



State of Wisconsin
Jim Doyle, Governor

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Rod Nilsestuen, Secretary

Department of Natural Resources
Matthew J. Frank, Secretary



DATCP AND DNR ANNOUNCE PRESENCE OF EMERALD ASH BORER IN WISCONSIN

Date: August 4, 2008

DATCP Contact: Mick Skwarok, office 608-224-4745, cell 608-219-1492

DNR Contact: Darrell Zastrow, office 608-266-0290

Madison – Officials with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Department of Natural Resources today announced the first confirmed occurrence of emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive, destructive insect pest of ash trees, in Wisconsin. The discovery was made by forest health specialists investigating a citizen report of dying ash trees in a private woodlot in Ozaukee County, near the Village of Newburg.

“We expected to find EAB in Wisconsin sooner or later, but this is still disappointing,” said DATCP Secretary Rod Nilsestuen. However, we now have a revised plan that outlines several management alternatives. Our focus now is to find out exactly what we’re up against.”

Officials announcing the find emphasized that the first steps in responding to the infestation will be to quarantine movement of hardwood firewood, ash nursery stock, timber or any other article that could spread EAB out of the infested area. Following placement of the quarantine there will be a thorough survey of the area around the find to determine the size of the infestation, its boundaries, and the possible source. Finding EAB at this location does not mean it is the origin of the infestation in Wisconsin.

Since the infestation site is near Washington County, it’s likely that both counties will be quarantined. Additional counties may also be included.

“Beyond the immediate quarantine and survey of the area a management strategy will not be suggested until the survey is complete and the responding agencies and partners have had an opportunity to consult with additional state and local officials,” said Brian Kuhn, Plant Industry Bureau Director with DATCP.

New EAB Response Plan Recently Approved

“We’ve worked with partners, scientists and key stakeholders to draw on the real world experiences of other states to draft a comprehensive response plan to EAB,” said Darrell Zastrow, the Director of the Office of Forest Science with the DNR. “DNR Secretary Matt

(more)

Frank and DATCP Secretary Rod Nilsestuen recently approved an updated Wisconsin EAB Response Plan that takes into account the latest science and research regarding the control and management of the emerald ash borer.”

The plan describes a range of possible management actions and recommends balancing any recommended treatment with environmental impacts, land ownership, cost, sociological impacts, size of the infestation and traditional ecological knowledge.

EAB has been found in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Illinois, West Virginia, Virginia, Missouri and the Canadian Provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

“A lot is at stake in Wisconsin,” Zastrow said. “There are an estimated 737 million ash trees in our forests and another five million in our communities. Impacts to the forest products industry, tourism and communities could be substantial.”

Community Meetings Planned

Community meetings will be held soon to address public concerns. Word of these will be made public as soon as they can be organized.

In the meantime, citizens can help prevent the spread of EAB and learn more in several ways:

- Follow all quarantine guidelines. For many people, that will mean not moving firewood out of the quarantined area.
- Learn about the signs and symptoms of EAB infestation, including the characteristics of an infested tree. This information can be found at the Wisconsin EAB Program Web site at www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov.
- Report suspicious ash trees or request information by calling the Wisconsin EAB Program hotline toll-free at 1-800-462-2803.

The adult emerald ash borer is a metallic green insect about one-half inch long and one-eighth inch wide. The adults burrow into the bark of ash trees and lay eggs. The larvae hatching from the eggs chew their way through the fluid-conducting vessels under the tree’s bark, cutting off the flow of nutrients in the tree, leading to decline and eventual death of the tree. EAB is native to Asia

NOTE: High resolution images of EAB and of the infestation in Ozaukee County are available to the media. Visit www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov or call Jane Larson at 608-224-5005 for assistance.