

# 2019 Firewood Survey

In December 2019, the Council undertook a survey to understand where our Tasman residents get their firewood to heat their homes. The results of the survey will be used to help the Council better target our efforts to improve air quality in winter.

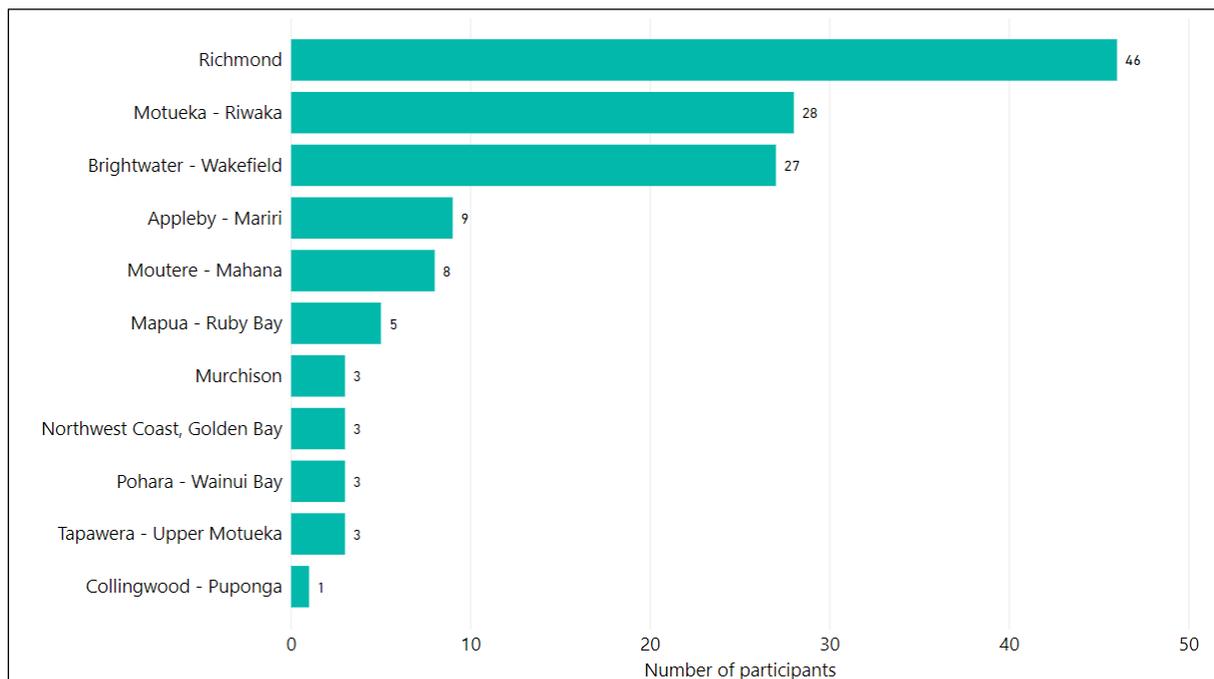
The survey was publicised via the Council’s Facebook page and Newline, and accessed via the Council’s website from 11<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

## 1. Participation

136 survey responses were received.

The largest number of participants reside in Richmond (46 participants, 34%), followed by Motueka – Riwaka (28 participants, 20.5%) and Brightwater – Wakefield (27 participants, 20%), as shown in Figure 1.

