What's In Your Firewood?

Firewood movement is a major pathway for the introduction of destructive invasive pests to new ecosystems. By using local or heat treated firewood, the public can prevent the accidental movement of these damaging pests.

Asian Longhorned Beetle

Hosts and Range
The Asian longhorned beetle, Anoplophora glabripennis (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae), kills hardwood trees such as maple, horse chestnut, birch, poplar, willow, elm, buckeye and ash. Native to Asia, this pest was first detected in North America in New York City in 1996. It has since become established in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Ohio and Illinois, and was detected in South Carolina in May of 2020. It has been successfully eradicated from Illinois, New Jersey and portions of New York.

Identification and Symptoms
The adult beetle is shiny black, one-and-a-half inches long with white spots on each wing cover, and has a pair of black and white banded antennae. Female ALBs chew depressions into the bark of trees to lay eggs. The white grub-like larvae cause the most damage, boring into trees and feeding on wood beneath the bark. The emergence of adult beetles creates circular exit holes ⅜- to ¾-inch in diameter. Sap may flow from these exit holes, and sawdust accumulates at the base of the tree and in the crotches of branches.

Feeding by larvae eventually disrupts the tissues that carry water and nutrients within the tree. Infested trees have dying branches, and leaves may turn yellow and droop prematurely. Severe infestations eventually kill trees.

Firewood
The best method of controlling the ALB is to prevent its introduction. Avoiding the movement of infested wood and proper disposal of infested wood can drastically reduce the spread of this pest. Since the beetle can live in cut wood, infested wood debris and firewood should not be moved long distances (greater than 50 miles). If traveling for recreational activities, we recommend leaving firewood at home and buying local firewood at your destination. When an ALB infestation is found in a new area, a quarantine is established to limit the spread of the pest through human activities. The quarantine prohibits the transport of firewood out of quarantined areas into unaffected areas.

Additional Information

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