



**You could be killing our trees!**



## **FIREWOOD QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **FIREWOOD AND INSECTS**

✓ **Why is firewood so bad? Other kinds of wood are moved and nobody says it's a problem.**

Firewood itself isn't the problem—what's bad is moving it from one place to another. The bark on firewood can harbor insects and diseases that kill trees. Many of these pests have spread in loads of firewood. Commercial lumber, unlike most firewood, is typically kiln-dried, which kills most pests.

✓ **What are these bugs that are supposed to be so bad? I don't see trees dying from them.**

There are many bugs, not native to New York or the U.S. that could kill trees in our campgrounds, forests and communities. These include the Emerald ash borer, (attacks ash trees), Asian long-horned beetle (attacks maples and many others) and Sirex woodwasp (attacks pines). The Emerald ash borer killed millions of trees as it spread from Michigan to Ohio.

✓ **So why are these bugs such a problem all of a sudden? Where did they come from?**

Along with lower prices, our global economy brings imported goods that often arrive on wood pallets or in wood crates. The Emerald ash borer and Asian long-horned beetle came from Asia in wooden packing material. Sirex woodwasp arrived in wood packing, probably from Europe, but possibly from South America, Australia or Africa.

✓ **Okay, so these bugs kill a few trees. Can't you just spray or something?**

Unfortunately, many of these pests bore deeply into the wood and are not killed by surface sprays. Effective registered pesticides are not yet available. This leaves our forests unprotect-

ed. If spraying is an option, it is typically used only for small groups of high-value trees on private property. When Emerald ash borers or Asian long-horned beetles are found, all nearby trees of the species they attack are cut to prevent spreading. Millions of ash trees have been cut in attempts to stop the spread of the ash borer.

✓ **So what are DEC and OPRHP doing about this, besides telling people not to bring firewood from outside the local area around the campground?**

They are working with federal agencies, other states and provinces to stop the spread of these pests and diseases and to safeguard against introduction of others. After Sirex woodwasp was found in Oswego County, DEC monitored its spread. Although Emerald ash borer has not yet been found in New York, DEC is trying to determine where it is likely to show up and how it may spread.

✓ **What kinds of firewood shouldn't be moved?**

All firewood can harbor dangerous pests or diseases—don't move any of it. Use only locally cut firewood. "Local" means from less than 50 miles. Never move wood from a quarantined area. (States include: Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, New Jersey, New York City, Long Island and the Province of Ontario.)

## **FIREWOOD AND CAMPGROUNDS**

✓ **Can I gather my own firewood around the campground?**

Don't count on it. Most popular campgrounds may already be picked clean. In areas where firewood gathering has damaged live trees, it may be restricted or banned completely. Dead and downed wood also provides important habitat for woodland animals and helps to renew the soil. Campers must be prepared to buy firewood.

✓ **How can I be sure I'll have firewood if I can't bring it?**

Firewood should be available from local vendors. DEC and OPRHP are working to assure that firewood will be available from local sources.

✓ **Why pay for firewood when I can bring my own for free?**

Most people who camp enjoy being in the woods. Consider the value of the forest compared to a few dollars saved on firewood. If trees are killed by pests brought in on firewood, what will this forest look like? Would you still want to camp there? Is firewood free if it kills trees in your favorite campground...or in your backyard? Why not save weight and space for other gear—food, beverage, bikes, etc—and burn your own firewood at home? Your children will thank you when they go camping.

## **DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD. OBTAIN IT LOCALLY.**

To learn more go to these websites:

[www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) [www.nysparks.state.ny.us](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us) [www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us)

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