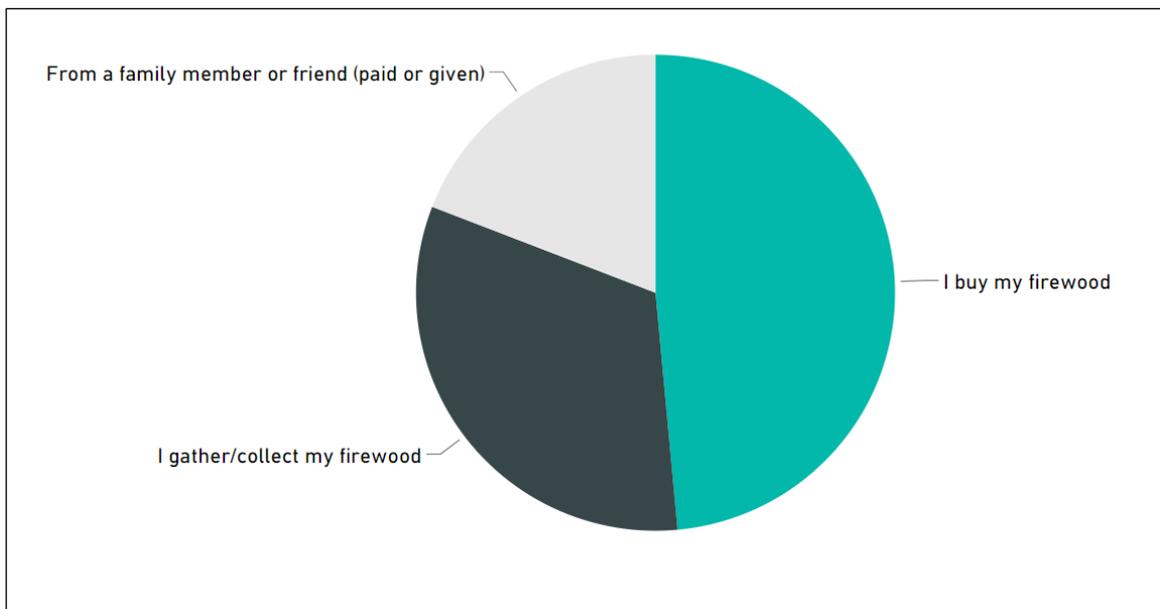
**Figure 1: Number of participants by location**



## 2. Where participants get their firewood from

Participants were asked where they get their firewood from by selecting an answer from one of three options. The largest number of participants buy their firewood (66 participants, 48.5%). 44 participants (32.5%) gather or collect their own firewood, and 26 participants (19%) receive firewood from either a family member or friend (paid or given).

**Figure 2: Where participants get their firewood from**



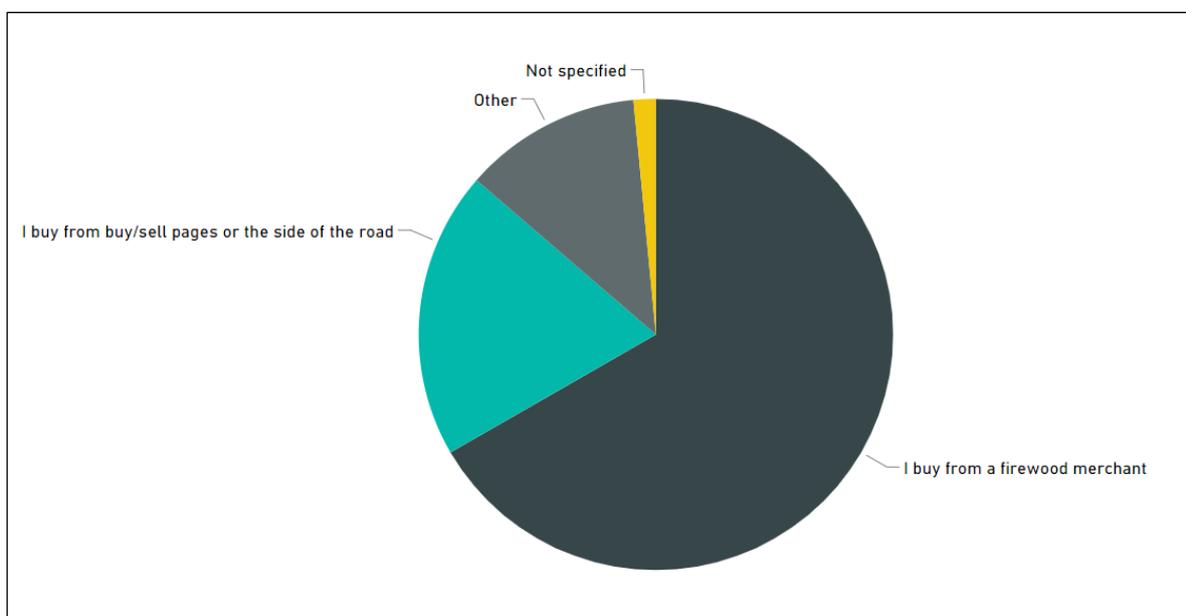
Approximately 75% of Richmond-based participants identified that they bought their firewood. Motueka and Riwaka-based participants largely had an even split between the three options. There were mixed results for other townships/areas with no obvious trends.

