

News Release/ Commentary for Immediate Release
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Threat to Our Forests and Trees: Emerald Ash Borer

Recently in Orange County, VT the invasive beetle the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was discovered. This came as a shock to local foresters and the environmental community. The Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is an invasive beetle from Asia. It was first discovered in the United States in 2002 near Detroit Michigan. This beetle has killed hundreds of millions of Ash trees within North America. It spreads rapidly and can kill a tree within 2-4 years. Tree branches as small as 1 inch can be infested and contain the EAB. It is primarily spread through firewood transport.

The Emerald Ash Borer attacks all three species of Ash found within Vermont. Perspective: 5% of all trees in Vermont are Ash. They comprise approximately 20% of the cash value of mixed forest timber produced. The EAB will have a huge ecological impact as well as an economic impact to Vermont. Current studies have indicated that it has the potential of causing up to 12.7 billion dollars in damage to U.S. trees by 2020.

The adult beetle eats ash leaves, but does not cause much harm. It is the larvae that cause the damage as they feed on the inner bark of the Ash tree. This feeding harms the tree by disrupting the nutrient and water movement. The adult EAB is around ¼ to ½ of an inch long, shaped like a bullet with a flat back and is metallic in color. The larvae can grow up to 3 cm in length and are creamy white.

Like other invasive species the EAB spreads quickly, creates a high mortality rate and is hard to contain. As it is difficult to detect and eradicate, spread prevention and preparation is the key. Don't move firewood!!! This is the exact reason for the firewood transport law. Don't move ash trees, ash wood products or firewood from outside of Vermont into the State. Buy trees that are locally sourced, from local nurseries. Loggers and communities should preemptively have a management plan written for EAB. The public and loggers are encouraged to reach out to your local forester: Find your local forester at:

http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/your_woods/county_forest/who_where

For more information on the Emerald Ash Borer, please visit: www.vtinvasives.org

To learn more about EAB and other forest pests, visit:

http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/forest_health/insects_diseases

To learn about how to plan as a community for the Emerald Ash Borer, visit:

<https://vtcommunityforestry.org/community-planning/tree-pests>

For more information and resources on aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, please visit:

<http://winooskinrcd.org/invasive-species/>

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District is one of 14 conservation districts throughout Vermont. It encompasses all of Chittenden and Washington County as well as parts of Orange County (Orange, Williamstown and Washington). The district relies on grants and individual donations to complete its conservation work. The WNRCD focuses its resources on completing

conservation projects based in solid science to provide solutions within the areas of agricultural assistance, forestland enhancement, urban conservation and watershed stewardship.

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