

**HUNTERS, OTHERS ASKED NOT TO MOVE
FIREWOOD THIS FALL**

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MADISON – With the annual gun season deer hunt right around the corner, now is good time to remind hunters and others who'll be enjoying some fall camping about a tiny insect that threatens Wisconsin ash trees.

The beetle is the emerald ash borer, or EAB, and hunters and campers can lend a hand to help keep Wisconsin free of this pest by restricting the movement of firewood.

“The emerald ash borer is an expert hitchhiker in firewood,” said Bob Dahl, plant protection section chief with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. “The EAB larva (immature stage) spends the fall and winter hidden beneath the bark of ash firewood. When people move infested firewood, they are also unknowingly spreading EAB or perhaps other forest pests.”

EAB is responsible for the loss of nearly 25 million ash trees in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland and Canada. It was discovered in Illinois last year and most recently in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The beetle is native to Asia and was first detected in Detroit in 2002.

Not only is moving firewood over long distances a bad idea, in some cases, it's illegal. Federal quarantines that were enacted last December restrict the movement of all hardwood firewood out of infested states. Breaking the quarantine can cost a person hundreds or thousands of dollars.

“Worse yet is the chance that someone could introduce EAB into Wisconsin and contribute to spreading one of the most serious forest health threats since Dutch elm disease,” Dahl said.

Dahl reminds hunters, fall campers and others to:

- Buy firewood at their destination
- Burn it all on site and don't take any home
- Obey quarantines and other state or local firewood regulations, including the recent 50-mile restriction on firewood use on state-owned lands (no firewood allowed on the property if it came from further than 50 miles away, unless the firewood is certified by DATCP)
- If possible, buy firewood from a DATCP-certified firewood dealer

“The busy summer camping season is long gone, but in fall there's still a lot of firewood moving around with hunters, firewood dealers, fall campers and those who use firewood for home heating,” Dahl said. “Anyone using firewood this fall – or any other time of the year – should start following this simple advice.”

Wisconsin is home to some 727 million ash trees in forest settings. In urban areas, ash represents about 20 percent (approximately 5 million) of all trees.

For more information, visit emeraldashborer.wi.gov or call the toll-free Wisconsin EAB Hotline at 1-800-462-2803.

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