

# **NATIONAL ARBORIST ASSOCIATION**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DANGEROUS, INEFFICIENT FIREWOOD DON'T GET BURNED**

AMHERST NH--Burning wood for heat makes a great deal of sense. But some wood is better for burning than other wood. Indeed, some wood is dangerous to burn, and some is costly.

Hemlock in your fireplace or on your campfire, for instance, will send sparks flying far and wide. And evergreen trees, such as pine, fir and spruce, are costly to burn because they create a lot of smoke and leave ashes rather than a good bed of coals.

Certain hardwoods, such as oak, ash and some types of birch, make desirable firewood. Remember that while a tree that loses its leaves in the fall is technically a hardwood, it may not be suitable for the fireplace. Quaking aspen is a good example of a hardwood that is not a good firewood. Elm is another.

A wood's relative dryness greatly affects its burning and heating efficiency. The "wetter" the wood, the longer it takes to ignite and the less heat it throws off. Even a good firewood such as oak burns poorly when freshly cut.

You can ensure you get the best-burning wood by choosing carefully and ordering early, before the weather turns cold. By ordering in the summer, you have time to stack and dry the wood. This is best done by covering it on the top only and leaving airspaces. Wood dried like this will burn better, throw off more heat, and leave less residue in your chimney than the same wood burned when freshly or recently cut.

Wood is sold in many ways across the country. The two most common measurements are "cord" and "face cord." A *cord* is a stacked wood pile of uncut or split logs that measures 4' x 4' x 8' or 128 cu. ft. After it is cut and split, the same pile of wood can occupy about 132 cu.ft, and 156 cu. ft. if loosely tossed. A *face cord* is a pile of wood 4' x 8' of any depth or length less than 4'. A *rick* is an evenly stacked pile of wood of any dimension

The National Arborist Association, 1-800-733-2622, will mail you a list of your local NAA-members, who will be able to answer questions about different types of wood.