



Emerald Ash Borer: How to Plan and Prepare



Left to right: Chris Johnson, Davenport City Arborist; Tivon Feeley, Iowa DNR Forest Health Program Leader; and Paul Tauke, Forestry Bureau Chief with Iowa DNR examine damage to an ash tree in Rock Island, Illinois.

Since Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was first discovered in the United States in 2002, dead ash trees have cost municipalities, property owners, nursery operators and the forest products industry tens of millions of dollars.

EAB is a metallic green insect native to Asia. The adult beetle is approximately 1/2 inch long and 1/8 inch wide. Regionally, the insect was detected in Illinois in 2006 and in Iowa in 2010 and has since spread extensively in both states.

Trees Forever has been helping communities for more than 25 years to plant diverse populations of trees and become more informed about EAB and other invasive pests.

Ash trees in Bloomington, Illinois showing crown-thinning, suckering at the base of the tree, and woodpecker activity – all symptoms of EAB.



The adult beetle emerges from infested ash trees via D-shaped holes.



EAB larvae leave S-shaped galleries as they tunnel through the layer immediately under the bark, damaging the tree's ability to transport nutrients and water.

EAB Recommendations & Tips

For Community Leaders & City Staff

1. Engage a stakeholder group in developing a readiness plan that includes a tree inventory and a communications plan for letting citizens know how the city government will be addressing tree removal and replacement. Include in this group representatives from local tree committees, neighborhood organizations, tree nurseries, local schools, utility companies, concerned citizens groups and organizations such as Trees Forever.
2. Do NOT remove *healthy* ash trees. Keep in mind that large healthy trees provide several benefits to residents, including improving air and water quality, providing shade and energy savings, and making neighborhoods safer and more pleasant places to live, work, and shop. Healthy trees are some of our oldest residents who work hard for our communities.
3. Research management options and associated costs. There are basically four options: do nothing, treat with insecticides for the rest of the life of the trees, remove and replant, or treat with insecticides temporarily to delay removals.
4. Continue to plant trees! Plant a diverse mix of appropriate trees before ash are removed. Be sure not to plant too many of any one genus (such as oaks, maples, etc.) or species (such as bur oak, red oak, pin oak, sugar maple, amur maple, etc.)

For Homeowners

1. Identify the trees – especially the ash trees – on your property.
2. Research your management options. If you have a special tree and EAB has been confirmed within 15 miles of your home, you may want to consider treating the tree with insecticides. Either hire a professional or, if treating the tree yourself, read all the label warnings. You don't want to save the tree only to compromise beneficial insects or water quality! Also, treatment of the tree is a lifelong commitment requiring treatments annually or every two to three years.
3. If an affected tree does not represent a hazard to people or structures, consider leaving it alone. Dead standing trees are very important wildlife habitat and contribute to the creation of healthy soils.
4. Most important, to prevent a future EAB-type problem, plant a diverse mix of trees and plants on your property (see #4 above).



Trees Forever arborist and field coordinator Dustin Hinrichs examines an ash tree located along a street in Marion, Iowa.

Additional Information

www.treesforever.org
www.emeraldashborer.info
www.stopthebeetle.info
www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health
www.na.fs.fed.us/ftp/eab

In Iowa

www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/eab
www.extension.iastate.edu/pme/emeraldashborer.html
www.iowatreepests.com

In Illinois

www.dnr.state.il.us/orc/urbanforestry
www.illinoiseab.com
www.webextension.illinois.edu/firewood/eab/cfm

Join Trees Forever on its mission to plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building community and promoting stewardship.

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