

# Transporting firewood may spread tree-killing insects

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(Phys.org) —Stocking up on firewood is on the minds of many Coloradans, with some seeking full cords for winter fuel while others are in need of only a few armloads for fall hunting trips. But because of the immense impact bark beetles and other insects can have on Colorado forests, the Colorado State Forest Service wants to be sure people are aware of the risks associated with moving firewood.

"There are many potential risks associated with moving [firewood](#), from spreading native insects like spruce beetle to introducing non-native urban pests from outside our borders," said Sky Stephens, CSFS forest entomologist.

The transportation of firewood is a common cause for the accidental introduction of harmful tree insects and diseases to new areas. Insects, fungi and diseases can hitch a ride on cut wood – from both living and dead trees – and are often hidden away under the bark. Stephens says insects of primary concern include the [emerald ash borer](#) and [gypsy moth](#) – pests that have not yet impacted Colorado but are active threats to its [deciduous trees](#). Thousand cankers disease, which has already killed most of the black walnut trees in some urban Front Range communities, is another major concern related to moving firewood.

The CSFS offers several tips to help protect Colorado trees and forests:

- Burn firewood at the location where you buy or cut it. Leave behind any wood you don't burn.

- Don't ever transport firewood or other raw wood across state lines (it may even be illegal).
- Ask firewood dealers questions about the origin of the wood, and always try to buy local. The best option is anything labeled with the Colorado Forest Products logo.
- Learn to identify the symptoms of common pests in the type of wood you plan to burn.

For more information about insects and diseases that threaten Colorado trees, contact a local CSFS district office or go to [csfs.colostate.edu](https://csfs.colostate.edu).

Provided by Colorado State University

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