

Study finds nearly 50% of retail firewood infested with insects

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A new study published in the *Journal of Economic Entomology* reports that live insects were found in 47% of firewood bundles purchased from big box stores, gas stations and grocery stores in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

Untreated [firewood](#) can harbor [pathogens](#) and destructive insects such as the [emerald ash borer](#), the Asian longhorned beetle, [bark beetles](#) and others, and transport them to uninfested areas. Furthermore, the risk of moving insects in untreated firewood is high, the authors found, because insects emerged up to 558 days from the purchase date of the wood.

There are currently no national regulations on the commercial firewood industry that require firewood to be treated before use or sale to reduce the possibility of live insects or pathogens on or in the wood. Several state and federal agencies are attempting to reduce the risk of introducing invasive native or exotic species by restricting the distance firewood can move from its origin and by enacting outreach programs to educate the public.

However, the authors conclude that heat-treating firewood before it is shipped so that insects or pathogens are killed would be prudent and would not restrict firewood commerce as much as bans on firewood movement across state borders.

Provided by Entomological Society of America

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