



**State of Illinois
Department of Agriculture
Department of Natural Resources**

**EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB)
COMMUNITY READINESS PLAN**

-A Checklist For Local EAB Preparedness

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EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BY THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN COOPERATION WITH APHIS on JUNE 13, 2006. ILLINOIS' FIRST OFFICIAL EMERALD ASH BORER SITE HAS BEEN FOUND IN LILY LAKE, IL in Northeastern Illinois.

The official announcement of the Emerald Ash Borer was made June 13th at the Kane County Governmental Center, Geneva, IL. The first official site has been verified by legal protocol in cooperation with APHIS. A copy of the official news release can be seen on the Illinois Department of Agriculture website: <http://www.agr.state.il.us/> or in the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Urban and Community Forestry Website (Emerald Ash Borer Exclusive or Prairie Tree Companion News letter). <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/conservation/forestry/urban/index.htm>

Local Preparedness Plan

- ___ 1) Identify a team for creating a local Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan of Action
- ___ 2) Consider the following elements for inclusion in the plan:
 - a) Community name, location and population
 - b) Local community forestry management history
 - c) Current decision-making hierarchy pertaining to trees, nuisance provisions of the ordinance, and law enforcement pertaining to trees
 - d) Policies relating to the local Community Forest/Policy Update Needs
 - e) Assessment of Current Fiscal Considerations
 - f) Assessment of Communities Tree Population emphasizing the Ash population
 - g) Analysis of the Potential Fiscal impact on the current budget structure
 - h) Establish a local protocol for reporting potential local EAB findings and determine a point person or department for contacting the Illinois Department of Agriculture at 847-294-4343 (Des Plaines office) or contact the USADA APHIS @ 1866-EAB-4512.
 - i) Establish Readiness Team and city official training on EAB prior to any public relations outreach so they will be able to respond to potential questions.
 - j) Develop a strategy for public awareness when or if EAB arrives in your community that will not evoke public panic.
 - i) Identify local media and public information outlets and determine the appropriate message via outlet.
 - ii) Include in any public information the local protocol for requesting an inspection of a site.
 - iii) Do not encourage citizens to directly contact Illinois Department of Agriculture or APHIS (due to workload issues).
 - iv) It is advisably to provide a phone message on the point person's/agencies phone after the EAB reaches your community that allows citizens to hear critical information on EAB larva/adult stage or other commonly asked questions that might mitigate the need to talk directly to a person.
 - v) Include Public officials and decision makers in the public awareness/training events when appropriate.

___ 2) Consider the following elements for inclusion in the plan (cont.):

- k) Develop a communications and public relations plan of actions for the time when/if EAB reaches your community
- l) Include Tree Removal/Replacement program specifications including tree planting and care standards plus program monitoring procedures to be used during this process

Policy Considerations

- ___ 1) Implement a Tree care ordinance or make sure your local community has a tree care ordinance that addresses nuisance trees on private lands as well as public lands. This will provide community officials with the legal authorities to enforce the removal of trees killed by EAB within the community boundaries. The State of Illinois has provided this authority to enforce nuisance issues 65 ILCS 5/11-60-2 - Definitions and Abatement of Nuisances. Each municipality has the authority to include this language in their local tree care ordinances include. Additionally, 50 ILCS 90/1 through 90/30 - Insect and Pest and Plant Disease Act addresses the states authorities through the Illinois Department of Agriculture in dealing with invasive pests and diseases. Some communities in Illinois have included local language that echoes concerns about movement of infected plant materials in their local ordinances. However, the authority for statewide enforcement is held by the State of Illinois Department of Agriculture. As of June 13, 2006, the Department of Agriculture has begun the process for securing language on the declaration of Emerald Ash Borer as an official nuisance in Illinois.
- ___ 2) Review your local ordinance to see what authorities your community has concerning the movement of firewood into your community and the inspection of said wood. It is advisably to create a firewood vendor permit to help regulate movement of firewood in and around your community.

Fiscal Considerations

- ___ 1) Determine the costs to your community considering your percent of ash trees in your community's canopy. Provide this information to the Mayor and other appropriate elected officials so that they are aware of the potential losses of trees in your community. Suggestions include: a) the potential cost to your community in tree losses, b) costs to replacement trees, c) losses to individuals due to trees losses as they impact heating and cooling bills; d) losses of major visual impacts on the communities aesthetics. Ex. Entry ways into the community lined with ash trees or ash trees in prominent visual locations. e) compare your current budget to the budget needs for an EAB outbreak; f) raise questions of using emergency funds or other sources of funding to mitigate the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer and the loss of forest canopy in your community.
- ___ 2) Watch for state and federal funding that could assist with Emerald Ash Borer or Urban and Community Forestry Management.

