

Firewood Month - October 2021

Project and Messaging Outline



This document is designed to help outreach professionals, stakeholders, and other members of the larger forest health community understand the intent of Firewood Month. It includes the goal, partner information, weekly themes, sample social media messages, and graphics to allow for convenient participation.

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Introduction

Goals

Firewood Month's primary goal is to increase understanding and adoption of better firewood using habits, regarding firewood movement as a forest pest and disease pathway. The messages strive to nudge people in the direction of accepted best practices for firewood buying and/or gathering, which will depend on their locality and situation. We established theme weeks to organize best practices based on situations and audiences, though we invite partners to tailor the messages to your needs and audiences.

Leadership and Contacts

USDA's Hungry Pests campaign and The Nature Conservancy's Don't Move Firewood campaign jointly manage firewood month. The Nature Conservancy's Forest Health Program Director is Leigh Greenwood (lgreenwood@tnc.org). The two major partner campaign contacts are Hungry Pests Campaign Manager Cecilia Sequeira (K.Cecilia.Sequeira@usda.gov) and PlayCleanGo Manager Krista Lutzke (klutzke@naisma.org).

Action Kit Audience and Partners

Our partners include outreach professionals, stakeholders, and other members of the larger plant protection community, such as State Departments of Agriculture, Regional Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Centers, Agriculture Extension Offices, nonprofit organizations, and any other entity that wants to share this educational messaging on their outreach channels.

Schedule

Each week in October has a theme. These themes allow partners to strategize when to "chime in" according to their preferences, audiences, and professional time constraints. There is no minimum requirement to participate, and it is not a problem if a given partner wishes to ignore the theme schedule due to their state or regions' needs.



2021 Changes and Resources of Note

New resources and outreach materials

The Don't Move Firewood Resource Library has many new materials from 2021 available for download. Visit www.dontmovefirewood.org/resource-library to view them. The National Plant Board published firewood guidelines in 2021, which are available here: firewood.nationalplantboard.org/

Federal emerald ash borer quarantine deregulation

The federal domestic emerald ash borer (EAB) quarantine regulations were removed effective January 14, 2021. The federal deregulation of EAB changed some aspects of the regulatory environment around the movement of firewood; some states have put in place new state-based regulations in reaction to the deregulation of emerald ash borer, while others that were affected by the EAB regulations before 2021 do not currently have a regulation that operates similarly in their region. Still other regulations relevant to firewood, such as federal regulations on other forest pests or pre-existing state-based regulations, remain in place. See <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/federal-deregulation-of-emerald-ash-borer/> and firewood.nationalplantboard.org/ for more information.

Several states rescind their quarantines on walnut twig beetle

Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee are in the process of rescinding their state-level quarantines on thousand cankers disease of walnut; deregulation is expected to go into effect within the calendar year. Several additional states are likely to follow suit. See this National Plant Board presentation for more information https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8zi1g8_UzU.

New state regulations and existing federal regulations

In 2021, several states enacted new, or modified existing, firewood related regulations to slow the spread of forest pests- examples include changes seen in Tennessee, California, and Montana. The existing regulations that continue to impact firewood movement are more relevant than ever due to the federal deregulation of emerald ash borer. Federal and/or state regulations limit firewood movement to prevent the spread of *Lymantria dispar*, imported fire ant, Asian longhorned beetle, giant African snail, and a variety of other regional pests of concern. The mid-Atlantic states' various quarantines on spotted lanternfly are also critically important in regards to firewood movement. The Don't Move Firewood summer analyst team updated all the state and provincial summaries (www.dontmovefirewood.org/map) to reflect the most up-to-date regulations and recommendations.

Many first-time outdoor recreationists in 2021

There was an influx of new campers in the year 2020, according to this KOA [2021 North American Camping Report](#), with more than half (55%) of them attributing their reason to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. The report projected two thirds of these new-timers would likely camp again in 2021. Additionally, the [2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report](#) by the Outdoor Industry Association concludes that **over half of all Americans aged 6 years and older participated in outdoor recreation at least once in 2020** – a record breaking participation rate and **7.1 million more** than the previous year. These sudden increases in new recreationists create an increased need for firewood messaging oriented to new campers as well as messaging that incorporates other aspects of responsible recreation, such as socially distancing reminders and how to select a good place to camp or hike. A new professional resource to consider is the Recreate Responsibly site (recreateresponsibly.org) which refers campers to Don't Move Firewood's longstanding partner, Leave No Trace (lnt.org) - the latter has incorporated Don't Move Firewood messaging as part of their 7 Principles (see [Principle 5: Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)) for over a decade.

