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## **Don't Get Burned When Purchasing Firewood**

HAMILTON, Ohio – With a cold, snowy start to the new year, many are making additional firewood purchases to help offset heating costs for the rest of the winter. So, it's important to know all the facts when it comes to buying firewood.

The most common legal method of selling firewood is by the cord or fraction of a cord. A "cord" is 128 cubic feet of tightly stacked wood, which equates to a stack that measures 4 feet x 4 feet x 8 feet, or 2 feet x 4 feet x 16 feet. Currently, a cord sells for approximately \$100 to \$150 locally, depending on the type of wood, and whether it is picked up or delivered. Cords can also be sold in fractional amounts. However, a seller may not legitimately use terms such as "truckload," "face cord," "pile," or "stack" because these terms are not legally defined measurements

"If you are buying firewood, understand what you're buying and your rights as a buyer," said Butler County Auditor Roger Reynolds. The Auditor also suggests that a buyer purchase the firewood from a reputable dealer.

In Ohio, the seller must provide the purchaser with a sales invoice which states:

- The name and address of the seller and purchaser
- Deliver date
- Cord or weight price
- Amount delivered and total price

Auditor Reynolds advises consumers to contact the Auditor's Weights and Measures Department if they have any doubts about a wood purchase. "All consumers should know that they are getting what they pay for," says Reynolds. "The consumer needs to be protected, and there are clear laws regarding firewood sales."

For more county information or to report issues with firewood sales, contact the Butler County Weights & Measures Department at (513) 785-6318.

Below is an information sheet provided by the National Conference on Weights and Measures.

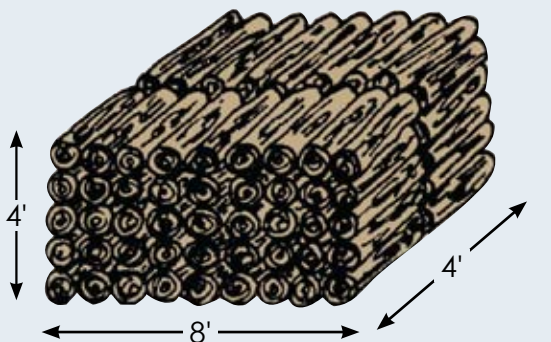


## Avoid Getting Burned When Buying Firewood

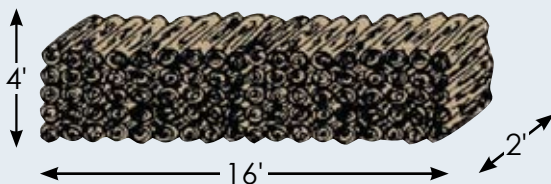


### How To Measure Firewood

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, making sure that 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.



4' x 4' x 8' = 128 Cubic Feet



2' x 4' x 16' = 128 Cubic Feet

### Get What You Pay For

#### How To Protect Yourself When Buying Firewood

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, you 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.

### What To Do

#### If You Think You've Been Short-Changed

If the seller can't or won't correct the problem, contact your county weights and measures authority before you burn any wood. It is also helpful to document the possible shortage by taking a picture of the stacked wood. Your weights and measures authority can be located in the government section of your phone book or at

[www.ncwm.net/county/state-directors](http://www.ncwm.net/county/state-directors)

