

MEMORANDUM

TO: David A. Hulseberg, Village Manager

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP
Director of Community Development

DATE: March 4, 2010

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Nuisance Ordinance Provisions – Firewood

Attached for Village Board consideration is a draft ordinance establishing provisions and restrictions for storing firewood on residential properties within the Nuisance Code provisions.

BACKGROUND

Currently, the Village of Lombard does not direct provisions regulating the amount of firewood that can be stored on a residential property. Past interpretations have restricted or minimized firewood storage within requisite yards or has limited external impacts of firewood. Other code provisions limit home occupation and related business activities or address life safety issues.

Based upon past inquiries, the excessive storage of firewood can be deemed inconsistent with the character of residential neighborhoods. Such expressed concerns include constant chainsaw noise for wood cutting, delivery and pick-up activities and visual impact. However, while such activities may be linked to business activity, identifying and enforcing home occupations on such properties can be elusive. As such, based upon these concerns, staff is pursuing an alternate approach to regulate firewood storage activities.

The proposed regulations are intended to be placed within Chapter 94: Nuisance provisions. The proposed amendments are intended to provide for a reasonable amount of firewood (one full-cord or less) on a residential property (for reference purposes, one cord of firewood equals a firewood stack of 4 feet in height, 8 feet in width and 4 feet in depth; or 128 cubic feet). Firewood is frequently sold in full-cord, half-cord and face-cord (generally 4' x 8' x 1') sizes and the one-cord would provide for traditional firewood usage (recreational or heating) but not for non-residential uses. Such restrictions also help ensure that the firewood would be more closely associated with the principal residential use of the property.

RECOMMENDATION

Attached is an ordinance amending Chapter 94: Nuisance provisions to establish regulations to minimize the total amount of firewood on a residential property to no more than one full-cord in size, with companion height and area restrictions. Staff recommends approval of the amendment.