

Emerald Ash Borer



Emerald Ash Borer Response Plan. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an invasive beetle that kills all species of ash trees, has been confirmed in Marquette County. With EAB confirmed in nearby communities, the future for ash trees looks uncertain. To be prepared for the arrival and to slow the spread of this destructive insect, the City of Marquette is pursuing an EAB response plan that balances public safety with a commitment to replanting trees on public land.

There are more than 230 public ash trees in the City right-of-way, in maintained areas of City parks and City-owned facilities. Ash trees represent 5 percent of all public trees in Marquette. 55 of these mature ash trees are being treated with a trunk injection on a three- year cycle.

The Department of Public Works has created the EAB Response Plan to extend the environmental, social, and economic benefits of ash trees, and to increase the diversity of the urban forest fiscally responsible to Marquette citizens. The plan pursues a phased treatment and removal process for public ash trees. In the first five years, a predetermined number of ash trees would be removed based on public safety, tree defects, size, and costs. The annual removal process would spread costs over a longer time period, allow staff to reevaluate the plan regularly, and limit the visual impact on streets lined with ash trees. Some ash trees will be treated, but only to keep EAB from killing the tree before it can be removed.

Although EAB will have a major impact on our community over the next several years, this challenge also presents Marquette with an opportunity to bring greater diversity to the public trees in our urban forest. A variety of trees will be planted at the size of 2-3 inch, which is optimal for establishment and survival of new trees. Not all the ash tree removals will be replaced, the location of some will be reevaluated. Since most of the tree removals will occur during the winter, there will be a time gap between removals and the replanting of new trees.



What is Emerald Ash Borer? EAB is native to Asia and was likely introduced into North America via cargo ships or planes. The beetle is brilliant bright metallic green in color and is visible to the naked eye, but small-about the size of Lincoln's head on a penny. The adult beetles eat ash foliage but cause little damage to the tree. It is the larvae that cause destruction. Larvae feed on the inner bark of the ash trees, preventing delivery of water and nutrients to the tree, causing it to die.



What can property owners do? The EAB strategy is primarily geared toward trees on publicly owned property: however, homeowners can also help prevent the spread of the insect on their property by observing the following suggestions:

- Do not move firewood across county or state lines. According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the spread of Emerald Ash Borer into uninfected areas has been done primarily through the movement of firewood.
- Identify ash trees on your property and watch for signs of Emerald Ash Borer. EAB, to date, has been found only on ash trees. Only those trees in genus *Fraxinus* are ash trees. A common misconception, due to its name, is that a mountain ash is an ash tree. However, the mountain ash is in the genus *Sorbus*, and therefore is not an ash tree. After identifying an ash tree, watch it for signs of decline, such as the top of the tree dying off, spindly sprouts growing from the trunk or roots, “D” shaped exit holes, and increased woodpecker activity. To confirm the presence of EAB in a tree, peel back the bark and look for larvae, which is whitish in color with no prolegs and bell-shaped segments.
- Contact your local extension office or professional tree service to discuss options for treating, removing or replacing your ash trees. If your ash tree is healthy, in a good location, and provides usable shade, there are chemical treatments available. However, to prevent ground contamination these chemical treatments have per-acre limits on the amount that can be used. Treatments that involve spraying a tree will not work, as they only kill the adult beetles and not the larvae, which cause the damage.

Additional Emerald Ash Borer Resources

- www.midnr.gov/eab
- <http://emeraldashborer.info>

