With cooler weather affecting much of Nebraska, many individuals are utilizing their fireplaces for warmth. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) would like to remind consumers to “not get burned” when purchasing firewood.

According to Paul Moyer with the Consumer Protection area of NDA, the Nebraska Weights and Measures Act specifies that firewood must be sold using the term cord and fractional parts of a cord.

A cord must equal 128 cubic feet. To ensure the purchase of a cord, stack the wood neatly by placing the wood in a line or a row and measure the stack. If width x height x length equals 128 cubic feet, you have a cord of wood.

“This requirement allows the buyers of wood to compare prices,” said Moyer. “It’s really about consumer protection and making sure the buyer is getting what he or she is paying for. Unfortunately, many sellers will list firewood as by the truck load and that is not a comparable measurement.”

Julie Van Meter, NDA’s state entomologist, also would like to encourage those who are purchasing firewood to purchase locally harvested firewood.

According to Van Meter insects and diseases, such as Emerald Ash Borer and Thousand Cankers Disease of Walnut, can travel in firewood. Moving firewood can spread these plant pests and damage or kill Nebraska’s trees.

“The Emerald Ash Borer has been detected in several states, including Iowa, Missouri and just this fall in Kansas,” said Van Meter.

“This insect can cause tremendous damage to our ash trees, and by purchasing Nebraska grown firewood you’ll be helping to make sure this invasive pest isn’t introduced into our state.”

For firewood facts and more information on measurements visit:
http://www.agr.ne.gov/publications/wam/firewood_facts.pdf

For more information about the Emerald Ash Borer, please visit:
http://www.agr.ne.gov/plant/eab.html