***"From a little spark may burst a mighty flame."* - Dante**

Fire is and has been one of man's most basic tools since the beginning of modern time. Having the ability to ignite a fire in an emergency can mean the difference between life and death.

Having fire means having the ability to purify water, make tools, signal, keep warm, heat meals and a means to accomplish a plethora of other chores.

Having a means of starting a fire that can be used one handed and which can be easily manipulated with cold, wet digits or with gloves on can be a Godsend.

Enter the new Zippo Emergency Fire Starter. The Zippo is proudly made in the USA by the good folks in Bradford, PA.

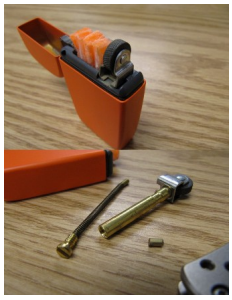
The Zippo Emergency Fire Starter is housed in a safety orange matte colored metal Zippo “Blu” size case. On flicking the cover open, one finds the normal Zippo guts removed and replaced with an O ring sealed polymer inner frame. The O ring keeps the unit water resistant, not water proof.

The inner frame houses a stout brass and steel flint-wheel striker element and a supply of four Zippo brand tinder sticks. There’s room enough under the tinder to also store a small supply of replacement Zippo flints. The flint-wheel striker is directional, meaning it is designed to throw the spark in one direction.

The flint wheel is reversible within the inner frame to accommodate both left and right hand use.

It is refillable with standard Zippo flints.

Zippo's tinder is rayon fiber impregnated with paraffin.



Operation is simple and requires little skill - a great advantage in a survival situation. Open the Zippo, withdraw a piece of tinder.

Pull the tinder apart a little bit to expose a host of spark hungry fibers.

Place those fibers very near to the spark producing side of the flint wheel and spin the flint wheel to produce a

spark.

Zippo's tinder is pretty impressive.

It easily caught the sparks produced and readily burst into flame. I lit a half dozen pieces over the course of the weekend and timed each burn.

The average burn time was just under 5 minutes.

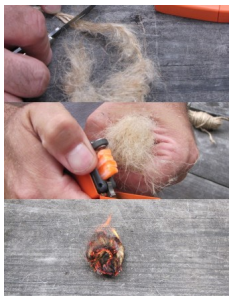
The tinder burned very hot and easily ignited our natural tinder for our campfire, even though it

was a humid, nasty, wet weekend with showers and t-storms everyday.

It was so wet that attempting to find any natural tinder to ignite was a lost cause. I did find some jute twine in the camper and decided to shred some up to see if it would light from the sparks produced by the Zippo.

The jute somewhat simulated carefully prepared, very dry natural fibers.

To my surprise, after rapidly spinning the flint wheel to produce a small shower of sparks, the jute ignited into a ball of flame that burned me before I could put it down!



My one criticism is that I wish Zippo would make a similar inner frame for their standard Zippo case. This would allow the user to select whatever case suited their fancy. It would also allow the user to house the Emergency Fire Starter in any one of the hundreds of Zippo belt cases that are on the market.

The Zippo Emergency Fire Starter is an effective fire making tool. I have mine stored in my go-bag which travels with me everywhere.

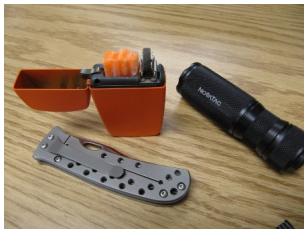
I like the fact that it is extremely compact and carries all necessary elements within itself.

I also like that it operates one handed and is large enough to allow for easy manipulation with cold, wet hands or with gloves on.

Lastly, I like the fact that the striker is easily refillable with standard, inexpensive Zippo flints that you can find in just about any store.

MSRP on the Zippo Emergency Fire Starter is currently $19.95. Replacement tinder can be purchased in an eight pack for around $5.00.

I picked up spare flints locally for $.52, including tax.



Need more info? Try www.zippo.com . Tell ‘em the WoodsMonkey sent ya…