved and feel more sympathetic to the security forces and local authorities.



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