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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Department of Agriculture Offers Tips for Purchasing Firewood

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Nov. 23, 2009) – As colder temperatures quickly approach and more people use firewood to help heat their homes, the Ohio Department of Agriculture officials ask Ohioans to be aware of some basic tips to help when purchasing wood.

“The department is responsible for enforcing many consumer protection laws, including those that pertain to firewood sales,” said Ohio Agriculture Director Robert Boggs. “Increasing public awareness of these rules and regulations will help assure Ohioans get what they pay for this winter.”

The following firewood rules and regulations are helpful to know prior to purchasing.

- If firewood is advertised and sold as “seasoned,” it must have a moisture content of less than 50 percent. “Unseasoned” wood will only produce two-thirds of the heat of “seasoned” wood.
- If the firewood is advertised and sold as a certain type of wood, the load must contain at least 90 percent of that species.
- Non-packaged firewood must be sold by the cord or by fractions of a cord. One cord, when properly stacked, should be 8 feet long by 4 feet high and 4 feet wide (128 cubic feet).
- If sold in bulk, firewood must be purchased by the weight in ton measurements. This must be weighed on a certified scale.
- It is illegal to sell firewood by any other unit of measurement such as a rick, rack, face cord, or truckload. If a consumer believes that a seller did not comply with these rules and regulations, the person should immediately contact the seller.
- If non-packaged firewood is purchased, the seller must present the consumer with a delivery ticket or sales invoice that includes contact information and the terms and conditions of the sale.

Consumers should also be aware that firewood is often home to invasive insects, and when moved, contributes to the spread of these pests.

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- Fifty-three counties in the state have been placed under Emerald Ash Borer quarantine. This means that firewood cannot be moved out of the quarantined area, and according to law, violation of the quarantine could result in fines up to \$4,000. For a map of Ohio's quarantined counties as well as a detailed explanation of the Emerald Ash Borer quarantine, visit www.agri.ohio.gov or call 1-888-OHIO-EAB.
- Forty-nine counties in the state have been placed under Gypsy Moth quarantine. This means that firewood cannot be moved out of the quarantined area without first receiving an inspection. Those who need their firewood inspected should contact the department's Plant Pest Control Section at 614-728-6400. For a map of the Gypsy Moth quarantine, visit www.agri.ohio.gov.

If a problem occurs with a firewood sale, and the seller will not correct the problem, consumers should contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Weights and Measures at 1-800-282-1955 or contact their local weights and measures inspector located in their county auditor's office.

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