

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES DETECTION OF EMERALD ASH BORER IN PENNSYLVANIA

June 27, 2007

HARRISBURG – Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive beetle that destroys ash trees, has been detected for the first time in Pennsylvania and a quarantine will be imposed for Butler, Lawrence, Allegheny and Beaver counties.

Adult beetles were found on an ash tree in Cranberry Township, Butler County, by U.S. Department of Agriculture surveyors, through a joint effort by federal and state agriculture departments, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Penn State Extension. The Emerald Ash Borer has forced similar quarantines in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland and Michigan.

"Emerald Ash Borer poses a major threat to ash trees," said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. "To best manage any effects of an infestation, we're working to determine whether this is an isolated incident or a more widespread problem."

State and federal officials are conducting intensive surveys for the insect near the detection site. The quarantine is designed to help slow the spread of the beetle.

Pennsylvania's quarantine restricts the movement from the quarantine area of ash nursery stock, green lumber and any other ash material, including logs, stumps, roots and branches, and all wood chips. Due to the difficulty in distinguishing between species of hardwood firewood, all hardwood firewood—including ash, oak, maple and hickory—are considered quarantined.

Since many species of wood-boring insects, including the Emerald Ash Borer, can be spread through transport of infested firewood and logs, campers and homeowners are encouraged to: use only locally harvested firewood; burn all of it on-site; and not carry it to new locations.

Emerald Ash Borer is a wood-boring beetle native to China and eastern Asia. The pest likely arrived in North America hidden in wood packing materials commonly used to ship consumer and other goods. It was first detected in July 2002 in southeastern Michigan and neighboring Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The beetle has since been blamed for the death and decline of more than 20 million ash trees in Ohio, Indiana, Maryland, Virginia and Illinois.

Typically, Emerald Ash Borer will kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

People who suspect they have seen Emerald Ash Borer should call the department's toll-free pest hotline at 1-866-253-7189. For more information about Emerald Ash Borer, visit <http://www.emeraldashborer.info/> or call 717-772-5229.

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