

H.799

An act relating to the importation of firewood

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 10 V.S.A. chapter 83, subchapter 8 is added to read:

Subchapter 8. Importation of Firewood

§ 2681. IMPORTATION OF FIREWOOD; PROTECTION FROM  
INVASIVE PESTS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and  
Recreation.

(2) “Department” means the Department of Forests, Parks and  
Recreation.

(3) “Firewood” means untreated or treated wood processed for  
residential, recreational, or commercial use in any wood-burning appliance or  
fireplace, either indoor or outdoor, that is cut to a length less than 48 inches,  
either split or unsplit. “Firewood” shall not mean wood chips, wood pellets,  
pulpwood, logs 48 inches or more in length, or other wood sold or transported  
for manufacturing purposes.

(4) “Invasive species” means:

(A) nonnative plant pests that are capable of spreading into the State  
and that threaten forest health; and

(B) native plant pests, designated by the Commissioner, that are present in the State, that are capable of spreading to new areas of the State, and that threaten forest health.

(5) "Plant pests" shall be defined as in 6 V.S.A. § 1030(12).

(6) "Treated firewood" means firewood that has been processed and treated in a manner sufficient to prevent invasive species from surviving.

(7) "Untreated firewood" means firewood that is not treated firewood.

(b) Rulemaking. On or before July 1, 2015, the Commissioner, after consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, shall adopt rules regulating the importation of untreated firewood into the State. The rules shall:

(1) address whether certain types of untreated firewood should be prohibited from importation due to the potential to spread invasive species;

(2) address whether a treatment certificate or some other form of approval shall be required to import firewood from one or more states;

(3) address whether persons who produce or sell firewood in the State shall be required to track purchases of untreated firewood from out of State in order to allow for identification of sources of invasive species;

(4) address whether the State should design and implement a voluntary certification for treated firewood;

(5) include a process under which the Commissioner may waive requirements or prohibitions under the rule related to the importation of firewood when the Commissioner determines that waiver is in the public interest and poses minimal threat to forest health; and

(6) address any other issue the Commissioner identifies as necessary for preventing the importation of invasive species into the State when importing firewood.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.