



## NEWS RELEASE

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**DATE:** Released in the May 23, 2006 Wisconsin DNR News  
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**SUBJECT:** Campers reminded not to bring firewood  
from out-of-state to Wisconsin State Parks

MADISON -- As campers get ready to kick off another great season of outdoor fun at Wisconsin State Parks, park officials and tree health experts remind visitors to leave the out-of-state firewood behind.

Operating under an emergency rule passed by the Natural Resources Board earlier this spring, DNR now prohibits the use of out-of-state firewood in state parks and other DNR-managed lands such as state forests, flowages, and wilderness areas.

“This restriction is in place wherever camping and campfires are allowed on state lands,” said Bruce Chevis, concessions program manager for Wisconsin State Parks. “It really doesn’t matter whether you’re a Wisconsin resident or an out-of-state camper, if your firewood is from some place other than Wisconsin, don’t bring it with you. Not only will leaving the firewood back home keep our parks healthy, it’ll help speed up your check-in process.”

The NRB adopted the firewood emergency rule to help DNR stave off an infestation of the emerald ash borer (EAB), which has ravaged millions of ash trees in Michigan and nearby states and provinces. The rule will also help keep out or limit the artificial spread of other potential problems.

The emerald ash borer is a tiny, green insect native to Asia. It was introduced to the U.S. in the early 1990s in the Detroit, MI area and has since spread to Ohio, Indiana and Ontario, Canada killing nearly 20 million ash trees in urban and forest settings.

“Firewood can be a home to any number of harmful insects and diseases that can be transported much faster by people moving firewood than they would spread naturally,” said Jane Cummings Carlson, forest health coordinator with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. “In fact, most of the new EAB infestations found outside of Detroit since 2002 have been traced back to firewood movement.”

Once EAB infests an ash tree, the future of the tree is certain: it will die. Ash trees in Wisconsin number around 717 million in forests and it's the second most common tree species in communities round the state, accounting for as much as a third of all urban trees.

"Step outside and take a look down your street. Chances are those are ash trees," Cummings Carlson said. "Now mentally erase those trees from the yards and boulevards. That's the result of EAB establishing itself in a community."

Firewood is available at a reasonable cost at almost every state park, though the hours and locations inside the park may vary. State forests and "flowage" areas where rustic camping can be found typically have firewood available locally – either for sale in nearby communities, or to be gathered on the property as down and dead wood.

Additional information about the firewood restriction and EAB can be found at [dnr.wi.gov/invasives](http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives). Campers may also call the DNR's toll-free Firewood Hotline for information before packing up for a trip. The frequently updated number is 1-877-303-WOOD (9663).

### ***Quick Facts***

- DNR-managed parks and campgrounds represent eight percent of the total number of campsites available in Wisconsin.
- State parks host approximately 14 million visitors annually (roughly 150,000 distinct reservations and walk-ins).
- Most state park visitors are Wisconsin residents.
- In 2004, Illinois residents were the second most common visitors (15.9 percent) followed by Minnesota (5.54), Iowa (1.26), Michigan (1.07), and Indiana (.61).