



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

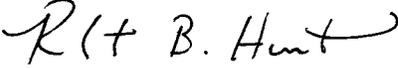
No. 1525

H.P. 1010

House of Representatives, April 8, 2025

An Act to Promote Firewood Banks in Maine

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative RAY of Lincolnville.
Cosponsored by Senator FARRIN of Somerset and
Representatives: BOYER of Poland, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, HASENFUS of
Readfield, HEPLER of Woolwich, PLUECKER of Warren, SACHS of Freeport, SINCLAIR
of Bath, STOVER of Boothbay.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA c. 810** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 810**

4 **FIREWOOD BANKS**

5 **§9731. Firewood banks**

6 The bureau shall promote the development and public awareness of firewood banks in
7 this State in accordance with this section.

8 **1. Definition.** A "firewood bank" is an organization that accepts donations of firewood
9 and makes firewood available free of charge to individuals and families in need of heating
10 assistance.

11 **2. Public promotion; maintain list of operating firewood banks.** The bureau shall:

12 A. Provide information to the public for the purpose of increasing awareness of the
13 resources available at firewood banks and the charitable efforts needed to maintain
14 firewood banks in this State; and

15 B. Develop and maintain, on the bureau's publicly accessible website, a list of all
16 firewood banks operating in the State.

17 In fulfilling its obligations under this subsection, the bureau may consult with the
18 University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

19 **3. Informational resources for firewood banks.** The bureau shall develop and
20 dispense informational resources to promote the successful operation of firewood banks in
21 this State. In fulfilling its obligations under this subsection, the bureau may collaborate
22 with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

23 **4. Forest harvesting of state-owned land; offer to donate firewood required.** When
24 timber or forest harvesting operations are conducted on state-owned land and any part of
25 that land is located within 50 miles from a firewood bank that is listed on the statewide list
26 of firewood banks maintained pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph B, the State shall offer
27 as a donation to that firewood bank at least 8 but not more than 13 cords of hardwood. The
28 bureau shall determine how many cords of hardwood the State is required to offer with
29 respect to a particular timber or forest harvesting operation.

30 **5. Liability.** A firewood bank and the municipality or county in which a firewood bank
31 is operating is not liable for any damages caused by the taking or use of firewood from the
32 firewood bank.

33 **Sec. 2. 38 MRSA §342, sub-§18** is enacted to read:

34 **18. Guidance to firewood banks.** The commissioner shall provide guidance to
35 municipalities or counties in this State operating firewood banks concerning management
36 of environmental impacts and solid-waste disposal associated with the operation of a
37 firewood bank. For the purposes of this subsection, "firewood bank" has the same meaning
38 as in Title 12, section 9731, subsection 1.

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SUMMARY

This bill establishes provisions to promote the development and operation of organizations that accept donations of firewood and provide access to firewood free of charge to individuals and families who are in need of heating assistance. These organizations are called firewood banks.

The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry to provide information to the public to increase awareness of firewood banks and to maintain a list on the bureau's publicly accessible website that lists all of the operating firewood banks in this State. The bureau must also develop informational resources to promote the successful operation of firewood banks in this State. In fulfilling these obligations, the bureau may consult with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

The bill requires that any time there are timber or forest harvesting operations on state-owned land located within 50 miles of a firewood bank, the State is required to offer a donation of 8 to 13 cords of hardwood to that firewood bank.

The bill clarifies that a firewood bank and the municipality or county in which a firewood bank is located is not liable for any damages caused by the taking or use of firewood obtained from a firewood bank. The bill also requires the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to provide guidance to municipalities and counties concerning management of environmental impacts and solid-waste disposal associated with the operation of a firewood bank.