



EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE & RECOMMENDED ACTION

By Kevin Westphal, Cedarburg City Forester

On August 4, 2008 the Wis. Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection announced they had discovered an Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation in Ozaukee County, just 9 miles from our city limits. This exotic, invasive insect is responsible for killing over 30 million ash trees in the U.S. to date.

This insect represents a severe and urgent threat to Cedarburg's urban forest, approximately 20% of which is ash. Due to the close proximity of this infestation, chemical treatment is recommended to anyone in Cedarburg desiring to save their ash trees.

The result of doing nothing will be the total loss of Cedarburg's ash trees within 4-5 years, perhaps sooner. This would have a devastating effect on the City landscape; increasing energy costs and lowering property values.

In Michigan, EAB spread an average of 4 miles per year. State entomologists have estimated EAB has been in Newburg, Wis., just 9 miles north of Cedarburg, for 5 years. With this in mind it is highly likely EAB is already in Cedarburg. **Based on the foliar feeding damage I am seeing on ash trees in Cedarburg, I believe EAB is in fact here in low numbers; feeding and laying eggs on our ash trees.**

On Sept. 8, the Cedarburg Common Council appropriated \$45,000 to start treating publicly owned ash trees. It is likely the contractor awarded this work will offer discounted rates to City residents. **I would like to urge citizens to take the following steps:**

1. Identify the ash trees on your property.
2. Measure their trunk diameters at 4.5 ft. above the ground and write them down.
3. Prioritize which ash trees you want to save. Preference should be given to ash providing summer shade or winter wind breaks for your home. People who own ash trees 12" in diameter or greater should start treatment **THIS FALL**.
4. Contact an arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and get a price quote/plan to save your trees. A list of Certified Arborists in our area can be found at www.treesaregood.com.

Note that people who own smaller diameter ash trees (<12") may opt to treat their trees themselves. The product to buy is called Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub (Imidacloprid) available at local garden stores. Remember to follow all label instructions.

If you choose not to treat this fall then you must treat next spring if you want to save your trees! I recommend annual treatment for the first 3 or 4 years to build up a residual within the trees. You will need to follow a treatment plan until this insect has exhausted its food resource (unprotected trees) in our area; that could take up to 10 years. **Please keep in mind that untreated dead and dying ash must be removed promptly to help slow the spread to neighboring trees!**

For more information and current updates please visit the City web page at www.ci.cedarburg.wi.us; City Departments; Forestry.