Survey logic was used which means that depending on each participant's response to this question, they were asked specific follow up questions as detailed below (in Sections 3-5).

### 3. Firewood is bought

Of the 66 participants who identified that they bought their firewood, 44 participants (68%) bought their wood from a firewood merchant. 13 participants (20%) bought their wood from the buy/sell pages (e.g. social media buy/sell, Trademe, etc) or roadside suppliers.

**Figure 3: Where participants buy their wood from**



Of those who bought their wood from firewood merchants, participants were asked to name their supplier. Responses included:

- Bay Firewood\*
- Buyright Firewood\*
- Richmond Wood and Coal Ltd\*
- Wholesale Firewood\*
- DIY shops (e.g. Bunnings, Mitre 10)
- Wai-iti Wood Supply
- Firewood Direct
- Longford Firewood
- Millers Firewood and Landscape Supplies

Suppliers listed with a '\*' denotes that these are currently Good Wood Suppliers – a Council-lead voluntary scheme that ensures firewood merchants undertake to supply firewood according to best practice. More information on the Good Wood scheme can be found on the Council's website ([tasman.govt.nz/link/goodwood](https://tasman.govt.nz/link/goodwood)). 64% of participants who bought their wood from a firewood merchant purchased wood from a Good Wood supplier. One participant commented that they bought firewood from Christchurch as they were not happy with the quality of local firewood supplies.

Eight people (12%) identified that they bought their wood from other sources including from their work, a local person with a sideline wood business, a friend of a friend, Upper Moutere sawmill, and anywhere that sells cheap wood.

Two participants commented that they both buy and collect wood, which was not an option in the survey, and that it is likely many other people also do this.

One participant did not specify where they bought their firewood from.

#### **4. Firewood is gathered or collected**

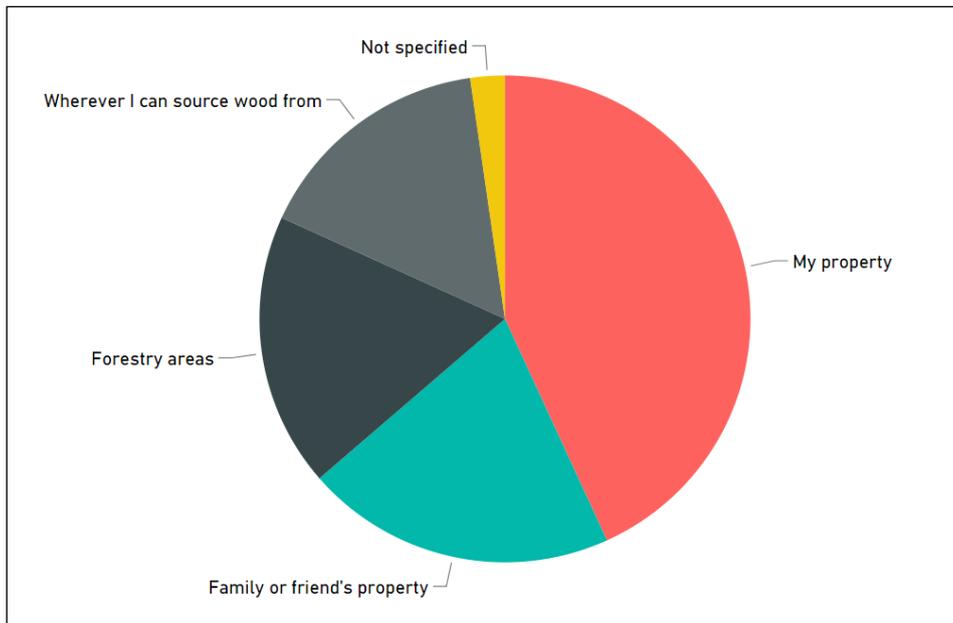
Those participants who identified that they gather or collect their firewood were also asked where they sourced their wood from. The responses were grouped into key themes as shown in Figure 4 (over page). Of the 44 participants that gathered or collected their firewood, the largest number of participants sourced wood from their own properties (19 participants, 43%).

