

Firewood and specialty timbers

Firewood is produced from Victoria's state forests by domestic and commercial operations. Domestic operations involve cutting firewood in the forests for personal use. Those wanting to collect firewood from State forests are required to hold a permit issued by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). Contacts for regional DSE offices are available on the DSE website. Commercial operations in parts of eastern Victoria are managed by VicForests and involve the delivery of firewood logs to nominated delivery points. Sealed bid auctions are run when supply or demand requires. Commercial operations in the western part of Victoria are managed by DSE.

Commercial Firewood Logs

Auctions:

Open auctions for the purchase of firewood logs are held by VicForests intermittently depending on demand and availability of raw material. During these auctions, qualified bidders are able to submit bids on multiple lots and for a supply of up to three years. Once evaluated, VicForests will deliver the firewood logs to the successful bidder's yard where they will be processed into firewood for public sale.

Tenders for auctions are advertised in major metropolitan and regional newspapers and on the VicForests website. Auction packs can be downloaded from the VicForests website prior to an auction.

Qualifying:

Buyers must meet minimum auction requirements to be eligible to bid for firewood logs. In order to qualify for an auction a potential bidder must be a viable business entity and:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Comply with VicForests' requirements for sale, delivery and unloading of logs
- Have an OH&S management system that complies with OH&S legislation including the OH&S Act 2004 and the OH&S Regulations 2007. This includes a safe unloading area, satisfactorily maintained unloading equipment and accredited machine operators
- Accept VicForests' Auction Rules and Terms and Conditions for Timber Sales.

Species:

All firewood logs are produced by VicForests' contractors as a by-product of normal harvesting operations. For this reason, species and areas are restricted to those which are available to VicForests for commercial harvesting. For the Central Highlands these species include: Alpine Ash, Mountain Ash and Messmate, while for the Gippsland region: Alpine Ash, Mountain Ash, Shinning gum, Messmate, Silvertop Ash, Grey gum, Cut-tail and Stringybark species.

Small quantities of Box and Ironbark may be available on an irregular basis in Gippsland, however most of the small amount that VicForests harvest is sold for high value speciality timbers and craftwood (see Specialty timbers).

VicForests' harvesting operations are restricted to the eastern part of Victoria. They do not cover the Mallee, Murray and western districts and therefore, can't produce red gum or other commercial firewood species.

Quality and quantity:

The 2008 summer firewood log auction sells wood in lots of 60 tonnes (2 truckloads) or 500 tonnes over a range of 1 -3 years. This allows smaller and larger businesses a security of supply. Product specifications are detailed in documents available at time of auction and detail log length, species and diameter.

Price:

Delivered price for firewood logs typically vary from \$50 to \$70 per tonne, depending on haulage distances. VicForests' harvesting operations are restricted to areas and forest types that the State Government permits VicForests to operate in. Firewood lots may not be available in some areas of eastern Victoria.

Domestic firewood

VicForests is not permitted to undertake domestic firewood collection. The collection and removal of firewood for domestic use requires a licence or permit issued by DSE or an agent acting on behalf of DSE. For further information on domestic firewood licences and permits see the DSE website or contact your local DSE office.

Specialty timbers

Specialty log products include all available red eucalypts including heavy durables Red Ironbark and Red Box and moderately durable Southern Mahogany (Snowy River Redgum). Blackwood and Silver Wattle. Other lesser species are also salvaged. All species are in short supply and are sporadic in their availability.

Sealed Bid auctions are held for sales of specialty timbers when supply is available. Tender notices are placed in Regional and metropolitan newspapers. Potential bidders can also register with VicForests to receive notification of future tenders. Once a registration of interest form has been received, VicForests will notify potential bidders of tenders fitting demand profile. Tender details include fixed costs, grade, diameter, species, point of sale, and viewing and submission times. A copy of the tender document can be found on VicForests website.

Contacts:

VicForests

(03) 9608 9500
Email: vfs.auctions@vicforests.com.au
www.vicforests.com.au

Domestic Firewood:

Contact your local DSE office or check their website www.dse.vic.gov.au

Firewood Association of Australia

1300 131 481
www.firewood.asn.au