

EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE

Since 2002, the emerald ash borer (EAB) has multiplied rapidly in Rochester Hills and elsewhere in Southeast Michigan. EAB has now killed most of the ash trees in the City. Only those trees that have been treated preventatively by property owners have a reasonable chance of survival.

As of 3/1/09, contracted and city forestry crews have removed over 3,285 ash trees from city right-of-way and other city properties. The Forestry Division removes dead and dying ash trees before they begin to decay and become potential safety hazards. Replacement trees for the right-of-way may be obtained through the city's Cooperative Tree Planting Program. Residents should contact the Forestry Division about right-of-way trees that appear to have EAB.



Ash trees on private property are the responsibility of the property owner. The Forestry Division provides information about hiring a tree service and ash wood quarantine restrictions.

To date, nearly 500 right-of-way ash trees have been replaced on street right-of-way and other public property. Most of the remaining ash trees on city property will be removed in the next several years. The replacement of ash trees will continue indefinitely.

What should homeowners do about infested ash trees on private property?

First, be sure that you have correctly identified the tree as an ash species, and then confirm that the tree is infested with EAB. (You may need to consult with a tree expert – look for a credentialed “Certified Arborist” in the phone book.) If you have an ash tree on your property that needs to be removed, do your homework before hiring a tree service. Ask the company the following questions: Do they have a Certified Arborist on staff? Do they have the proper insurance coverage (workers compensation, personal and property damage insurance)? Can they provide references for similar work performed? Will they dispose of all limbs and debris? (Stump grinding is usually quoted separately.) Be sure to obtain a written quote that itemizes the services to be provided. Getting multiple written estimates is a good idea.

Residents should also be aware that EAB could be transferred to new areas in firewood or other ash products or debris from infested ash trees. Michigan's lower peninsula is currently under quarantine that prohibits movement of ash trees or tree parts, including logs and firewood of any species, out of the area. (Additional information on the quarantine can be found at the State EAB website noted below.) Note that it is permissible to use ash for firewood (subject to fire department regulations) and for wood chips within the quarantine area. Other than not taking ash out of the quarantine area, people can dispose of woody debris from ash trees as they would any other tree.

If you wish to plant a replacement tree that is suitable for the site, there is a list of recommended residential trees on the Forestry website, just click [here](#).

Additional information can be obtained from the Forestry Division at 248-656-4673, the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service at 248-858-0880, and these websites: www.michigan.gov/mda, <http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/>, www.emeraldashborer.info.

Gerry Lee – Forestry Division