Other sources included:

- Forestry areas, for example private and commercial forests, with permission or through work (8 participants, 18%)
- Family or friends' properties or forestry blocks (9 participants, 20.5%)
- Wherever firewood can be sourced around the district. Examples included scavenging pine cones and kindling wood from Rabbit Island (which the Council allows in areas open to public access provided a chainsaw is not used), side of the road, and where private property owners allow it (7 participants, 16%).

One person did not specify where they gather or collect their wood from.

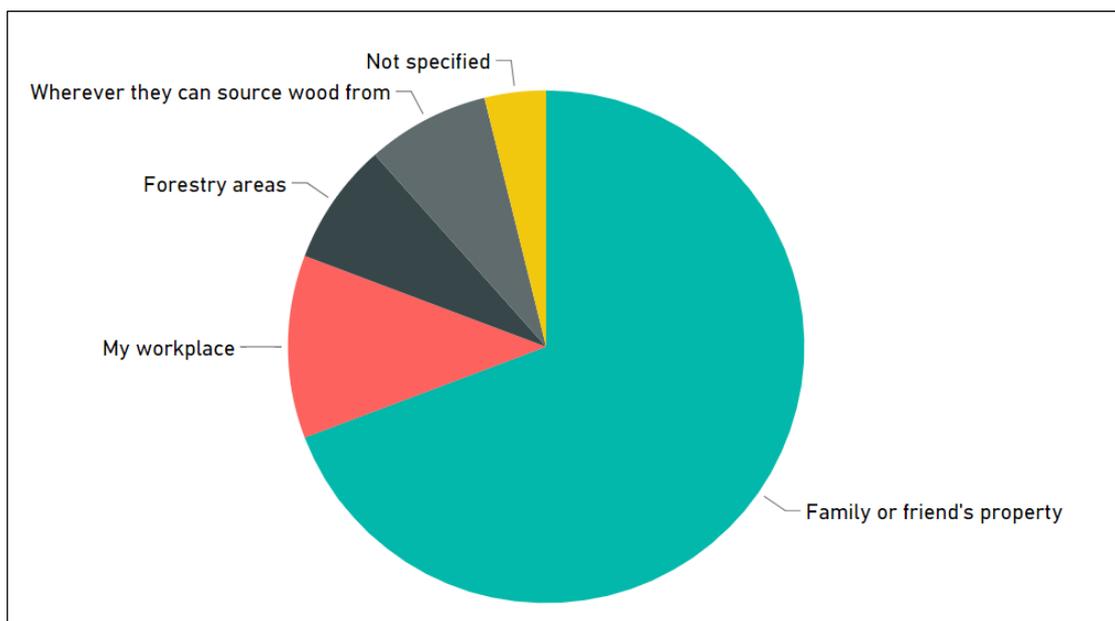
**Figure 4: Where participants gather or collect wood from**



## 5. Firewood is received from a family member or friend

Those participants who identified that they receive firewood from a family member or friend (paid or given) were also asked where they sourced their wood from. The responses were grouped into key themes as shown in Figure 5. 26 participants identified that they receive firewood from a family member or friend and this wood is either given (free) or paid for. This wood is largely sourced from family or friends' properties including forestry blocks (18 participants, 69%).

