



Buying Firewood? Don't Get Burned

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How Is It Sold?

In Canada, most firewood is sold by the cord. A cord is a legal unit of measurement defined by the *Weights and Measures Regulations* as “128 cubic feet of stacked roundwood (whole or split, with or without bark) containing wood and airspace with all bolts of similar length piled in a regular manner with their longitudinal axes approximately parallel.”

How Is It Measured?

Follow these steps to ensure that you have received the correct quantity:

- Stack the wood neatly in a line or row, ensuring that individual pieces are touching and parallel to each other with as few gaps as possible.
- Measure the length, width and height of the stack in feet (for example, 4 feet x 8 feet x 4 feet).
- Multiply these measurements to calculate the volume in cubic feet.

If your result is equal to 128 cubic feet, you have a cord.

Which Units Of Measurement Are Legal?

Some firewood dealers have been known to use various units of measurement to sell firewood. Some of these units of measurement are legal in Canada and some are not. Beware of terms that are not recognized as legal units of measurement, as they will often mean less than a cord.

Common legal units of measurement used in the sale of firewood:

- cord
- fractions of a cord
- cubic feet
- stacked cubic metre
- fractions of a stacked cubic metre

Beware of terms that are not recognized as legal units of measurement, as they will often mean less than a cord.

Terms that are not recognized (illegal) for the sale of firewood in Canada include:

- apartment cord
- furnace cord
- rack of wood
- short cord
- bush cord
- pile of wood
- tossed cord
- single cord
- face cord
- processed cord
- truckload of wood
- stove cord

How To Protect Yourself

Adhering to the following precautions when purchasing firewood will help ensure that you get what you pay for.

When ordering firewood:

- Ask for it to be delivered stacked in the truck so that you can measure it before it is unloaded.
- If this is not possible, immediately following delivery:
 - stack the firewood;
 - measure the length, width and height of the stack; and
 - calculate the quantity that you received.

When receiving the firewood:

- Be present at the time of delivery. Do not rely on a neighbour to accept delivery on your behalf.
- Ask for a receipt and verify that it indicates:
 - the quantity and type of firewood purchased;
 - the seller's name, address and telephone number; and
 - the price paid.
- Write down the licence plate number of the delivery vehicle.

Before using any firewood:

- Verify that the quantity received is the same as the quantity paid for. If there is a discrepancy, contact the seller before using any of the firewood.

Do You Think You've Been Shortchanged?

If you received less firewood than you paid for, and after contacting the seller you are not completely satisfied, contact the nearest Measurement Canada office before using any of the firewood. We are listed in the blue pages of your telephone directory.

Summary

- A cord is equal to 128 cubic feet of firewood.
- Legal units of measurement for firewood are: a cord, fractions of a cord, cubic feet, a stacked cubic metre, and fractions of a stacked cubic metre.
- Beware of units of measurement that are not recognized in Canada (illegal). You are likely to receive less firewood for your money.
- Verify that the quantity of firewood received is the same as the quantity paid for.
- If you have any questions or complaints regarding the quantity of firewood received, contact the nearest Measurement Canada office.

For More Information

For more information, please contact the Measurement Canada office nearest you. We are listed in the blue pages of your telephone directory. You can also visit us online at www.mc.ic.gc.ca.

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