

**TIMBER
DON'T BE A VICTIM!**



Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Office of Forestry

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Louisiana
Department of
Agriculture
&
Forestry

Mike Strain DVM, Commissioner

BE INFORMED: DON'T BE A VICTIM

Louisiana timber resources annually provide over six hundred million dollars in stumpage value to the landowners of our state. Timber is the leading agricultural crop and the second leading industry in Louisiana producing over 25,000 jobs and adding five billion dollars to our economy. The most vulnerable person in this economic process is the private landowner, especially those who know little about the value of their timber or the proper way to contract the harvesting. Remember, your trees are a valuable asset representing many years of investment before contributing to your financial livelihood.

IMPORTANT STEPS TO REDUCE CHANCES FOR TIMBER THEFT LOSSES:

1) KNOW THE VALUE OF YOUR TIMBER:

If you need help, representatives of the Office of Forestry can guide you. You may decide to seek professional assistance in managing your forest resources for optimum return. **NOTE:** A study conducted in Georgia showed that using the services of a professional when selling timber brings a higher price, even after paying a commission on the sale. In a recent Louisiana case, for example, a landowner was offered \$16,500 for all merchantable timber on a 26-acre

tract. However after the landowner contacted the Office of Forestry and subsequently retained a professional forester, the landowner received a bid of \$88,000.

2) BOUNDARY LINES: Make sure lines are correct and well-marked. A description of the property can be obtained at the courthouse in the parish where the land is located. This will prevent honest mistakes and will add to the chain of evidence if theft occurs.

3) VISIT THE PROPERTY: Visit frequently if possible. Make sure no unauthorized logging is taking place. Visit logging sites daily when you have a harvest operation on your property---including firewood cutting---or when there is harvesting on the adjacent property.

4) ABSENTEE OWNERS: You are especially vulnerable. If you live too far from your property to visit it frequently, arrange for an overseer. This overseer might be a paid employee, a professional forestry consultant, a hunting club, a friend or neighboring landowner, or a combination of these. Notify local authorities that you are an absentee landowner and ask them to let you (or designated person) know of any suspicious activities on your land; in turn, let them know when there are to be legitimate harvesting or other management activities on your woodlands.



5) SELLING TIMBER: Check with the nearest Office of Forestry location to learn about available services and assistance. Draw up a contract that:

- Spells out limitations and conditions of the sale and method of logging,
- Gives an estimate of volume to be cut (cruise or tree count)
- Identifies trees to be harvested.
- Is signed by both the buyer and seller



The Office of Forestry recommends that the lump-sum sale method be used and that bids be obtained from as many buyers as possible.

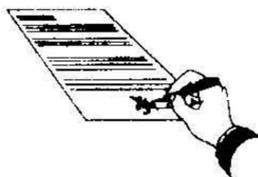
Not least of all, MONITOR THE TERMS OF YOUR CONTRACT WHEN HARVESTING BEGINS.

FIREWOOD CUTTING: Make sure you have authorized the operations. Written authorizations may be in the best interest of all concerned. Do not allow transfer of authorization. As in other timber sales, specify the area and the trees to be cut and monitor cutting activities.

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TIMBER SALES CONTRACT

Always have a written contract and have an attorney and forester who represent your interest review the contract before signing.

