

# **OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FORESTRY**

2800 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105

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## **BUYING LOCALLY GROWN FIREWOOD BENEFICIAL TO ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST HEALTH, FORESTER SAYS**

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Oklahoma City—Those bundles of firewood for sale at convenience stores and other retail outlets are a handy source of fuel for many consumers but state forestry officials are concerned that these bundles may carry unwanted pests as well.

“There is a national problem and concern regarding the movement of firewood due to the threat of spreading harmful pests and diseases that could threaten forests,” said state forester, John Burwell of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry. “We urge everyone to buy locally grown firewood to support their local economy and protect our forest’s health.”

Emerald ash borer, European and Asian gypsy moths, and disease such as Chestnut blight have been attributed to being spread by firewood movement. Burwell said forestry officials in every major forest state and Canada are asking people to not move firewood.

“Basically any timber being transported with the bark intact is capable of hiding harmful pests,” he said. “A visual examination of the wood isn’t enough to detect the presence of something like a gypsy moth or Emerald ash borer.”

Sancho Dickinson, ODAFF director of Consumer Protection Services, said the National Plant Board recommended federal rules and restrictions be placed on interstate firewood sales and deliveries but no action has been taken. Such rules would require action by USDA.

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