

Ashi-niswi giizisooog (Thirteen Moons)

Binaakwe Giizis

Binaakwe Giizis is the falling leaves moon. This moon is a time for preparing the home and the mind for winter and for the harvest of moose (mooz). Binaakwe Giizis begins its cycle as a new moon on October 7.

Preparing the home for winter

By Andrew Imig, FDLTCC

Winter is coming and most people are looking for simple and inexpensive ways to reduce their energy costs this year.

FDLTCC works closely with the Fond du Lac Reservation housing construction crews to help implement building science into ongoing work with local homes. This partnership will result in lower energy cost for occupants while increasing comfort levels in the homes. I have assembled a couple of easy tasks that can help reduce energy loss from a house while improving overall comfort.

First, clean the window sealing areas on the windows. Many times bugs and dirt build up in the sealing area of the homes windows. If the weather gets cold and the window is not properly latched, flies and Japanese beetles will hide in the seal area and later, when the window is latched, the bugs will cause seal leaks which allow cold air to enter the house. Wash the seals and the window contact points using warm water and mild detergent. Use a rag that you don't mind getting really dirty. After the windows are dry and clean latch the windows for the winter. This will help insure

proper seal contact and it can prevent air leakage and ice build up on some windows.

Next, insure that the furnace filter is clean and the correct size for the furnace. The furnace filter is commonly found in a covered slot in between the furnace and the return ducting. There are often arrows on the furnace filter to help install the filter correctly. This is the number one forced air inefficiency in high heating demand climates. Replace the filter once a month to insure maximum furnace performance.

These and other tips are often covered during an energy audit. FDLTCC has just started a Building Performance program that is teaching people how to use building science to test and improve residential homes. In February the first two courses were introduced in Minnesota. Currently, FDLTCC is training other instructors and colleges around the state to teach the same building science principles. FDLTCC is also working closely with the Fond du Lac Reservation housing construction crews to help implement the building science into their ongoing work with local homes. I hope these tips help you prepare for the upcoming winter.

Zhingob

By Julie Miedtke, UMN Extension

Each fall, Minnesotans take to the woods to gather boughs to be clipped and woven into decorative wreaths, swags and garlands. Minnesota is a national leader in the seasonal greens industry, shipping wreaths to every state in the nation and across the globe. This short and intense seasonal industry employs thousands of people in Minnesota, and allows many 'home based businesses' to earn a substantial income.

Approximately 98 percent of the boughs harvested for wreaths are from the balsam fir tree or "zhingob." In Minnesota, bough harvest season begins after hard frosts have "set" the needles on the branches. Other species, including giizhik (northern white cedar) and zhingwaak (white pine), are also gathered to create mixed wreaths.

Properly harvested boughs cause minimal harm to the tree and, in fact, can lead to more prolific branching for future harvests. On the other hand, careless harvesting can quickly deplete and de-

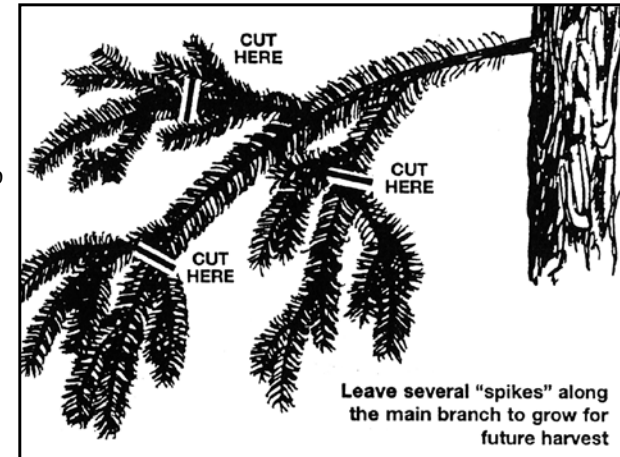


Illustration courtesy of MN Dept. of Natural Resources

grade the resource.

Contact FDL Resource Management Division to get a permit for harvest and a brochure detailing proper harvest techniques. It is always a good idea to identify and contact a buyer before harvest if the intent is to sell boughs or wreaths.

Wigwam: the winter home



Photo: Walter Muma, wildwoodsurvival.com

By Dave Wilsey

The winter wigwam was a seasonal home built by woodland tribes upon reaching their winter camps. In its most basic form, the winter wigwam was framed with saplings and covered with birch bark, held fast by cedar strips and spruce roots. Bark was layered so as to shed water. Some wigwams had overhead vents and air intakes to improve the interior air quality when burning fires. Double-wall technology may have been used to increase the structure's insulation capacity. Floor mats of grasses and other fibers also helped to keep the interior warm and clean.

Expanded versions of these articles can be found online, <http://giizis13.wordpress.com>

Upcoming Events:

Thirteen Moons Workshop: Preparing the home for winter, Date & Time TBD

Thirteen Moons is a monthly production of FDL Resource Management Division and University of Minnesota Extension. Content addresses culture, ecology, and natural resource management. Comments and contributions are welcome and should be directed to FDL RMD at (218) 878-8001 or giizis13@gmail.com