



Emerald Ash Borer Technical Brief

Preparedness Plan

What is Emerald Ash Borer?

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), (*Agrilus planipennis*) is an exotic beetle from Asia and was first discovered in 2002 attacking ash trees in southeastern Michigan (first identification occurred in Detroit). It was suspected of being in North America for as many as 10-15 years before its discovery and by then it had colonized much of the southern half of Michigan and Windsor, Ontario. Larvae feed in the phloem and outer sapwood of the tree producing galleries that eventually girdle and kill the entire tree. Generally trees decline and die over 3-5 years. EAB attacks all ash trees native to the United States and has devastated the ash population in affected areas.

What is the current status of EAB?

Emerald Ash Borer was found near Detroit Michigan in 2002. Populations were also established in Windsor, Ontario, and found in Ohio in 2003, northern Indiana in 2004, northern Illinois and Maryland in 2006, western Pennsylvania and West Virginia in 2007, Wisconsin, Missouri and Virginia in the summer of 2008, Minnesota, New York, Kentucky in the spring of 2009, Iowa in the spring of 2010, Tennessee in the summer of 2010, Connecticut, Kansas, and Massachusetts in the summer of 2012, New Hampshire in the spring of 2013, North Carolina and Georgia in the summer of 2013, and Colorado in the fall of 2013. In addition, Federal funds to control EAB have been curtailed and unless Federal budget allocation for EAB control changes, states and local municipalities will bear the brunt and cost of controlling EAB.

The future for native ash trees located in the eastern and central United States is bleak. Chemical controls are currently available and can protect an ash tree for one to two years depending on the chemical. The cost and sheer number of trees to treat makes current preventative treatment methods impossible on a large scale. All indications though, at this time, are that without some introduced sustainable control, EAB will devastate the native ash population in the eastern and central United States.

What is the risk to the ash population in St. Louis?

The City of St. Louis street tree population is comprised of approximately 14% ash trees (11,200 trees) this does not include trees on private property or in city parks. The City of St. Louis Forestry Division believes a significant and serious risk exists to the ash population in the City. Therefore, proactive steps have been taken to reduce the impact of EAB.

EAB Preparedness Plan

- Species of ash (all native ash such as white, green, and blue) known to be susceptible to EAB infestation have not been planted on City property for a decade. The planting of ash on private property is not recommended.
- Ordinance 68607 is in place to allow the City (Forestry Division) access to private property to remove infested trees either through Division or contractual assets.
- Forestry Division staff responsible for conducting tree evaluations have been trained and briefed about EAB – currently two Urban Forestry Assistants and three Urban Foresters. Provide information to them on who to report potential infestations to, for follow up verification and subsequent alerting of state officials.
- Brief the Commissioner of Forestry, Urban Forestry Superintendent and Forestry Supervisors (x3) about EAB. The Forestry Supervisors are directly involved in the supervision of field workers for the division and therefore, play a key role in early detection. Information provided to these individuals on who to contact to investigate a potential infestation.
- Distribute USDA EAB Pest Alert and post in staff break and meeting rooms.
- When an ash tree is removed it is not to be replaced with another ash tree unless specifically approved by the Commissioner of Forestry as an essential component of the tree scape in that area.
- Preventative removal of ash trees purely for EAB reasons is not to occur on City property at this time. The ash tree population will be selectively reduced using data from our street tree inventories conducted in each ward. Ash trees that have a condition rating of dead, critical, poor, or fair will be removed first. While EAB is highly likely to reach St. Louis, we are not at the stage of removing healthy trees to control it yet. Ash trees along with all other City trees will continue to be removed for existing safety concerns. The removal of healthy ash trees is not a preventative control measure in place or recommended by the Forestry Division for the City of St. Louis at this time. Staff should be advised to educate the public about EAB and the preventative measures being taken by the City when inquiries are received.

EAB Preparedness Plan *continued*

- Forestry Division compost site is operated under contract. The contractor will operate under all guidelines set forth by Missouri Department of Agriculture and/or Missouri Department of Conservation in regards to the disposal and acceptance of ash tree material that is considered infected with the pest.
- Create general informational handout about EAB and preventive measures for public distribution and what steps Forestry Division is taking to prevent its spread as well as what they can do to prevent its spread. (i.e. procure local or Missouri firewood only). Place this handout on Forestry Division's website as well.
- Identify approximate total number of City ash trees along with removal and replacement remediation costs based on the ongoing street tree inventory being conducted.
- Keep communication open with all current Forestry Department Contractors about the possible need for emergency services to address the arrival of a confirmed infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer.

EAB Detection Response Procedures

1. Suspect trees should be reported as soon as possible to a Forestry Division Tree Evaluation Contact (below). They will provide the initial investigation of the problem.
2. If initial investigation indicates the likelihood of EAB, the Division's EAB Resource Officer (if not already contacted) is to be contacted so they can evaluate the tree, site or other evidence.
3. The Commissioner/EAB Resource Officer will then contact the Missouri Department Conservation and coordinate their involvement. An infestation is not considered positive until verified by state officials (MDC and/or Missouri Department of Agriculture). At least one false positive has occurred in St. Louis and therefore, verification of the infection is critical before any statements about its presence in St. Louis are made.
4. If a positive identification of EAB occurs then state guidelines must be followed in containing and determining the scope of the infestation. Coordination should begin immediately with state officials at this time. Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry will be briefed by the Commissioner of Forestry at this time. The coordination and mobilization of City wide assets to begin to address recommended actions for containment and control will commence at this time.

Forestry Division EAB Resource Officer

Greg Hayes
Commissioner of Forestry
1415 N. 13th Street St. Louis, Mo 63106
314-613-7205
Hayesga@stlouis-mo.gov

Missouri Department of Conservation Contact

Mark Grueber – Urban Forester
Powder Valley Nature Center
11715 Cragwold Rd.
Kirkwood, MO 63122
314-301-1500 ext. 4210
mark.grueber@mdc.mo.gov

Forestry Division Tree Evaluation Contacts

The following staff members have had EAB identification training and have a general understanding of the pest. They should be contacted to assist with further evaluation and verification of a potential EAB infestation.

- Jim Morrison – Urban Forester 314-289-5317(Forest Park)
- Christine McCarthy – Urban Forester 314-613-7121
- Gerald Overmann – Urban Forester 314-613-7238
- Josh Carren – Urban Forestry Assistant 314-289-5317 (Forest Park)
- Amil Jakupovic – Urban Forestry Assistant 314-613-7121
- Dan Devereaux – Urban Forestry Assistant 314-613-7121

Forestry Division Field Supervision Assets

- Mike Williams – Urban Forestry Superintendent 314-289-5306
- Mel Tyler – Forestry Supervisor (utility) 314-289-5305
- Ed Corrigan – Forestry Supervisor (north) 314-289-5380
- Pat Lumpkins – Forestry Supervisor (south) 314-352-5120

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