



Emerald Ash Borer is Getting Closer to Mississippi

The emerald ash borer has made a major jump south. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) announced (July 27, 2010) the discovery of emerald ash borer (EAB), the first detection of the destructive tree pest in the state. The discovery was made in late July at a truck stop in Knox County near the Loudon County line. The find was confirmed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

EAB attacks only ash trees. It is believed to have been introduced into the Detroit, Mich. area 15 to 20 years ago on wood packing material from Asia. Since then, the destructive insect has been found also in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and now Tennessee. In response to the find, TDA plans to issue a quarantine in Knox and Loudon counties prohibiting the movement of firewood, ash nursery stock, ash timber and other material that can spread EAB. TDA plant inspectors and foresters will conduct a thorough survey of trees in the areas to assess the extent of the infestation. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is working closely with TDA in response and will likely issue a federal quarantine in

the coming days in support of national efforts to control the spread of EAB.



Figure 1: Adult Emerald Ash Borer

Typically, the Emerald Ash Borer beetles can kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green (as pictured above), one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from April until September, depending on the climate of the area. In Tennessee, most EAB adults would fly in May and June. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees. When they emerge as adults, they leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry estimates that 10 million urban ash trees in Tennessee are potentially at risk from EAB. The risk represents an estimated value loss of \$2 billion. There are an estimated 261 million

ash trees on Tennessee public and private timberland potentially valued as high as \$9 billion.

Officials urge area residents and visitors to help prevent the spread of EAB. Many in Mississippi have seen the bumper sticker “**DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD IT BUGS ME!**” this is a directed message concerning the Emerald Ash Borer with an associated website for additional information

www.emeraldashborer.info.

Keys to help prevent the spread include:

- Do not transport firewood, especially within infested areas and recently discovered infested areas. Do not bring firewood along for camping trips. Buy the wood you need from a local source. Do not bring wood home with you.
- Do not buy or move firewood from outside the state. If someone comes to your door selling firewood, ask him or her about the source, and do not buy wood from outside the state or country. One can check for the EAB galleries as represented in the Figure below.



Figure 2: EAB galleries

When firewood is purchased from grocery stores or other outlets it should be checked as far as tree species and point of origin if at all possible. It is not uncommon for firewood being sold at such outlets to come in from other states or even other countries. These raw wood products, usually untreated, have the potential of harboring any number of invasive pest species. Trying to minimize the pathways of introduction is the responsibility of all of us as we attempt to protect our valuable forest resources.

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Figure 3: Firewood