

PRESS RELEASE

Emerald Ash Borer Detected West of Sycamore

June 5, 2009 - For Immediate Release

SYCAMORE, IL - Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, has announced the detection of the Emerald Ash Borer west of the city limits of Sycamore, near 1st Street. Emerald Ash Borer is an invasive beetle that destroys ash trees, and it has been detected for the first time in DeKalb County. The Illinois Department of Agriculture has previously enacted quarantines on the movement of ash tree debris within many Illinois counties, including DeKalb, Kane and McHenry Counties. Now that the Emerald Ash Borer has been confirmed within close proximities of our borders, the City will work with the Illinois Department of Agriculture to create and activate a response plan and begin the task of managing it. The City understands the extent of potential damage, and has historically worked to plant alternative tree species so the impact of ash tree loss might be minimized. This highly destructive pest is eliminating the ash species as a viable tree for our area. The City will work to monitor the progression of the infestation, manage public ash populations, and educate residents as to their management options as it pertains to their privately owned ash stock.

The emerald ash borer is a small, metallic-green beetle native to Asia. Its larvae burrow into the bark of ash trees and feed upon its vascular tissue, causing the trees to starve and eventually die. While the beetle does not pose any direct risk to public health, it does threaten the tree population. Since the emerald ash borer was first confirmed in the Midwest in the summer of 2002, more than 20 million ash trees are dead or dying.

Please visit www.emeraldashborer.info or www.agr.state.il.us/eab in order to become familiar with this pest and to help us keep a look out for additional emerald ash borers. Please note that the most problematic spreading of the pest comes from the movement of failed ash tree debris, firewood, or nursery stock from a quarantined area. We ask that you please work to prevent the spread of this pest. Additionally, because of the potential destruction of ash trees by this new invasive species, the price of ash trees has come down dramatically. It is our recommendation that you do not buy ash trees as you will most likely lose them before they reach maturity.

The City will continue to monitor any possible presence of the emerald ash borer very closely, and appreciates cooperation from residents in addressing the situation. If any additional information on our infestation becomes available, it will be posted on www.cityofsycamore.com

For information about this press release, please contact the Sycamore Public Works at 815-895-3545.