

# BITUMEN BURNS CARD – FIRST AID

## Safety



**PROTECT YOURSELF** and others from harm.  
**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE BITUMEN.**  
**COOL THE BURNT AREA** with cold water for a minimum of 20 minutes. **DO NOT USE ICE.**

## Note



**EYE BURNS** – flush with water, same as above.  
**DO NOT REMOVE CLOTHING STUCK TO BITUMEN.** This may cause further injury.  
**REMOVE BELTS & RINGS** and any other constrictions if you can without further damage.

## Treatment



**COVER** any exposed burns (those not covered with bitumen) with clean non-stick burns dressings. Do not wrap dressing too tightly.  
**MAINTAIN BODY HEAT** and treat for shock.  
**DO NOT** attempt to clean the affected areas.  
**DO NOT** apply lotions or ointments.  
**DO NOT** dress areas covered with bitumen.  
**DO NOT** let blankets touch burns or bitumen.  
**DO NOT** give **ANYTHING** by mouth until cleared to do so by medical personnel.

## Call



**CALL for an Ambulance immediately by dialling 000 and advise a “Bitumen Burn”.**  
**ATTACH** the burns card to the casualty.

**NOTE:** A work colleague trained in these procedures should accompany the injured party to Hospital to support and ensure that a Bitumen Burns Card is attached to the casualty, and make treating medical staff aware of the details on the reverse of this card.

### 1. Ensure First Aid has been applied

### 2. Consult with Bitumen Burns Specialist

### 3. Clinical Assessment

- **AIRWAY & BREATHING** in case of neck and facial burns.
- **ASSESS NEUROVASCULAR COMPROMISE** in case of circumferential burns.
- **DOCUMENT** location and extent of injury.

### 4. Investigations

**INVESTIGATION ONLY TO ASSESS POSSIBLE SECONDARY COMPLICATIONS.**

### 5. Removal of Bitumen

- **DO NOT REMOVE BITUMEN** – Bitumen should only be removed by an appropriately trained health care practitioner.
- **EXTENSIVE & FULL THICKNESS BURNS** – refer to the specialist burns unit. Generally indicates active removal of bitumen, which should be carried out by specialist surgeon in an operating theatre.
- **CIRCUMFERENTIAL BURNS** – where hardened bitumen is causing constriction, elevate limb, and in consultation with the specialist burns unit soften and/or split to prevent blood flow restriction.

### 6. Burns to the Eye

- **IRRIGATE** as per First Aid guidelines.
- **DO NOT REMOVE BITUMEN.**
- **PAIN MANAGEMENT** – analgesic & local anaesthetic drops can be applied followed by saline irrigation.
- **URGENT OPHTHALMOLOGICAL REFERRAL.**

### 7. Disposition

**TRANSFER TO SPECIALIST BURNS UNIT** depends on – extent, area involved and patient condition.

**NOTE: The cold bitumen will form a waterproof, sterile layer over the burn which will prevent the burn from drying out.**

*Endorsed by the Australian & New Zealand Burn Association*



**Australian Asphalt Pavement Association**

[www.aapa.asn.au](http://www.aapa.asn.au)

Version 1 © 2013 AAPA