

Game and Parks Commission Warns Against Importing Firewood

(KTNC) - The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is asking campers to restrict the movement of firewood as a way to prevent the spread of the invasive Emerald Ash Borer into the state.

The pest is a tree-killing beetle native to Asia. It can move from state to state in firewood. Officials say the Emerald Ash Borer has become established near Creston, Iowa, just 60 miles from the Nebraska border.

Game and Parks officials recommend Nebraskans acquire firewood at or near their destination rather than bringing it from other locations. Local firewood will be sold at park offices inside several state parks and recreation areas, including Indian Cave State Park near Shubert.

A voluntary firewood exchange program is in place at several state park areas. Campers at Niobrara, Ponca, Eugene T. Mahoney, and Indian Cave state parks, and Branched Oak, Lewis and Clark, Pawnee and Two Rivers state recreation areas who bring firewood from outside the state should exchange the firewood at the park office for an equal amount of locally-acquired firewood.

Campers can also collect and burn wood they find lying on the ground at Game and Parks properties, though officials caution visitors to comply with regulations to prevent wildfires.