

Natural Resources Woodlot

Firewood Selection

The wood in the Natural Resources Woodlot lot varies in species and time since fallen. The main species includes: Ponderosa Pine, Gambel Oak, Blue and Engelmann Spruce, Douglas Fir, and Cottonwood. The best firewood material has seasoned for at least one year. Look for a grayish/lighter color in the wood, bark sloughing off, and wood cracking. This wood will have a lower moisture content and a much lower risk of having active bark beetles.

Bark Beetles

The majority of available firewood is beetle killed Ponderosa Pine. The freshly cut wood of many trees can attract bark beetles which can breed in it, while the wood of trees killed by bark beetles may harbor a developing brood. Whenever wood is transported, there is a risk that associated insect and/or disease pathogens are moved as well. This can result in the introduction of new pests, or exacerbate existing pest problems. Some bark beetle species become so numerous during periods of drought that they will mass attack and kill healthy trees.

Store the firewood in a sunny location as far away from your pine trees as possible. You can cover firewood with clear plastic while sealing the edges to the ground. The clear plastic will confine the beetles, limiting their opportunities to infest surrounding trees. In the sunlight, the clear plastic will capture heat like a greenhouse. This heat can kill the larvae and beetles remaining in the firewood.

Trees other than pines are unlikely to be infested by beetles, but it is a good practice to store firewood under plastic. This will keep it dry and protect your neighbors' trees.

There may also be wood borers that attacked the firewood. The borers are less likely to kill landscape trees, but can cause some problems. A greater concern is the emergence of borers inside your house if you store firewood indoors.

Responsibility and Personal Protective Equipment

Safety is your responsibility! The US Air Force Academy and Natural Resources assumes no liability or responsibility for firewood cutting operations. We expect you to have appropriate PPE including: chaps, eye protection, ear protection, leather boots, gloves, long sleeves, and helmet.

We can only accept checks or money orders made out to the "US Treasury". All money collected from firewood sales is utilized to help manage the USAFA forests.

The USAFA Medical clinic does not have an emergency room. For any emergency, dial 911. For security issues you can contact USAFA Security Forces at 333-2000.

For any questions or further information please contact Joe Murphy at: (719)333-3308 or rudick.murphy.1@us.af.mil.