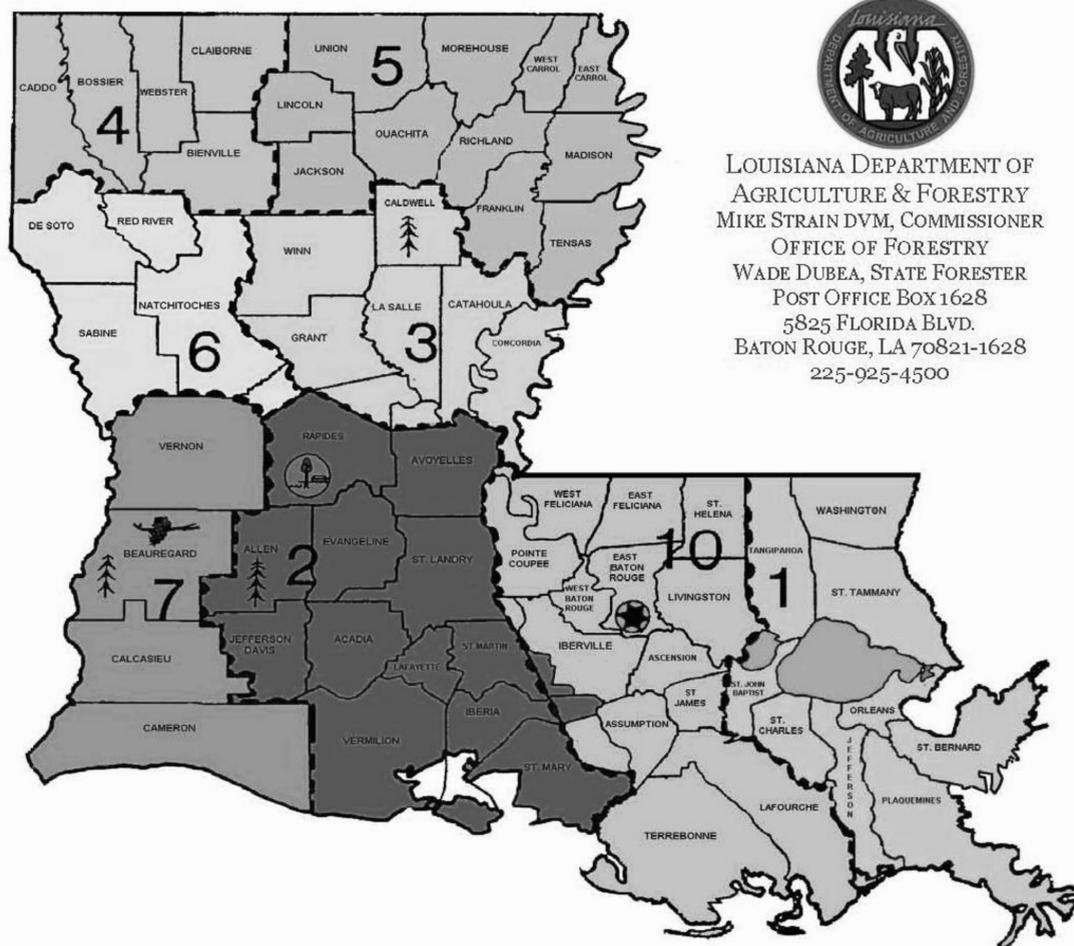


Contracts should include:

- ☞ Name and address of seller and purchaser
- ☞ Amount of money to be received (lump sum or per unit) and when payments should be made and where sent
- ☞ Performance bond
- ☞ Expiration date
- ☞ Best Management Practices
- ☞ Clauses to protect improvements and excluded trees

IF THEFT OCCURS: Report the theft as soon as possible to the Office of Forestry, local sheriff's office or both. Provide as much detailed information as possible. To facilitate this, make written notes for yourself as you learn information. Cooperate fully with authorities. If an arrest is made, press charges. To help draw attention to the seriousness of the timber theft problem, as well as for your own reasons, offer positive reinforcement (written as well as verbal) to public officials who participate in timber theft cases.

The Office of Forestry has many cost sharing programs and publications available to the public and is available to counsel and/or assist you with the management of your forest resources. Take advantage of these services and feel free to contact the Office of Forestry.



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Lafayette, LA 70508
(318) 262-5433 Fax (318) 262-2222

New Orleans Office
No. 1 Palm Dr.
New Orleans, LA 70124
(504) 483-4795 Fax (504) 483-4795

Woodworth Office
P. O. Box 298
Woodworth, LA 71485
(318) 487-5172 Fax (318) 487-5988

NURSERIES

Beauregard Nursery
6308 Hwy 190 West
DeRidder, LA 70634-0935
(318) 463-5509 Fax (318) 825-6814

Columbia Nursery
276 Columbia Nursery Rd.
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