



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 27, 2010

CONTACT: Tom Womack  
615-837-5118 or 615-419-8636  
[Tom.Womack@TN.gov](mailto:Tom.Womack@TN.gov)  
Tim Phelps, Forestry  
615-837-5543 or 615-428-5913  
[Tim.R.Phelps@TN.gov](mailto:Tim.R.Phelps@TN.gov)

## EMERALD ASH BORER DISCOVERED IN EAST TENNESSEE

*- Plans underway to survey and restrict movement of ash material in Knox, Loudon counties -*

**Nashville, Tenn.** – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture today announced the discovery of emerald ash borer (EAB), the first detection of the destructive tree pest in the state. The discovery was made last week at a truck stop in Knox County near the Loudon County line.

“We knew EAB could potentially reach Tennessee, and we’re prepared to help slow the spread of the infestation and protect our forest resources.” said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens. “We will be working closely with federal officials and other stakeholders to determine the extent of the infestation and to take steps to limit its spread.”

After receiving a report of a suspected find, state and federal officials collected specimens from infested logs for submission to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for positive identification. USDA confirmed the find late last week.

EAB attacks only ash trees. It is believed to have been introduced into the Detroit, Mich. area 15 to 20 years ago on wood packing material from Asia. Since then, the destructive insect has been found also in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

In response to the find, TDA plans to issue a quarantine in Knox and Loudon counties prohibiting the movement of firewood, ash nursery stock, ash timber and other material that can spread EAB. TDA plant inspectors and foresters will conduct a thorough survey of trees in the areas to assess the extent of the infestation. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is working closely with TDA in response and will likely issue a federal quarantine in the coming days in support of national efforts to control the spread of EAB.

– MORE –

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER  
BOX 40627, NASHVILLE, TN 37204  
[Tennessee.gov/agriculture](http://Tennessee.gov/agriculture)

Typically, the Emerald Ash Borer beetles can kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from April until September, depending on the climate of the area. In Tennessee, most EAB adults would fly in May and June. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees. When they emerge as adults, they leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry estimates that 10 million urban ash trees in Tennessee are potentially at risk from EAB. The risk represents an estimated value loss of \$2 billion. There are an estimated 261 million ash trees on Tennessee public and private timberland potentially valued as high as \$9 billion.

TDA officials urge area residents and visitors to help prevent the spread of EAB:

- **Don't transport firewood, even within Tennessee.** Don't bring firewood along for camping trips. Buy the wood you need from a local source. Don't bring wood home with you.
- **Don't buy or move firewood from outside the state.** If someone comes to your door selling firewood, ask them about the source, and don't buy wood from outside the state.
- **Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees.** If you suspect your ash tree could be infested with EAB, visit [www.TN.gov/agriculture/eab](http://www.TN.gov/agriculture/eab) for an online symptoms checklist and report form or call TDA's Regulatory Services Division at 1-800-628-2631.

For more information about other programs and services of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture visit [www.tn.gov/agriculture](http://www.tn.gov/agriculture) .

###

# Tennessee Department of Agriculture

## Emerald Ash Borer Initial Detection

### Talking Points

Date: 7/27/2010

Initial Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) detection details:

- Where it was found: Truck stop off I-40 at west Knox county Line, Knoxville, TN
- Who discovered it: Ohio woman with a forestry background and familiar with symptoms who was visiting TN
- Who it was reported to: Tennessee Department of Agriculture Regulatory Services
- Officially confirmed by USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on: Thursday, July 22, 2010
- Response plan/quarantine/regulations details: TDA plans to issue a quarantine in Knox and Loudon counties prohibiting the movement of firewood, ash nursery stock, ash timber and other material that can spread EAB. TDA plant inspectors and foresters will conduct a thorough survey of trees in the areas to assess the extent of the infestation.

Basics of Emerald Ash Borer (ctrl+click on hyperlinks to access more information):

- It attacks only ash trees (*Fraxinus spp.*).
- Adult Beetles are metallic green and about 1/2-inch long.
- Adults leave a D-shaped exit hole in the bark when they emerge in spring.
- Woodpeckers like EAB larvae; heavy woodpecker damage on ash trees may be a sign of infestation.
- It probably came from Asia in wood packing material.
- **Movement of infested firewood is a major means of spreading the emerald ash borer.** Quarantines have been established in states with confirmed infestations to stop the spread of the insect through infested wood products. **Buy local firewood.**
  - Quarantine details by state: Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin
- In the Midwest, the Emerald Ash Borer has killed more than 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. This has cost municipalities, property owners, nursery operators and forest products industries tens of millions of dollars.
  - In Tennessee, an estimated 261 million ash trees on timberland could potentially become infested with EAB. This represents a potential value loss of over \$9 billion (USDA Forest Service).
    - Timber uses: major export commodity used in furniture, cabinets, flooring, caskets, tool handles, sports equipment (eg. baseball bats, hockey sticks, canoe paddles), mineland reclamation
    - 127 mills throughout the state report utilizing and processing ash logs (TDF)
  - Another 10 million ash trees in urban areas are potentially at risk with a value loss of another \$2 billion (TN Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy (*in review*)).
    - Uses: street/shade/beautification tree widely planted in urban areas due to its fast growth, beautiful fall color, ease of maintenance, and hardiness to urban environment.
  - Wildlife uses: seeds of ash are eaten by several species of birds. The bark is occasionally food for rabbits, beaver, and porcupine. Cavity excavating and nesting birds often use ash.
- The exotic beetle was first discovered near Detroit, MI in 2002.
- If you think you have emerald ash borer on your property, or think you may have spotted it somewhere else, here's what you should do:

- Check out [emerald ash borer identification site](#) to verify if the insect looks like the one you saw, or that the damage to the ash tree looks like the serpentine trails underneath the bark.
- If it looks like emerald ash borer or emerald ash borer damage, contact:
  - Tennessee Department of Agriculture through the [interactive form](#). Be sure to complete the form in its entirety to ensure prompt response. Tennessee Department of Agriculture, or
  - call TDA's Regulatory Services Division at 1-800-628-2631

Five Core Messages consistent throughout the EAB program ([modified from MN](#)):

1. Don't Move Firewood: Humans unknowingly contribute to the spread of EAB when they move fire-wood. EAB larvae can survive hidden under the bark of firewood. Play it safe: don't move any firewood and you won't move any beetles.
2. Visually inspect your trees: Early detection is a key factor. If trees display any sign or symptom of EAB infestation, contact your county Extension Office, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, or USDA APHIS.
3. Spread the Word: Talk to your neighbors, friends, and coworkers and get them onboard. Public awareness and education is an ongoing process; support the effort.
4. Know State and Federal regulations: Make sure you understand the regulations that govern your own State and those States and Provinces you may visit.
5. Ask Questions: If you receive ash nursery stock and firewood, know its point of origin and your supplier. EAB larvae may be hiding under the tree bark.

Additional Resources:

Multi-national website for everything EAB:

<http://www.emeraldashborer.info>

USDA Forest Service Pest Alert – Emerald Ash Borer fact sheet:

<http://fwf.ag.utk.edu/TDFMH/PDF/emeraldashborer.pdf>

(Images) <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=7171>