

Be a careful consumer

Fireplaces and wood stoves are popular in use as primary or supplementary heat sources in homes. The rising costs of heating energies has led to a great increase in the utilization of wood as heating fuel. Wood is a relatively clean, efficient, safe energy source. Wood fires are easy to start and produce a large amount of heat in a short time, in addition to providing a cheerful atmosphere to the home.

Included in this pamphlet is valuable information and helpful tips which will help you become a more informed consumer when purchasing firewood.

What if a retailer won't fix the problem, or I feel I've been overcharged?

Who should I contact?



**Measurement Standards Division
Oregon Department of Agriculture**
635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-2532

phone: 503-986-4670
fax: 503-986-4784
web: oregon.gov/ODA/MSD

If you have a wood QUALITY complaint, contact the Oregon Department of Justice at 503-378-4320.

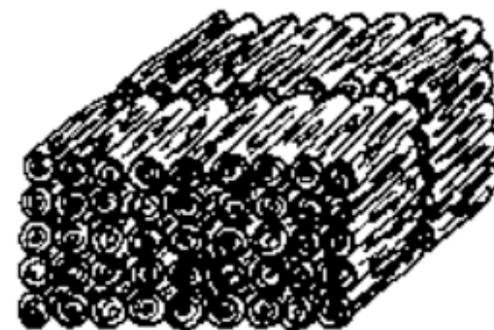
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Avoid getting burned...

When buying firewood



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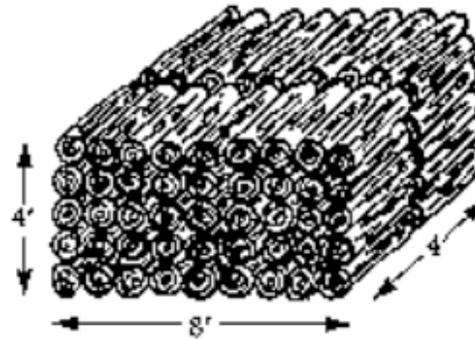
The Measurement Standards Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture

How to avoid getting burned when buying firewood

What is a cord?

Firewood is sold by a measurement called a “cord.” A cord must equal 128 cubic feet. To be sure you have a cord, stack the wood neatly by placing the wood in a line or a row, with individual pieces touching and parallel to each other. Make sure the wood is compact and has as few gaps as possible, then measure the stack. If the width times the height times the length equals 128 cubic feet, you have a cord of firewood.

Stacking a cord for measurement



$4' \times 4' \times 8' = 128$ cubic feet

Delivery ticket

A delivery ticket from the seller should be given to the consumer. It must contain at least the following information:

- name and address of vendor
- name and address of purchaser
- date delivered
- quantity delivered, and quantity upon which the price is based, if it differs from the delivered quantity
- price of amount delivered
- identity in most descriptive terms commercially practicable, including any quality representation made in connection with the sale.

Get what you pay for – Get it in writing

When you buy firewood make sure to get a receipt which shows the seller’s name and address; as well as the price, amount, and kind of wood purchased. If possible, get the seller’s phone number and write down the license plate number of the delivery vehicle.

When the wood is delivered, ask the seller to stack it (you may have to pay extra for this service) or stack the wood yourself.

Measure the wood before using any. If the cubic measurement indicates that you did not receive the correct volume, contact the seller before you burn any wood.

Words that may indicate you are not getting proper measurement

A cord, like other measurements such as a foot, a gallon, or a ton, is defined by law. A seller may not legitimately use terms such as “truckload,” “face cord,” “rack,” or “pile” because these terms have no legally defined meaning and, therefore, have no way of determining how much firewood you are actually receiving. If a seller uses such terms it should alert you to a possible problem. Wood can only be sold by the cord or by fractions of a cord. If you feel you are getting shorted it is helpful to document it by taking a picture of the stacked wood.

What to do

1. Pay attention to terms used in selling firewood. Firewood must be sold by the cord or fractions of a cord.
2. Be sure you receive a sales receipt at the time of sale.
3. When you receive your wood, stack the wood in a line or row with individual pieces touching and parallel to each other, minimizing gaps.
4. Measure the stack.
5. If you feel you have been shorted, contact the seller before burning any firewood.
6. If the seller can’t or won’t fix the problem, contact the Measurement Standards Division, before burning any wood.

For more information:

503-986-4670

Visit our website at www.oregon.gov/ODA/MSD