

# THE FIREWOOD BANK COMMONS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTING FIREWOOD BANK STORIES AND RESOURCES



## Wood Banks Equipment & Safety Round Table

The University of Maine is hosting two roundtable discussions on equipment and safety on December 20th 8 AM (EST) and 8 AM (PST). Click [here](#) to participate.

## Firewood Bank Facebook group

A new Facebook group has been created to help promote greater cooperation and knowledge sharing between firewood banks. Click [here](#) to join!

## 2023 AGH Wood Bank Grant Status

Through U.S. Forest Service funding, AGH has processed 48 firewood banks applications to receive grants, accounting for all funds available for 2023. Visit our [page](#) featuring the grantees to view who has received funding so far. If your bank received funds, please send a paragraph to [darian@forgreenheat.org](mailto:darian@forgreenheat.org) for us to post next to your picture!

## Resource Sheets for Firewood Banks

We now have five resource sheets that AGH staff have created over the last month with your help. Please check them out and give us feedback if you think we missed anything. And, print them out for your key people!

Visit our [resources page](#) for more examples.

Wood Splitter Safety	Chain Saw Safety	Volunteering 101
<p><b>FIREWOOD BANK SAFETY WOOD SPLITTER</b></p> <p><b>A. PROPER SAFETY CLOTHING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye protection</li> <li>Ear protection</li> <li>Steel toe boots</li> <li>Gloves</li> <li>No loose clothing to avoid becoming tangled in equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>B. KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT &amp; WORK AREA</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the log splitter user manual!</li> <li>The surroundings of your wood splitter should be clear of other volunteers/workers. Working in a crowded space increases risks of injury.</li> </ol> <p><b>C. PREPARE YOUR WOOD SPLITTER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wheels locked? Make sure the wheels of your splitter are secure with blocks before starting.</li> <li>Solid firm base! Make sure your splitter is on flat and even ground.</li> <li>Hydraulic hoses or cables? Hydraulic hoses and pipes can wear out with time and usage. Check to make sure there are no leaks or faults before starting with a piece of wood or cardboard. DO NOT USE YOUR HANDS.</li> </ul> <p><b>D. BASIC OPERATING SAFETY TIPS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No two-person teams! One splitter, one person operating.</li> <li>Handle logs by the sides, not the ends. This habit keeps your fingers out of the clearing path.</li> <li>Don't hold the wood on the splitter with your hand.</li> <li>Don't pry partially split wood apart with your fingers. Those splits can close due to spring tension in the wood and crush your fingers.</li> <li>Be careful with frozen wood and don't split rotten wood.</li> <li>Back rounds straight. If there's a large misalignment wood can fly out of the splitter.</li> <li>If wood is too heavy, use a hydraulic lift. Team lifting is dangerous.</li> </ol> <p><b>VIDEO RESOURCES*</b></p> <p>Log Splitter Safety Tips Safety and Clearing Techniques <small>*AGH does not recommend any particular brand unless otherwise noted for quality of safety tip.</small></p> <p>Questions? Email <a href="mailto:info@forgreenheat.org">info@forgreenheat.org</a></p>	<p><b>FIREWOOD BANK SAFETY CHAIN SAWS</b></p> <p><b>A. PROPER SAFETY CLOTHING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helmet</li> <li>Eye protection</li> <li>Ear protection</li> <li>Chaps</li> <li>Steel toe boots</li> <li>Gloves</li> <li>No loose clothing to avoid becoming tangled in equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>B. KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the chain saw user manual!</li> <li>Identify the safety features on your chain saw (chain brake, front and rear hand guards, chain catcher, stop switch, vibration damper, throttle trigger lockout, etc.).</li> </ol> <p><b>C. PREPARE YOUR CHAIN SAW</b></p> <p>A chain saw that is in good condition is a safer and easier to operate chain saw.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need sharpening? Follow the instructions in your chain manual to sharpen the chain.</li> <li>Loose chain? All chains stretch- follow manufacturer's recommendations on chain tension.</li> <li>Wall-oil! Good lubrication will extend a saw's life.</li> </ul> <p><b>D. BASIC OPERATING SAFETY TIPS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never refuel a hot engine.</li> <li>Never drop start a saw! Holding a saw with only one hand does not allow for proper control over the swinging action that the bar will make.</li> <li>Have a plan in mind before starting the saw. Walking around with a started saw only increases the risk of injury.</li> </ol> <p><b>How To Use a Chainsaw</b> Chainsaw 101 <small>*AGH does not recommend any particular brand unless otherwise noted for quality of safety tip.</small></p> <p><b>VIDEO RESOURCES*</b></p> <p>Questions? Email <a href="mailto:info@forgreenheat.org">info@forgreenheat.org</a></p>	<p><b>FIREWOOD BANK VOLUNTEERING 101</b></p> <p><b>A. PROPER SAFETY CLOTHING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed toe shoes (No sneakers! Preferably boots)</li> <li>Eye protection</li> <li>Gloves</li> <li>No loose clothing to avoid being tangled in equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>B. INTRODUCE EQUIPMENT &amp; WORK AREA</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers under 18 should not operate any dangerous equipment including chain saws and wood splitters.</li> <li>Make sure your volunteers know the physical address at which they're working, who the safety contact is, and are aware of whether or not they have a phone signal. All of these are good things to know in case of emergency.</li> <li>Does your volunteer know your mission? Sharing the mission and illustrating the heating need within the community gets volunteers to reflect on the energy needs of their neighbors and connect deeper to their work at the firewood bank. Having volunteers connect with the mission will also help reduce the stigma around those seeking heating aid.</li> <li>Express the importance of keeping a processing site tidy- a cluttered work space is a more dangerous work space. This also means that more is not always better. Try to limit the amount of dangerous machinery operating at one time.</li> <li>Make sure volunteers understand that there are many needs of a firewood bank, so their skills are wanted! Some may not like or be able to cut, split, or stack wood, but they can help with outreach, event management, wood lot management, or grants and paperwork. Everyone is welcome.</li> <li>Every firewood bank is unique. The most important thing is to make sure volunteers are all on the same page. A cohesive and organized group of people can get a lot of things done while staying safe.</li> </ol> <p><b>VIDEO RESOURCES*</b></p> <p>Questions? Email <a href="mailto:info@forgreenheat.org">info@forgreenheat.org</a></p>

