

NEWS RELEASE

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Residents Encouraged to Treat Against Emerald Ash Borer Infestation

DUBUQUE, Iowa –National Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week isn't until May 22-28, but the City of Dubuque Park Division is urging residents to act now to protect healthy ash trees from infestation. The invasive pest was officially confirmed in Dubuque County and in the city of Dubuque last August.

EAB infestations were originally confirmed on the southern side of the city of Dubuque last year and infestations have since been found as far north as Garfield Avenue. EAB infestations have also been confirmed in East Dubuque, Ill., and Kieler, Wis. At present time, no infestations have been found on Dubuque's east or west end, but residents living within 15 miles of infected locations are encouraged to treat their ash trees now if they wish to preserve them.

In healthy ash trees, most recommended insecticide treatment options are highly effective. Some products require annual retreatment while others provide protection for up to three years. However, ash trees in poor condition are generally not candidates for preventative insecticide treatment.

“Not all ash trees are worth saving, nor should they be saved,” said Steve Pregler, forester for City of Dubuque Park Division. “Ash trees that have been stressed in recent years have already become infested with bark beetles and several of the native borers. Many of these trees are already in a state of decline and most likely would not respond favorably to treatment.”

Ash trees on private property are the responsibility of the property owner. There is currently no Federal, State, or City funding available to assist homeowners with the removal or treatment of ash trees. As outlined by City of Dubuque's Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan, the City is proactively removing city-owned ash trees that have been found to be in poor condition and do not respond favorably to treatments. City-owned ash trees in good condition will be treated this spring.

Since EAB infestations have been confirmed in Dubuque, the City warns residents to beware of scammers claiming to be tree companies or offering tree services. For a list of established and insured businesses providing tree care services, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/EAB.

The City's park division plans to hold Emerald Ash Borer informational meetings this spring, with details forthcoming. Informational documents and an educational EAB video are available at www.cityofdubuque.org/EAB. For more information, contact the City of Dubuque Parks Division at 563-589-4263.

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The Emerald Ash Borer is a small, metallic green, non-native invasive pest whose larvae feast on the inner bark of ash trees, ultimately disrupting their ability to transport nutrients and causing the tree's eventual decline and death. EAB was first found in Michigan in 2002 and has continued to spread into neighboring states, threatening to eventually spread across the U.S. and Canada. EAB has killed tens of millions of ash trees since its discovery in 2002 and threatens the entire North American ash tree population.