**Figure 5: Where family members or friends source firewood from**



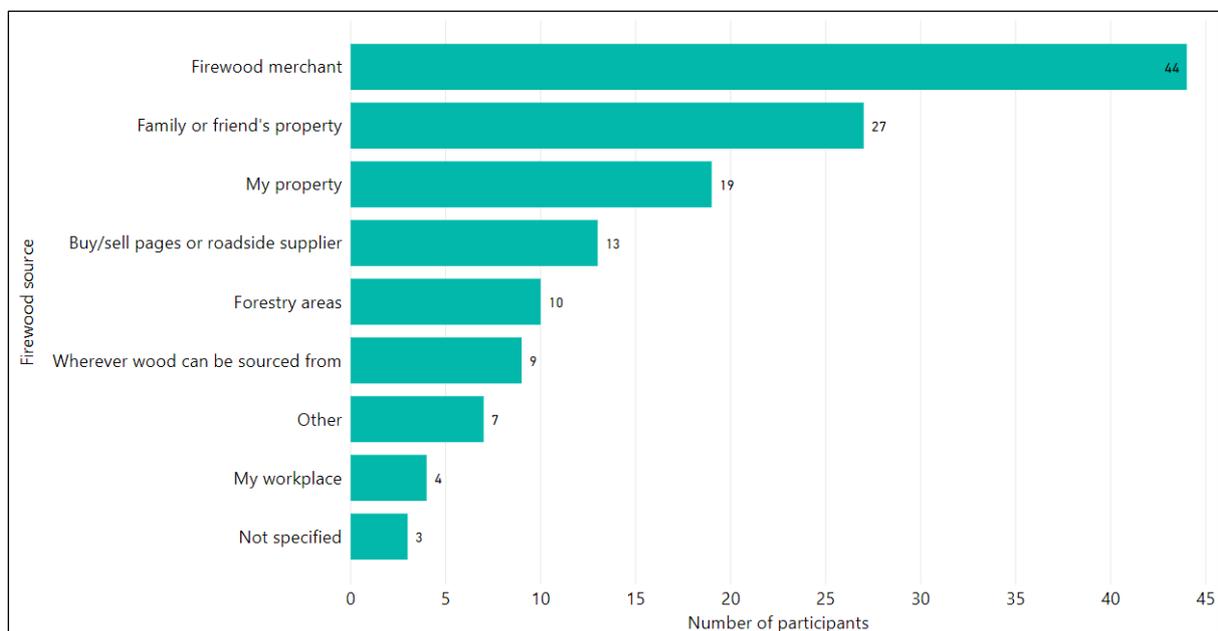
Other responses included from forestry areas (2 participants, 7.5%), or wherever their family member or friend could source wood from (2 participants, 7.5%). Three participants (11.5%)

identified that their firewood is sourced through their work. One person did not specify where their firewood is sourced from.

## 6. Firewood sources

The results from Sections 3-5 can be collated and analysed further to provide an overall summary of where firewood is sourced from (as shown in Figure 6). The results show that Tasman residents get their wood from a variety of sources, either bought or collected/given for free. Wood that is sourced from private properties (either their own (19 participants, 14%) or a family member or friend's property (27 participants, 20%)) is the most common source of firewood (a total of 46 participants, 34%). Purchasing wood from a firewood merchant is a close second source of firewood (44 participants, 32%).

Figure 6: Firewood sources



'Other' sources included a local person with a sideline wood business, a friend of a friend, and as one participant described as being anywhere that sells cheap wood (and all within the category of bought firewood).

