Newsarticle

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Emerald Ash Borer Detected in North Carolina

The emerald ash borer (EAB), a destructive exotic insect pest, has now been detected in North Carolina. These beetles feed under the bark of ash trees (Fraxinus spp.), eventually killing them. The detection is not unexpected, as EAB was already present in Virginia and Tennessee. In North Carolina, Person, Granville, and Vance counties are under quarantine. No movement of ash trees or ash wood products, or of hardwood firewood, is allowed from these counties. The reason is that EAB can be present inside these materials and inadvertently moved long distances by people.

Since emerald ash borer (EAB) arrived in Michigan in 2002 a lot of great research has been done to understand how to manage trees with EAB present. This work has also resulted in Extension publications that will help us deal with EAB here in North Carolina.

The ultimate source for EAB information is the website EmeraldAshBorer.info which is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Michigan State University, Purdue University and Ohio State University. On this site you can find out how to diagnose infested trees, learn about treatment options, and see what research is being on to help control EAB.

Diagnosing infested trees an important because trees can die quickly and become hazards. If you have a tree that shows signs of decline first be sure it is an ash tree. There is a publication to help you distinguish ash from other trees and distinguish EAB from other ash pests (<http://ecoipm.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/commonashproblems.pdf>).

Another publication will help to zero in on specific EAB signs and symptoms (<http://ecoipm.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/signssymptomseab.pdf>). In general trees will show branch dieback and sucker growth within the canopy and near the ground. D-shaped exit holes will be present on trees from which a generation of adults has already emerged.

There are a few products available to homeowners for protecting ash trees. But there are many considerations before committing to protecting a tree. See the “Emerald Ash Borer: Homeowner Guide to Insecticide Selection, Use, and Environmental Protection” (<http://ecoipm.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/eabtreatmentguide2.pdf>).

Dr. Steven Frank and Dr. Mike Munster from NC State University provided information in this article.