## Profile of Compassion



## Wood4Good on the TODAY Show's "Dad's Got This"

"If people work together on helping people, I think it would help to heal some of the division," Eric Axelrod, Wood4Good's leader and founder, said.

## Firewood Banks in the News

Gold Country grant will improve volunteer

Colrain, MA debuts new wood bank,

safety and ensure seasoned wood



“Not only will this grant allow us to meet new air-quality best practices criteria, but it will help build a sustainable, environmentally-conscious program,” said Gold Country executive director Leslie Lovejoy”

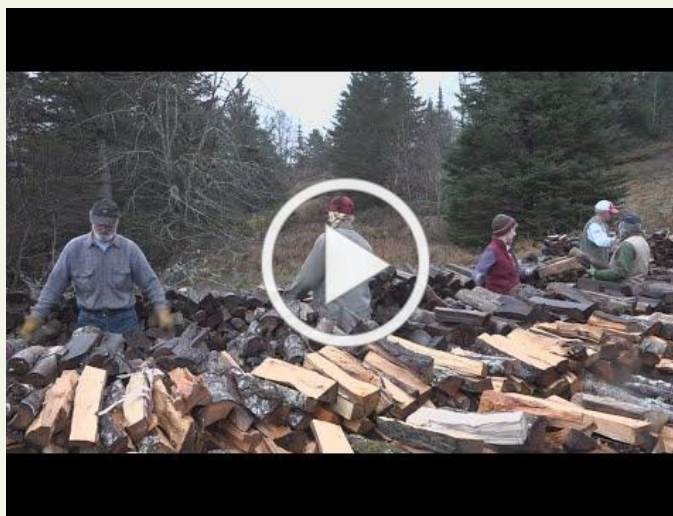
mutual aid



“This is a mutual aid project,” David Greenberg, one of the bank organizers, said.”



## DownEast Wood Bank reports record need for firewood as the winter chill fast approaches



*“...with the price of goods remaining high in general, free wood comes as a relief to many.”*



Do you have firewood bank stories to tell or resources to share? [Email us!](#)

THANKS FOR READING...

**THE FIREWOOD BANK COMMONS**

VISIT [FIREWOODBANKS.ORG](http://FIREWOODBANKS.ORG) FOR MORE INFO

Alliance for Green Heat | 6909 Laurel Ave, , #5461, Takoma Park, MD 20912

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