## 7. What time of year is firewood bought or gathered/collected?

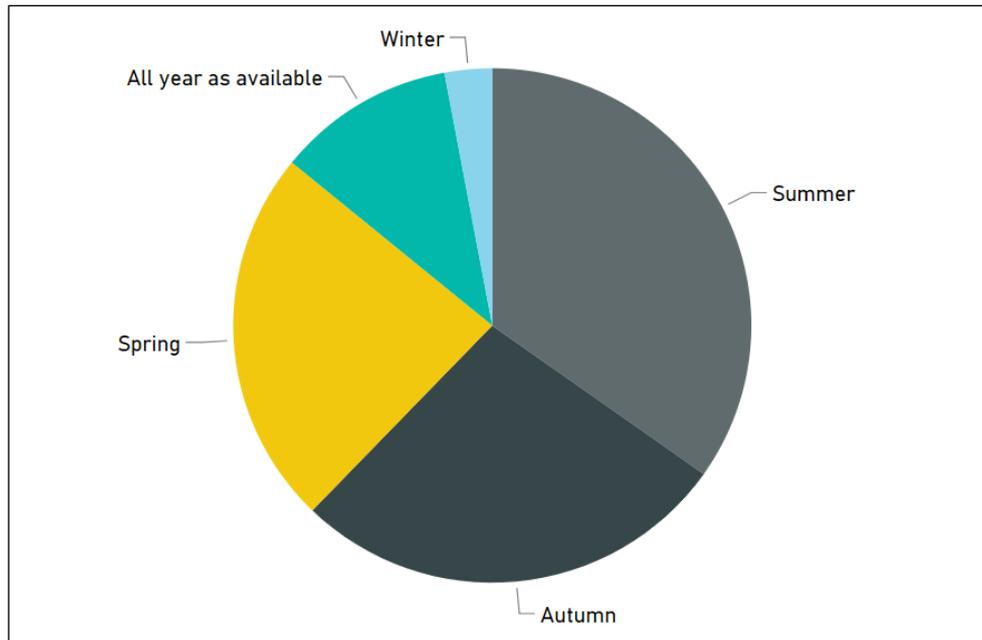
Participants were asked an open ended question to find out what month of the year they typically got their firewood. A range of responses were received including individual months, blocks of months, seasons, and all year around. For analysis purposes, responses have been grouped together into seasons as shown in Figure 7.

It is noted that some caution should be applied when considering these results. Firewood can be bought or collected all year round as noted by some participants. The key is to ensure that firewood is correctly stored and kept dry and any 'green' (unseasoned) wood is given sufficient time to season before being used. The time taken to season wood can vary and depends on several factors including the type of wood used, storage and the local climate. Firewood merchants usually sell

both seasoned firewood suitable for immediate use, and green firewood which should be stored and seasoned by the purchaser for use at a later date.

A number of participants identified that they get their firewood early during the months of spring (September, October, November) to enable it to season in time for the following winter (32 participants, 24%). Of these participants, 56% either gathered/collected their own or got it from a family member or friend (paid or given); and the rest buying their wood (firewood merchant, buy/sell pages, roadside supplier). November was specifically identified by participants as a popular month during spring to get firewood.

**Figure 7: What time of year is firewood bought or gathered/collected?**



Summer was the most popular season to get firewood (47 participants, 35%). Of these participants, 53% bought their wood (firewood merchant, buy/sell pages, roadside supplier); with the rest either gathering/collecting their own or got it from a family member or friend (paid or given). January and February were popular months during the summer to get firewood as identified by participants.

Autumn was the second most common season to get firewood, with 37 participants (27%) identifying this season. Of these participants, 65% bought their wood over the autumn months. March was specifically identified by participants as a popular month during autumn to get firewood.

Four participants (3%) identified that they got firewood during the winter months. Two participants bought their wood during June, and two other participants commented that they collected their own wood for seasoning and use the following winter.

15 participants (11%) identified that they get wood all year around, as and when available. All of these participants, with the exception of one, either collected/gathered their own wood or received wood from a family member or friend (paid or given). Several participants commented that they store and season the wood before using it, with a couple noting that they get wood 1-2 years in advance.