Pallets can reduce handling in a firewood operation, which speeds production and makes the work easier. Pallets can fit into both small- and large-scale operations.

As firewood is stacked on a pallet as it comes off the saw and split wood can be handled at once by a machine, rather than having to handle the pieces individually. Full pallets were then transported to the storage yard or building. When folded, a stack of pallets can be comfortably within the capability of an end loader on my tractor. Whenever firewood was needed at a building, the skid steer loader was used to deliver a full pallet and pick up the empty pallet. On a far smaller scale, I use pallets for handling the firewood I use to heat my home. The firewood is stacked directly on pallets from the wood splitter. One person operates the splitter, and two persons handle the pieces directly onto a pallet. When the pallet is full, it is moved to a convenient place for drying and storage using forks on the front-end loader on my tractor. When I was designing a firewood handling system for a resort, this resort used about 15 cords of firewood per year. The design project is shown in the drawing above. In addition to the characteristics noted above, I designed the machine that will move them. I set up a mini assembly line to handle the wood, so it won’t fall off when the truck or trailer is unloaded. To turn the lag bolts (an air wrench was used to connect 4 x 4 to 2 x 4), or goodwood@vermontel.net. Irwin Post is available at 802/875-4102. Based in Chester, Vermont, forest engineer, how you value your time, and how much you value firewood. The answer depends on the value one puts on time. If handling firewood is seen as recreation and exercise, the answer is clearly that you’d be better off making your own wood. If you are time tight and are very busy, then the answer is that you’d do much better to purchase firewood. This article was published in the Dec/Jan 2007 issue of Sawmill & Woodlot Management. For additional information on this subject, visit our website at www.sawmillmag.com