

EMERALD ASH BORER FOUND IN IOWA ALONG BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER IN ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Invasive Pest Kills Ash Trees, Iowans Asked to Not Move Firewood

DES MOINES – The Iowa Emerald Ash Borer Team confirmed today that the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an invasive pest that kills ash trees, has been found in Iowa along the Mississippi River two miles south of the Minnesota border in Allamakee County. The land is owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This is the first confirmed EAB infestation in Iowa.

Four EAB larvae were found in one ash tree by members of Iowa's EAB team during a survey of the area following the recent announcement that the beetle had been found just across the Minnesota border. An infestation in nearby Victory, Wisconsin was discovered in 2009.

A quarantine prohibiting the movement of firewood, ash nursery stock, ash timber, or any other article that could further spread EAB is pending from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. A federal quarantine would follow the state quarantine.

Iowa State University Extension will issue a separate news release providing EAB management recommendations for homeowners.

This detection of EAB in Iowa was the result of collaborative effort that has been looking for this pest since 2003. Detection efforts have included visual surveys, sentinel trees, trap surveys, nursery stock inspections, sawmill/wood processing site visits, and hundreds of educational programs.

This year EAB team members are in the process of placing 1800 purple traps at high-risk areas in the state, including in a 1.5 mile grid along the Mississippi River. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources also has 412 trap trees in the state this year, 12 of which are in Allamakee County.

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is native to eastern Asia, and was detected in the United States near Detroit, Michigan in 2002. EAB kills all ash (*Fraxinus*) species by larval burrowing under the bark and eating the actively growing layers.

The metallic-green adult beetles are a half inch long, and are active from late-May to early-August in Iowa. Signs of EAB infestation include one-eighth inch D-shaped exit holes in ash tree bark and serpentine tunnels packed with sawdust under the bark. Tree symptoms of an infestation include crown thinning and dieback when first noticed, epicormic sprouting as insect damage progresses, and woodpecker feeding.

EAB has killed ash trees of various sizes in neighborhoods and woodlands throughout the Midwest. Ash is one of the most abundant native tree species in North America, and has been heavily planted as a landscape tree in yards and other urban areas. According to recent sources,

Iowa has an estimated 58 million rural ash trees and approximately 30 million more ash trees in urban areas.

The Iowa Emerald Ash Borer Team includes officials from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa State University Extension, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the USDA Forest Service.

The movement of firewood throughout Iowa and to other states poses the greatest threat to quickly spread EAB even further. Areas currently infested are under federal and state quarantines, but unknowing campers or others who transport firewood can spark an outbreak. As a result, officials are asking Iowans to not move firewood and instead buy wood where they are staying and burn it completely.

To learn more about EAB please visit the following websites:

- www.IowaTreePests.com
- www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/eab/index.html
- www.extension.iastate.edu/PME/EmeraldAshBorer.html