

Kansas Works to Reduce Emerald Ash Borer Threat

After confirmation of a single emerald ash borer was made by an arborist near Parkville, Mo., the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) reminded Kansans that the department has worked for years on emerald ash borer prevention, surveillance and early detection efforts. To date, emerald ash borer has not been found in Kansas.

Emerald ash borer, which is a pest of ash trees that is native to Asia, was first discovered in North America near Detroit, Mich., in summer 2002. Since that time, the pest has killed millions of ash trees in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, Kentucky, New York, Iowa, Tennessee and Connecticut. Financially, the United States risks an economic loss of \$20 billion to \$60 billion because of this pest.

In response to the threat of emerald ash borer, Kansas is working cooperatively on a local scale with the Kansas Forest Service in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and USDA's Forest Service. Kansas is one of 48 states participating in a USDA survey to monitor known emerald ash borer infestations and detect unknown beetle populations. In May 2012, KDA set 100 traps and USDA set 207 traps on ash trees across the state to detect emerald ash borer.

"The discovery of emerald ash borer so close to Kansas is a reminder of the importance of staying vigilant in our prevention and surveillance efforts," said Jeff Vogel, KDA Plant Protection and Weed Control program manager. "Emerald ash borer has killed or damaged more than 20 million trees in the United States. It is imperative that we work cooperatively with Kansans and with all stakeholders to slow the spread of this pest into Kansas ash trees."

All ash trees are susceptible to infestation by the emerald ash borer. Trees become infested when adult beetles lay eggs on the bark. The eggs hatch into larvae that bore into the tree. They tunnel between the bark and wood and disrupt water and nutrient movement, eventually killing the tree. Emerald ash borer appears to prefer trees under stress but is capable of killing perfectly healthy trees.

Adult emerald ash borers are about one-half inch long and they emerge in late spring. The larvae feed just under the bark of a tree, which damages and eventually kills the tree. Trees infested with emerald ash borer will have canopy dieback, water sprouts, bark splitting, serpentine-like galleries and D-shaped exit holes.

Vogel emphasized the important role Kansans play in monitoring for emerald ash borer. He said if anyone thinks that one of their trees may have the pest, they should notify KDA immediately.

To learn more about the emerald ash borer, visit www.ksda.gov/plant_protection/content/379 or www.emeraldashborer.info.