
ISSUE NOTE: New discovery of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Toronto

Current situation

- On Friday, June 13, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed a new finding of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Toronto. The tree is located on a private property at 5 Milroy Crescent in the Scarborough district (see attached map).
- This is the second discovery of EAB in Toronto. The pest was first discovered in November 2007 in the area of Highway 404 and Sheppard Avenue.
- The tree is heavily infested, and appears to have been infested for approximately two years.
- The infestation was identified by a private tree service company. The tree has not been removed.
- CFIA is planning to complete a ground survey in the area in the coming month to determine the extent of the infestation.
- It is likely that EAB has spread over a much greater area than is presently known. It is typical to detect EAB two to three years after initial infestation.
- The pattern of detection in Toronto is similar to what has occurred in other counties where EAB is established. After the first infested tree was discovered in November 2007, many more infested trees were found surrounding it. Seven months later, EAB is well established in another area of the city, approximately 14 kilometres away from the first detection site.
- This summer, it is expected that many more infested trees will be found in Toronto and in areas outside of Toronto.
- CFIA may respond to new finds by regulating newly-infested counties or regulating all of southern Ontario.

Key messages

- EAB is a highly invasive pest that spreads very quickly and is extremely difficult to detect. Its spread can be slowed but cannot be controlled.
- All species of ash trees are susceptible to EAB, estimated at six per cent of the city's tree canopy. Approximately, 27,000 street trees in Toronto are ash. While there is no inventory of trees in parks or on private lands, it is estimated that the number of ash trees in Toronto exceed 60,000.
- The City of Toronto is working collaboratively with the CFIA, the lead agency responsible for controlling EAB spread in Canada to ensure a coordinated response to slow the spread of this invasive pest.
- When EAB is established in large areas, generally the removal of infested trees is not considered to be an effective tool in the management of EAB. During the initial stages of a new infestation, removal of infested trees can slow the spread of the beetle to the new areas, however this should be done when beetles are in a pupal or larval stage (September to May).
- During summer months when EAB is in flight, residents should not move wood from ash tree pruning or fire wood as this could result in the potential spread of infested materials that may already harbour the insect. It is best to cut and destroy wood between September and May.
- The TreeAzin pesticide may be injected into the stem of the ash tree to provide short-term protection and to prolong tree life, however, TreeAzin must be reapplied every two years and will not provide 100 per cent control.

Background

- In November of 2007, an infestation of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was discovered in the Highway 404 and Sheppard Avenue area.
- On February 22, 2008, the CFIA, the lead agency for dealing with invasive pests announced a Declaration and Order that regulates the treatment and movement of wood from ash trees inside and outside the City of Toronto.
- *Emerald Ash Borer Infested Place Order* regulates “firewood of all species, and trees, nursery stock, logs, lumber, wood packaging or dunnage, wood or bark, wood chips of the genus commonly known as Ash”. The Order requires that regulated materials be ground to less than 2.5 cm before being moved outside of the City limits. The Order does not regulate leaves or bagged yard waste material.
- EAB information is available on the City of Toronto website at www.toronto.ca/trees and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at www.inspection.gc.ca.

Next steps:

- Parks, Forestry and Recreation will organize a public meeting in the community surrounding 5 Milroy Crescent to inform residents of the EAB infestation and to encourage residents to remove infested ash trees after August 6 as a strategy to reduce population buildup and slow the spread of this pest.
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation will implement a city-wide communications plan for summer 2008 to inform residents about the impact on EAB on Toronto’s ash trees and how to respond to this pest. Communications efforts will highlight measures that the public can take to more effectively contain the movement of EAB.

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Date: June 23, 2008