Public Education and Awareness Campaigns

- ___ 1) Identify and educate the core internal team first. Provide staff training to Forestry Department, Street Department, Public Works Department and other local tree authorities.
- ___ 2) Make sure the Mayor's office and other appropriate elected officials are aware of the potential losses of trees in your community. Determine the potential cost to your community in tree losses and tree replacement costs.
- ___ 3) Educate local advisory and tree advocacy groups of the Emerald Ash Borer biology and provide instructions for local monitoring programs. Provide a local protocol for reporting potential incidents in your community. Make sure that all inquiries go through one main local professional or tree authority. That one authority should be responsible for following standard protocol for reporting potential EAB sites. Emphasize that only the community's designee should be responsible for calling in the state officials in case a potential site is found. Please realize that the state system is not staffed heavily enough to accommodate the amount of calls that could potentially be generated from an unorganized approach to this potential epidemic. The locally authorized person should contact the Department of Agriculture at the Ag Hotline or Mark Cinnamon's office to verify a potential EAB finding.
- ___ 4) Develop a local public outreach program to inform citizens of the Emerald Ash Borer that clearly identifies local protocol for calling in state and federal officials. Be careful not to create a public panic in this public education outreach. Only conduct local public outreach if you have an educated team in place to assist with initial response and identification.
- ___ 5) Implement a public education campaign of educating real estate agents through out your community and providing them with a flyer to inform new residents not to bring their firewood into your community to leave it at their old home is advisably. Sharing a series of public relations articles with the local media during prime "out of state" vacation dates such as Memorial Weekend, Labor Day... is advisably. For example" "IT'S GOOD TO LEAVE YOUR WOOD! Don't bring firewood back from your vacation. "
- ___ 6) Consider providing the local library and other public information locations in your community with EAB information and local procedures. Put up display boards that clearly identify local officials or urban forestry/Tree City USA officials who should be contacted initially. Or establish a drop off site for sample borers/larvae.
- ___ 7. Keep informed by internet information from the following e-mail addresses:

<http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/> www.emeraldashborer.info

<http://www.entm.purdue.edu/EAB/images/maps/fullSize/nationalMap.jpg>

- ___ 8. Keep networked by attending meetings such as the Northeastern Illinois Municipal Foresters Meetings, Illinois Arborist Association training sessions.
- ___ 9. In case EAB reaches your community, have a list of reporters and media outlets you will contact for an official announcement. Prepare a press release with information such as: who find the site within your community, when was it found, what was the process that you went through to verify the finding, and what should citizens do now that it is found in your community (check their trees, don't move firewood, who is the point of contact, don't remove trees, who will handle residual wood, should they treat the trees).

Natural Resource Management

- ___ 1) Conduct/Use a Street Tree Inventory to identify target areas of the community with high ash populations.
- ___ 2) From your tree inventory, list all Fraxinus (ash) species by street address and use this list for monitoring between April to July. Remember that EAB is considered the "HIDDEN THREAT". This means that you may have to rely not just on a visual inspection for die-back, yellows and sprouting but for suspect trees and areas you should consider checking for loose bark or even checking trees that are potential removal trees for galleries, egg masses and larvae depending on season.
- ___ 3) Consider evaluating the ash tree population and removing trees in poor condition and replacing them with a different species. This will help reduce the overall financial impact to your local community forestry budget should EAB come to your community.
- ___ 4) Consider diversifying the tree population in your community forest. Plant no more than 10% of one genus species (ex. red oak) and no more than 25% of one species (Ex. oaks). In the mid 1900's Dutch Elm Disease caught some communities with 80% American Elm. Based on that experience, communities implemented local community forestry program and have diversified their community forests species composition. In Illinois, the average percent of ash tree in our community forests is about 20%. The impact of the Emerald Ash Borer will be a great loss and cost to our communities, but it will be a far less impact had local communities not adopted community forestry management programs to maintain a healthy urban forest and a safe environment for citizens.
- ___ 5) Establish residual wood burning and recycling centers. NOTE: The outer slabs need to be cut off and burned. Since the infestation occurs only in the outer phloem, cambial and surface of the xylem of the wood, the inner wood can be used for structural lumber. Michigan officials were able to utilize the non-infested parts of the wood. Try to determine if there is a local sawmill or person with a portable sawmill in your area.
- ___ 6) A list of potential contractors for tree removal and debris handling should be created.

KEY ACTIONS WITH EMERALD ASH BORER

Review **local firewood policies**. If none exist consider implementing a no movement of firewood policy for new homeowners and /or a permitting policy for firewood vendors.

If you have a **tree inventory**/ urban and community forestry management plan, **generate a list of the ash trees** on public lands and conduct an initial inspection either with staff or by contacting homeowners with ash trees on or near their property.

Keep local authorities **updated on the status of EAB** as it moves or is found throughout Illinois.

Develop and implement Local Community Readiness Plan of Action addressing local readiness team assignments, protocol and local actions to be taken, pro-active community forestry management strategies, and public relations for when EAB arrives.

IF EMERALD ASH BORER IS FOUND IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Implement Local Community Readiness Plan of Action addressing local readiness team assignments, protocol and local actions to be taken, pro-active community forestry management strategies, and public relations for when EAB arrives.

A Public relations campaign is critical. In case EAB reaches your community, have a list of reporters and media outlets you will contact for an official announcement. Prepare a press release with information such as: who find the site within your community, when was it found, what was the process that you went through to verify the finding, and what should citizens do now that it is found in your community (check their trees, don't move firewood, who is the point of contact, don't remove trees, who will handle residual wood, should they treat the trees).

Arrangements should be made for **tree removal and wood disposal**, once IDOA approves tree removal

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**EARLY DETECTION IS THE KEY TO CONTROLLING THE
EMERALD ASH BORER AND THE INEVITABLE DAMAGE THAT
OCCURS WITH A LACK OF DETECTION AND SOUND URBAN
AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT.**