City of Coon Rapids, MN
Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

The City of Coon Rapids Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan is intended to take a proactive approach in the management of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and attempt to reduce the economic impact associated with an outbreak of EAB.

EAB is an invasive pest introduced from Asia that attacks and kills ash trees (Fraxinus spp.). This metallic wood boring beetle was first found in Detroit, MI, and Ontario, Canada, in 2002. It is believed to have arrived in shipping crates. Since the initial discovery it has been identified in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, West Virginia, Wisconsin and most recently St. Paul and Minneapolis Minnesota.

The destructive potential of EAB is enormous because there is currently no known cure. Minnesota has 900 million ash trees vulnerable to Emerald Ash Borer. It has already killed more than 20 million ash trees nationwide, most of which were in southeast Michigan.

EAB kills trees over a period of one to five years depending on the size of the tree. It is the larval stage that does the damage. The larvae live under the bark of the tree and feed in the tissue layer directly beneath the bark. This layer contains the vascular system of the tree which transports water from the roots to the crown. As the larvae develop they create tunnels throughout this tissue. This activity kills the tree by stopping the flow of water and nutrients.

The most prominent symptom of EAB is dieback of the tree canopy. It is not unusual for as many as one half of a tree's branches to die back during the first year of attack. The tree tries to compensate for this loss by sprouting new growth below the level of infestation. At this time the bark may begin to split. Eventually the adult beetles emerge from the bark. In the process of emerging as adults, they leave a "D" shaped exit hole that is about 1/8th inch wide.

Woodpeckers love EAB larvae and woodpecker holes may indicate the presence of EAB. However, not all EAB infested trees are attacked by woodpeckers and other insect larvae may also attract woodpeckers.

EAB adults can fly at least ½ mile from the tree where they emerge. However, the most likely way EAB is transported will be by people moving ash logs, ash firewood or infested ash trees from nurseries. This is one reason the City of Coon Rapids Forestry Division has stopped planting ash trees.

The lead agency in Minnesota for preparing for and dealing with EAB is the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is a key player as well. Cities and Counties will be working together with these agencies to coordinate efforts which will create consistent programs. This will help in Minnesota's efforts in protecting ash trees from EAB.

The following are the main components of the City's EAB management plan. This plan is subject to change should state or federal policies dictate.

Boulevard Trees:

As budget permits, the forestry division will be removing boulevard ash trees which are structurally unsound and in poor condition or per residents request. This will allow for the costs associated with removal to be disbursed over a number of years. Only trees which are very obvious in decline will be marked and the adjacent property owner notified before removal. If there are any objections by the adjacent resident the tree will be put on a list and considered for removal at a later date. Likewise, if the adjacent resident wants to invest in chemically treating the boulevard tree they may do so at their own expense. Once the tree is removed the stump will be ground out and the boulevard restored with appropriate topsoil and grass seed.

Park Trees:

As budget permits, the forestry division will be removing park trees that are in maintained areas of park land which are structurally unsound and in poor condition. This will allow for the costs associated with removal to be disbursed over a number of years. Trees that are adjacent to areas of the park where people congregate will have priority over more passive areas of the park. Ash trees in wooded or natural areas of park land will not be removed. The City Forester and Parks Supervisor will decide on which parks to address first. Stumps in maintained areas will be ground out and restored with appropriate topsoil and grass seed.

Trees on Private Property:

The City of Coon Rapids is currently working with the MDA, DNR and LMC for updated revisions of our Epidemic Diseases in Trees ordinance, 8-800. Residents are urged to monitor for EAB and report any suspicious trees to the MDA, DNR or City of Coon Rapids Forestry Division. It is recommended that the residents of Coon Rapids establish a management plan for their own property with the assistance of an ISA Certified Arborist. Tree contractors removing trees in Coon Rapids need to be licensed with the City. Residents are encouraged to replace trees lost with appropriate species for the site or to plant new trees in advance of EAB.

Planting:

As budget permits, the forestry division will replace boulevard and park trees lost to EAB. Bare root trees are typically planted in the spring. Adjacent residents are notified prior to the planting of boulevard trees so that they are properly placed and cared for. Species diversity is priority when deciding on which trees to plant.

Inventory:

The City of Coon Rapids Forestry Division is currently inventorying the city's boulevard trees. One goal of the inventory is to get a definite number of ash trees so we will be able to track our progress in dealing with EAB along with costs associated with this potential outbreak. Phase II of the inventory will include park trees in maintained areas.

The City of Coon Rapids has an estimated 20,000 boulevard trees, 5,000 are estimated to be ash trees. These numbers are derived from the number of parcels in Coon Rapids and by doing sample windshield surveys of neighborhoods with high ash densities.

Chemical Treatments:

The City is currently comparing costs associated with chemical injections versus removing/replanting to see if there are certain scenarios where one approach would be more practical over the other.

Other:

One of the responsibilities of the City Forestry Division is to keep its residents and staff up to date on the current status of EAB. Once new EAB findings are confirmed by the MDA or new management approaches are proven we will communicate them via our city web site, cable TV, city E-news and/or Coon Rapids Herald. We are also applying for funding opportunities as they become available.

The following links are helpful in identifying and learning more about Emerald Ash Borer:

www.dnr.state.mn.us

www.mda.state.mn.us

www.emeraldashborer.info