

INVASIVE EMERALD ASH BORER DETECTED IN ARKANSAS



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Arkansas Agriculture Department/Arkansas State Plant Board officials today confirmed that the emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive beetle that attacks and kills ash trees, has been found in Hot Springs, Clark, and Nevada counties.

Beginning in 2009 the Arkansas State Plant Board and the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA APHIS PPQ), through a cooperative program, have conducted an Emerald Ash Borer survey. The survey has been ongoing with USDA APHIS PPQ surveying approximately one half of the state and the Arkansas State Plant Board surveying the remaining counties. The survey consists of placing traps and inspecting Ash trees for signs of EAB infestations.

Emerald Ash Borers have been detected in traps placed in Hot Springs, Clark, and Nevada counties. The insect specimens from the Hot Springs and Clark county traps were sent to scientists at USDA APHIS PPQ, who have confirmed the insect's identity. The insects trapped in Nevada County have been screened by an Arkansas State Plant Board entomologist and are considered highly likely, however official confirmation will be made by USDA APHIS PPQ scientists.

EAB is now present in 24 U.S. states and two Canadian provinces. It was first discovered in Michigan in 2002 and has since killed tens of millions of trees.

The adult emerald ash borer is a metallic green insect about one-half inch long and one-eighth inch wide making it hard to detect in the wild. The female beetles lay eggs on the bark of ash trees. The eggs hatch and the larvae bore into the bark to the fluid-conducting vessels underneath. The larvae feed and develop, cutting off the flow of nutrients and, eventually killing the tree. EAB attacks and kills North American species of true ash, and tree death occurs three to five years following initial infestation. EAB is native to Asia.

Signs of EAB include: canopy dieback beginning at the top of the tree and progressing through the year until the tree is bare; sprouts growing from the roots and trunk; split bark with an S-shape gallery; D-shaped exit holes; and more woodpecker activity, creating large holes as they extract the larvae.

State and USDA APHIS PPO personnel will now survey trees in the areas surrounding the initial finds to determine the extent of the EAB infestation. It is expected that a federal quarantine will be expanded to include parts of Arkansas and potentially the entire state.

To prevent the spread of this beetle, **do not move firewood**. Firewood is a vehicle for movement of tree-killing forest pests including EAB and Asian longhorned beetle. Use locally-sourced firewood when burning it at home. When travelling, burn firewood where you buy it. Make sure to burn all wood purchased.

Report signs of the beetle to the Arkansas State Plant Board at 501-225-1598.

For more information about Emerald Ash Borer, visit:

www.emeraldashborer.info

<http://www.arinvasives.org/>