

## **CITY OF WASHINGTON COURT HOUSE EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **BACKGROUND**

1. The Emerald Ash Borer is a small, non-native insect introduced to the Detroit area from Asia sometime during the last 10 years. The fatality rate for ash trees infected with EAB is 100%, unless treated with expensive insecticides. Essentially, there is no practical control or natural predator for EAB. Only one species of ash tree, the Manchurian Mancana ash from Asia, appears to be immune from EAB.
  
2. The Emerald Ash Borer has spread from Michigan to Indiana, Ontario and to 25 counties in Ohio. With its natural migration, EAB was expected to arrive in Washington Court House within the next 10 to 15 years. However, through transportation of infested firewood or nursery stock, EAB is spreading much more quickly than expected and could arrive in WCH very soon. EAB has been detected in one county south of I-70, Warren County, in an area near Springboro.
  
3. Ash trees are a native tree to Ohio and are common in Fayette County and in Ohio's state parks and woodlots. Washington Court House has about 226 city-planted ash trees (11% of the total trees planted) along our city streets. Nine of these 226 are Manchurian ash trees. Before the Tree Committee was created, ash trees were commonly planted along our city streets and on private property. Our parks also have dozens of ash trees.
  
4. Ash trees are a large species of tree and dying ash trees will quickly become hazards to the general public. The Urban Forestry Div. of the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources recommends that cities in Ohio create plans to prepare for EAB to address infested ash trees on both public and private property. As an example, the City of Upper Arlington has decided to replace 10% of the ash trees along their city streets each year, starting with ash trees in the poorest condition throughout all neighborhoods to minimize the impact to residents, aesthetics and property values. Their plan includes education of the public as well as the ability to declare ash trees on private property as hazardous and subsequently order removal of the tree.
  
5. The State of Ohio quarantines areas of Ohio where the EAB is found. The State of Ohio no longer requires the removal of all ash trees within the quarantined area.

## **WCH PLAN**

The Tree Committee of the City of Washington Court House recommends that the City of Washington Court House adopt the following Emerald Ash Borer management plan in order to prepare for the arrival of EAB. This plan addresses the four different types of tree plantings in the city - trees planted by the city in street tree lawns, trees not planted by the city in street tree lawns, trees planted by the city in parks and city owned property, trees on private property.

1. Because EAB is spreading more quickly than previously expected, the WCH Tree Committee recommends replacing 10 to 15% of the ash trees planted by the City per year. Replacing 10 to 15% of city planted trees would require replacement of 25 to 35 ash trees on city streets and in city parks per year. The WCH Tree Committee recommends beginning ash tree removals, as well as street and park reforestation, in areas of the City that have the highest density of ash trees in order to lessen the impact of large scale tree removals in these areas. Our nine Manchurian ash trees will not be removed.
2. South Fayette, E. Temple, E. Paint and Columbus Ave currently have the highest density of ash trees along our city streets. To lessen the impact of this large scale tree removal, every third or fourth ash tree will be targeted for removal each year. These three streets are being surveyed now for the removal of ash trees in the poorest condition. Tree removals will begin in the winter of 2007.
3. Similar removals (every third or fourth ash tree) will also begin on several city blocks on other city streets that have been planted exclusively with ash trees. The 200 block of W. Temple and the 700 block of N. North St. are examples of dense ash plantings.
4. High density ash areas will be targeted for planting of new trees each spring planting.
5. The WCH city forester has started monitoring ash trees in WCH for EAB and, assisting the ODNR, has established EAB detection trees in our parks. Our city forester will provide a listing of all ash trees in city owned/controlled property. Progressive replacements of these trees will begin according to their future hazardous nature.
6. The decision to treat, remove or retain trees not planted by the City rests with the property owner. This applies to trees on private property as well as trees in street tree lawns. Placement of this responsibility to the property owner is consistent with the City's Tree Ordinance for maintenance of trees. The City maintains records of all trees planted by the City in street tree lawns. Street tree removals by private individuals are regulated by the City Tree Ordinance.
7. The City has an ordinance addressing the removal of trees on private property. Aggressive enforcement of tree removals currently listed as hazardous is recommended to prepare for the high number of ash trees that will die in the next 10 years.
8. Education of the public will occur with articles in the Record Herald outlining the City's EAB plan. Letters will be sent to property owners where city planted trees will be removed explaining the details of the City's EAB plan and the need for removal. Property owners are urged to monitor EAB's movements and to consider many variables when evaluating their options including costs of EAB insecticides; potential targets should the tree fall; shade, heating and cooling values; proximity of EAB; etc.