Regionally Specific Firewood Messaging

Certified heat-treated firewood availability is regional

In areas where certified, heat-treated firewood is typically commercially available (in general, this correlates closely with emerald ash borer or *Lymantria dispar* known infested counties, see relevant maps below), it may be advisable to emphasize the use of *heat-treated* firewood over local firewood. “Local” has many possible interpretations, while heat-treated firewood is a regulated product.

- <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/maps/plant-health/eab-map> (EAB interactive map)
- <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/maps/plant-health/european-gypsy-moth-quarantine> (*Lymantria dispar* interactive map)

Definitions of local firewood vary

“Local” firewood is not a defined or consistent term. Firewood regulations throughout the country vary; state regulations are most often either defined as a set distance (typically 10, 25, or 50 miles) or as a specified geographical area defined by a county, state, or regulated area. It is imperative that you determine what metrics and/or geographies will mean “local” in your area, and then reflect that in your messaging.

Recommendations on when and where to mention gathering firewood

The likelihood that gathering firewood on-site is legally permissible and environmentally sustainable varies greatly by region and land ownership patterns. Please make the decision to promote responsibly gathering or harvesting firewood based on your knowledge and best judgment for the areas you are targeting.

Firewood Scout and finding firewood vendors

The answer to the questions “how can I figure out where to buy firewood?” varies greatly by region. Some state Departments of Forestry or Agriculture maintain an online directory of approved dealers. Eleven states list their vendors on Firewood Scout, a cooperative firewood vendor locating website (<http://firewoodscout.org/>). Some states and areas have no online information. Do a brief search to find the best options available and make your recommendations accordingly.


Suggested wording on where firewood comes from

In the sample wording pages, you will see many messages that follow this rough pattern of wording: “the trees cut for firewood often died due to insects or disease...”. This has been extremely popular with the general public on the Don’t Move Firewood social media accounts, as people often envision firewood being cut from dead or declining trees. However, this may not be applicable to commercial or large-scale operations, especially in the Eastern states. If you do not feel like this message will resonate with your audience, feel free to not use it.

Canada specific messages and dates

Partners in Canada will want to refer to the Canadian Council for Invasive Species Firewood Month page to see some of the specific Canadian outreach materials. For instance, their posters show “Buy Local, Burn Local” as the official slogan alongside Don’t Move Firewood. Learn more at <https://canadainvasives.ca/programs/buy-local-burn-local/>.

You may find it helpful to consult national maps and related state-specific resources at these URLs:

-  <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/map/>
-  <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/pests-diseases/hungry-pests/Pest-Tracker>

Weekly Themes

Week 1 (Oct 1 – 9, 2021)

For the first week of Firewood Month, we focus on general information, disseminating ideas, promoting press releases describing the issues of firewood and the spread of forest pests. *In 2021, this week overlaps with [Fire Prevention Week](#) (Oct. 3 – 9), so cross-promoting with general fire safety tips may be desirable.*

Suggested outreach landing page: <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/firewood-month/>

General messages and sample wording: Messages strive to include a brief summary of the issue of forest pests and the firewood pathway, followed by positive messages of what each person can do to make a difference. Sample wording and concepts follow.

Moving firewood long distances can spread forest pests. Your firewood choices matter. Don't move firewood – instead, buy firewood where you'll burn it, buy certified, heat-treated firewood, or responsibly gather on site when permitted. You can protect the places you love by preventing the spread of forest pests that hide in firewood!

The Don't Move Firewood campaign promotes the following three choices, which each participant in Firewood Month should regionally tailor and select according to factors in their local firewood situation:

- **Buy certified, heat-treated firewood.**
- **Buy it where you burn it / Buy firewood near where you'll burn it.**
- **Responsibly gather firewood on site where permitted.**

Sample wording of social media posts during the first week:

(Please tag Twitter posts #FirewoodMonth to allow for campaign tracking and easier sharing. You are welcome to remove the hashtags seen below for other platforms.)

