

Pests In Your Firewood



Fall in Minnesota brings shorter days, cooler nights, and the perfect time to gather around a fire. But firewood can do more than keep us warm, it can also carry harmful pests that threaten our forests.

Many insects and diseases live on or inside trees, lumber, and firewood. Moving untreated firewood can spread these pests, putting Minnesota's trees at risk. Invasive species like the Emerald Ash Borer, Spongy Moth, and Asian Longhorned beetle have attacked millions of trees across the United States. Native pests such as wood borers, bark beetles, and carpenter ants, along with diseases like oak wilt and Dutch elm disease, can also hitch a ride and spread to healthy trees.

How You Can Protect Minnesota Forests

- **Buy firewood where you'll burn it.** Locally purchased wood is less likely to contain pests not already in the area.
- **Choose MDA-certified firewood.** Certified, heat-treated wood poses the lowest risk and is marked with the MDA certified logo. Check labels for the county of harvest. Find a Minnesota Certified Firewood Producer near you.
- **Follow state park rules.** If visiting a Minnesota State Park, comply with DNR firewood guidelines.
- **Burn firewood promptly.** Use wood before spring to prevent pests from emerging. Avoid storing wood indoors for long periods.
- **Store it safely.** Stack wood off the ground with good air circulation to help it dry. Cutting in mid to late fall also reduces the risk of attracting springtime borers.

To limit the spread of pests, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) regulates hardwood firewood. It is illegal to:

- Move hardwood firewood out of quarantined Minnesota counties unless it is MDA-certified.
- Bring hardwood firewood into Minnesota from other states.

Violations can result in fines of up to \$7,500 per day, per violation.

If you have questions about safe firewood practices or suspect a tree may have a pest, contact the MDA at reportapest@state.mn.us.

Protect Minnesota's trees this firewood season by buying local and using certified firewood. Your choices can help stop destructive pests and keep your trees and our forests healthy.