

NEWS RELEASE

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MDA confirms emerald ash borer infestation in Minneapolis trees

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) today confirmed an emerald ash borer infestation in four trees in the Prospect Park East River Road neighborhood of Minneapolis within Tower Hill Park. This infestation is within a mile of the St. Paul neighborhood in which the tree pest was found last year.

The infestation was discovered through an ongoing survey of ash trees in the vicinity of the South St. Anthony Park neighborhood, where EAB was found in May 2009. While this marks the first time emerald ash borer has been found in Minnesota outside Ramsey County, state officials said the discovery was anticipated. Last fall, scientists determined that the St. Paul infestation had been in place for about three years prior to detection. Since the adult beetles can fly up to 2 miles each year, officials expected that the bug had spread into Minneapolis.

“When we found the St. Paul infestation last May so close to the border of the two cities, we knew there was a good chance we’d find it in Minneapolis,” said MDA Plant Protection Director Geir Friisoe. “That’s why we included Hennepin County in the initial EAB quarantine, even though it had only been confirmed in Ramsey County.”

The EAB quarantine in place for Ramsey and Hennepin Counties prohibits moving from the counties any items that may be infested with EAB, including ash trees and ash tree limbs, as well as all hardwood firewood. This quarantine remains in effect in 2010.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s Forestry Division is responsible for planting and maintenance of public trees on Minneapolis city streets and parkland. The Park Board’s forestry division has been working with MDA to prepare for the arrival of EAB. Next steps will include removal of infested trees and an intensified survey of all ash trees in the surrounding area.

EAB is an invasive beetle that kills ash trees. Its larvae kill ash trees by tunneling into the wood and feeding on the tree’s nutrients. Since its accidental introduction into North America, EAB has killed millions of ash trees in 13 states. The metallic-green adult beetles are a half inch long, and are active from May to September. Signs of infestation include one-eighth inch, D-shaped exit holes in ash tree bark and serpentine tunnels under the bark.

Officials remind Minnesotans they can take the following steps to keep EAB from spreading:

- **Don’t transport firewood.** Buy firewood locally from an approved vendor, and burn it where you buy it;
- **Be aware of the quarantine restrictions.** If you live in a quarantined county, be aware of the special restrictions on movement of products such as ash trees, ash limbs, and firewood. Details on the quarantines can be found online at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/eab/quarantinefaq.aspx>; and
- **Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees.** If you suspect your ash tree could be infested by EAB, visit www.mda.state.mn.us and use the “Do I Have Emerald Ash Borer?” checklist.

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