



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE AND  
CONSUMER SERVICES

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD, VIRGINIA**

*Limit the spread of invasive pests*

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA** – As the days turn cooler and shorter, many Virginians are using firewood to keep warm and spend quality time with friends and family.

While seemingly harmless, moving firewood can enable the easy movement of destructive forest and agricultural pests. When firewood is moved from one area to another, the invasive emerald ash borer, spongy moth, Asian longhorned beetle, and spotted lanternfly often “hitchhike” to destroy crops, infect more trees and sometimes even entire forests.

Since it's difficult to determine if firewood is infested, the best option to keep Virginia's forests and crops safe is to buy firewood where you plan to burn it. A general rule is to get firewood that's at least local to the county where it'll be used. If you heat your home with firewood, harvest it locally or purchase it from a reputable dealer in compliance with state and regional firewood regulations.

“Invasive insects and disease are a critical threat to our forests,” said Virginia State Forester Rob Farrell. “When you buy firewood near where you'll burn it, you help protect Virginia's forests while supporting local economies. Simple choices and a little planning can make a big difference in ensuring Virginians will have forests to enjoy for generations to come.”

“Invasive insects and diseases can lurk both inside and on the surface of firewood, so transporting firewood can allow potentially destructive and non-native organisms to move hundreds of miles and start infestations in new places,” said Joseph Guthrie, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. “When traveling from one location to another, never transport firewood to your destination unless it is heat-treated and certified.”

Going camping? Make plans to buy firewood when you get there or gather it onsite (if permitted). If you have leftover firewood, leave it behind when you go. Packaged heat-treated (not kiln-dried) firewood, which will have a seal of certification from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or a state agency is also a safe option. Certified heat-treated firewood may be moved as long as it remains sealed. Once the packaging has been opened, it will attract insects and should not be moved.

To find local firewood dealers across Virginia, visit [Firewoodscout.org](http://Firewoodscout.org). For more information on invasive insects in Virginia, visit the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services [website](#). For more information about protecting trees from tree-killing insects, visit <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/>.

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#### ***About the Virginia Department of Forestry***

*The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDof) protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. With nearly 16 million acres of forestland and more than 108,000 Virginians employed in forestry, forest products and related industries, Virginia forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$21 billion annually.*

*Headquartered in Charlottesville, the agency has forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide citizen service and public safety protection across the Commonwealth, which it's been doing now for more than 100 years. VDof is an equal opportunity provider.*

#### ***About the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services***

*Established in 1877, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) promotes the economic growth and development of Virginia agriculture, provides consumer protection and encourages environmental stewardship.*

*The agency is headquartered in Richmond and has several field offices, four regional diagnostic animal health laboratories and a global network of representatives promoting Virginia products internationally.*