- 🔥 The trees cut for firewood often died due to insects or disease. Don't spread pests – buy #firewood where you burn it. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Your choices matter- buy local #firewood, certified, heat-treated firewood, or gather on site where permitted. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Want to protect #nature? Don't move firewood. It can spread invasive pests hidden inside. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Forest pests can spread on contaminated #firewood, starting new infestations. Protect trees – don't move firewood. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Transporting #firewood can spread pests. Buy local or certified heat-treated firewood, or responsibly gather it on site! #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Help stop the spread of #invasive pests. Use certified, heat-treated or locally harvested firewood. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Join us in spreading the word on #FirewoodMonth – your #firewood choices matter! Learn more: (link of your choosing)

(a variety of images to complement these text examples can be found at the end of this document)

Week 2 (Oct 10 – 16, 2021)

Focus on general information, or target fall recreationalists - especially the demographics of hunters, anglers, and RV owners.

Suggested outreach landing page: <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/firewoodmonthrecreation/>

General messages and sample wording: Messages will target outdoor recreationalists that are most likely to move significant amounts of firewood in the fall. This demographic includes all campers, but especially hunters, anglers, and recreational vehicle (RV) owners. Fall recreationalists are a particularly important group of people for the firewood pathway, as they often combine several demographic profiles that are most prone to moving firewood (long term campers, owners of large vehicles, owners of property with trees). All messages should include positive actions of what each person can do to make a difference. Sample wording and concepts follow.

Hunters, anglers, RV owners, and everyone that enjoys fall camping can protect the campsites and wildlife habitat they enjoy by preventing the spread of forest pests on firewood. Don't move firewood – instead, plan to either gather firewood on-site when permitted, or purchase firewood near your camping destination. Don't fill your vehicle with firewood to burn at an upcoming destination – this could spread forest pests and may also violate state or local laws—depending on the area. You have the power to slow the spread of forest pests!

Please note that for long stay campers (such as big game hunters, RV-ers, etc.) the solution to buy firewood may seem impractical or too expensive, so mentioning gathering firewood is particularly important for this group. For this reason, we suggest presenting the “gather” option FIRST when messaging directly to this demographic:

- **Gather firewood on site where permitted.**
- **Buy it where you burn it / Buy firewood near where you'll burn it.**
- **Buy certified, heat-treated firewood.**

Sample wording of social media posts during this week:

(Please tag Twitter posts #FirewoodMonth to allow for campaign tracking and easier sharing. You are welcome to remove the hashtags seen below for other platforms.)

- 🔥 Going #camping? Your #firewood choices matter- buy local wood or gather on site where permitted.
- 🔥 #Trees cut for firewood often died due to insects or disease. Protect your favorite places – don't bring #firewood from home to your campsite.
- 🔥 Want to protect #wildlife? Don't move #firewood. It can spread invasive pests hidden inside.
- 🔥 Just because #firewood looks clean doesn't mean it's safe to transport. Protect forests from #invasive pests; buy it where you burn it or gather firewood on site where permitted. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Join us in spreading the word on #FirewoodMonth – tell fellow campers that their #firewoodchoices matter!
- 🔥 Taking that #RV for a big trip? Prevent the movement of #forestpests- inspect the outside, and don't bring #firewood inside. #FirewoodMonth (suggestion: use with RV and *Lymantria dispar* imagery, found in the image bank)

(A variety of images to complement these text examples can be found at the end of this document.)

Week 3 (Oct 17 – 23, 2021)

Focus on general information, or on firewood's important role as a forest product during [National Forest Products Week](#) in the USA.

General messages and sample wording: National Forest Products Week* begins the third Sunday in October each year when various forest product industry groups (primarily lumber and paper) promote their own messages. For reference see the [2019 Proclamation](#) or [2020 Proclamation](#) (the wording is different between years, and reading both is helpful). Our messages this week will work off the themes of forest health, forest products, and the importance of buying or harvesting firewood responsibly. All messages should include positive actions that each person can take to make a difference. Sample wording and concepts follow.

