



## Camping This Summer? Leave Firewood at Home

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MADISON – As you kick off your summer camping and cabin season this Memorial Day weekend, don't be the one who brings emerald ash borers or gypsy moths to Wisconsin's North Woods.

"Buy it where you burn it' is good advice," says Brian Kuhn, director of the Plant Industry Bureau in the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). "State parks require that firewood be brought from no more than 10 miles away. National forests require it to be purchased within 25 miles. Many private campgrounds prohibit bringing in firewood at all. And if you live in a county that's under quarantine for either EAB or gypsy moth, it's illegal to take firewood to a non-quarantine county. The only exception to these regulations is when you buy firewood with DATCP's pest-free certification."

This year, leaving firewood at home is more important than ever, as more than half of Wisconsin's counties now are known to harbor EAB. The heaviest infestations are in southeastern Wisconsin, which is also the most densely populated part of the state and the source of many of the tourists visiting the northern forests. Because so many ash trees have been cut down there, people may be tempted to take the wood up north for campfires.

"The risk of carrying EAB to the North Woods increases every time we find a new infestation," Kuhn says. "Left on its own, EAB spreads no more than two miles a year. But we've had infestations show up in Superior and in Rhinelander, far from any other known infestations. Those had to have been brought by humans, and firewood is the most frequent means of transport."

In addition to the EAB quarantine, 50 of the state's 72 counties are under quarantine because they have gypsy moth infestations. Firewood can carry gypsy moth caterpillars or egg masses. It can also carry diseases such as oak wilt.

Even in most of the counties that already have EAB, gypsy moth, or both, the pests are in small pockets, not spread completely throughout the county. That means that moving firewood within the county or from one quarantined county to another could introduce a new population, Kuhn points out.

"Even if it's legal, it's never a good idea to move firewood," he says. "We strongly advise against it. You can't just look at wood and see pests. They may be inside of it, or they may be microscopic pathogens. In the balance of things, the health of our North Woods – and all the jobs and wildlife that depend on it – is worth spending a few dollars to buy firewood instead of hauling it from home."

For more information about EAB and gypsy moth and the quarantines aimed at slowing their spread, go to [emeraldashborer.wi.gov](http://emeraldashborer.wi.gov) and [gypsymoth.wi.gov](http://gypsymoth.wi.gov).

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