

Media Release

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Operation Block Splitter - seizure of illegal firewood

Authorised officers from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) have seized a significant quantity of illegal firewood from a property in North east Victoria yesterday.

DELWP Senior Forests Investigator, Sam Moore, said: "A search warrant executed yesterday has resulted in the seizure of approximately 50 cubic metres of firewood, a four wheel drive utility and other items allegedly used in the commission of offences under the Forests Act 1958."

"The confiscated firewood and equipment will be stored until the matter goes before a court," Ms Moore said.

"There's a high likelihood if found guilty, the seized vehicle and other items will be forfeited to the Crown as well as all of the timber."

"The search warrant was conducted as part of Operation Block Splitter, a state-wide compliance program which is targeting the illegal removal of large quantities of firewood from public land."

"The result is a deterrent for those considering illegally removing firewood from public land."

"Firewood in domestic firewood coupes is timber provided for local communities. By illegally removing large quantities of firewood from domestic firewood coupes, these people are practically stealing from their own communities.

"As part of Operation Block Splitter DELWP authorised officers will investigate reports of suspected illegal firewood suppliers and those caught will face significant penalties and potential loss of plant and equipment used in the commission of an offence.

"If you are aware of the illegal sale of firewood or any unauthorised activity relating to firewood we encourage you to report it by calling DELWP on 136 186 and mentioning 'Operation Block Splitter'."

All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.