Firewood is the original forest product – and a renewable resource. Your firewood choices matter. Harvest firewood responsibly or buy firewood locally from forest products businesses. Trees cut for firewood have often died due to insects or disease; to protect forests, avoid transporting cut wood across state or quarantine boundaries. By taking these steps, you have the power to protect our Nation's forests and trees!

The Don't Move Firewood campaign typically promotes three choices for firewood. In the case of National Forest Products Week, the last option is modified (Harvest vs Gather) to fit the intended audience and tone more closely.

- **Buy certified, heat-treated firewood.**
- **Buy it where you burn it / Buy firewood near where you'll burn it.**
- **Harvest firewood in compliance with local regulations.**

Sample wording of social media posts during this week:

(Please tag Twitter posts #FirewoodMonth to allow for campaign tracking and easier sharing. You are welcome to remove the hashtags seen below for other platforms.)

- 🔥 When you think about sustainable #forestproducts, think local #firewood! Buy it where you'll burn it. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 #Firewood is an important #forest product for many rural communities. Buy local or harvest with a permit. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Support the #forestproducts industry and prevent the spread of invasive species, all at once! Buy certified, heat-treated #firewood. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Celebrate National #ForestProducts Week by learning about the importance of responsible #firewood choices. *(insert educational link of choice)* #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Spread the word on #FirewoodMonth and #ForestProducts Week– tell your colleagues that their #firewood choices matter!

(a variety of images to complement these text examples can be found at the end of this document)

**Forest Products Week in the USA is in October, note that in Canada it is in September.*

Week 4 (Oct 24 – 31, 2021)

Focus on general information, or messages targeted to people that buy or gather firewood to heat their homes or cabins.

Suggested outreach landing page: <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/firewoodmonthheating/>

General messages and sample wording: Messages this week will focus on the topics of home heating, wood stoves, cordwood, and buying from established wood sellers to reduce the accidental or intentional/unethical selling of cords from across a regulated boundary. All messages should include positive actions of what each person can do to make a difference. Sample wording and concepts follow.

Everyone who heats their home or cabin with a woodstove can help slow the spread of invasive tree-killing pests by burning responsibly harvested firewood. If buying cords of wood, ask your firewood seller if they are following your local or regional restrictions. In many places, quarantines and movement rules are in place to reduce the movement of tree-killing pests in firewood. Your firewood choices matter- buy local firewood, or responsibly harvest your own firewood in accordance with local rules.

Woodstove users typically buy and use firewood in cords, making the message to buy packaged certified, heat-treated firewood unrealistic from both an economic and logistics perspective. Instead, we suggest using the following two messages for this audience during this week.

- **Buy firewood from a local and reputable dealer.**
- **Harvest your own firewood responsibly- know your local regulations.**

Sample wording of social media posts during this week:

(Please tag Twitter posts #FirewoodMonth to allow for campaign tracking and easier sharing. You are welcome to remove the hashtags seen below for other platforms.)

- 🔥 Buying #firewood in cords? Purchase responsibly - ask your wood supplier if there are any local restrictions due to #forestpests. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 #Firewood can be infested with tree-killing insects. Buy or harvest locally to reduce the risk of spreading invasive species. #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 DYK wet #firewood wastes energy and creates more pollution? Buy your firewood locally and keep it dry for best results! #FirewoodMonth – consider including a link to: <https://www.epa.gov/burnwise/best-wood-burning-practices>
- 🔥 Heat your home with #firewood? Buy local firewood, or harvest your own responsibly. Learn how this protects trees at [dontmovefirewood.org](https://www.dontmovefirewood.org). #FirewoodMonth
- 🔥 Spread the word on #FirewoodMonth + protect your trees - tell your neighbors their #firewood choices matter!

(a variety of images to complement these text examples can be found at the end of this document)

Sample Image Bank

SCROLL THROUGH PAGES TO SEE ALL OPTIONS

Various Hungry Pests **Social Media quality** images below. Please visit the website for alternative ideas, images in higher resolution, and other items:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/pests-diseases/hungry-pests/usda-efforts/partner-tools>







Various Don't Move Firewood **Social Media** quality images below. Please visit the website much more:
<https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/resource-library>





