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pending on the trailer construction. The weight of wood is deceptive; the wood pictured here is a verified overload and subject to a citation. Over-

load tickets increase the price of fuelwood. Wood should be stacked in a sheltered place and piled very loosely to allow the air circulation to further dry the wood. A small airspace should be left between woodpiles and the walls of buildings to prevent decay from attacking the structure.

Summary: do’s and don’ts

This brief publication on gathering fuelwood for home heating cannot cover all the situations that might be encountered. Only some common pitfalls and safety hazards have been described. Good judgment and common courtesy are needed when gathering fuelwood. As a form of review and summary the following “do’s and don’ts” are listed.

Don’t

1. Take wood without obtaining written permission from the landowner.
2. Cut wood already cut for other uses (i.e. logs stored in log decks).
3. Travel on dirt roads in wet weather.
4. Overload your vehicle without a permit or special license.
5. Close stove damper or fireplace flue damper while coals are still producing heat (produces carbon monoxide gas).
6. Fall timber across roads unless the road is blocked and clear.
7. Cut poison oak (recognized as tan colored stalks and vines in winter and three-leaved shrubs and vines in summer).

Do

1. Get a permit from the landowner.
2. Find out where the property is located.
3. Watch out for loggers and other woods traffic.
4. Obey safety rules when felling, bucking, and using a power saw.
5. Have the proper equipment and carry a first-aid kit.
6. Close the fireplace flue damper if the fireplace is not used for extended periods.

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Respect the rights of landowners. They may allow wood-cutting if permission is asked first.

Clean debris out of roads and ditch lines as a matter of courtesy.

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Wood is often considered a renewable resource because plants grow and use sunlight. However, some woodsmen may exceed 50 percent of their own homes on a long-term basis. The cost of getting fuelwood may go from nearly free to a price determined by seasonal conditions. Thus, fuelwood may not be the best source of energy for heating homes on a long-term basis. The cost of getting wood must be considered, particularly if the source is distant and requires a large expenditure of time.

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Gather fuelwood for home heating: do's and don'ts

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