

June 20, 2011

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an introduced insect from Asia that spreads quickly, attacking and killing all species of true ash trees (genus: *Fraxinus*) by feeding beneath the bark and disrupting the flow of water and nutrients within the tree. It has devastated many ash trees in southwestern Ontario and parts of the United States since it was discovered in Detroit, Michigan in 2002. The EAB is expected to have a drastic impact on Toronto's ash population over the next several years, as there is no known method of stopping it from spreading.

In 2007, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed the presence of the EAB in Toronto in the vicinity of Sheppard Avenue East and Highway 404. Subsequent inspections in 2008 and systematic surveys conducted in 2009, 2010 and 2011 have confirmed EAB infestation throughout the east, north and west parts of the city.

All ash trees in Toronto are at risk of dying from this infestation. Mortality may occur in as short a period as one year, however, death normally occurs within 2-3 years of a tree becoming infested. The recent tree canopy study estimates that there are 860,000 ash trees in total on public and private lands. The initial areas of infestation detected in 2007 are likely to lose most of their ash trees by 2012. EAB will eventually spread to the rest of Toronto, killing most ash trees in the city by about 2017. The City of Toronto has a plan to manage the impact of EAB on Toronto's urban forest, available for download at <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/pe/bgrd/backgroundfile-36698.pdf>.

## Questions and Answers

### What is the City of Toronto doing to manage the impact of EAB on the urban forest?

The City is focusing on managing the impact that EAB will have on the urban forest with a dedicated and comprehensive multi-year plan. Unlike previous invasive species like the Asian Long-Horned Beetle, Urban Forestry will not be able to eradicate the EAB. Implementation is intended to achieve the following key objectives:

- 1) Integrate ash tree removals into existing operational programs to build efficiencies.
- 2) Communicate information to the public in order to raise awareness of EAB, prepare for the removal of privately-owned trees and encourage replanting of trees on private lands to replace lost tree canopy.
- 3) Develop proactive tree planting programs that will aim to replace tree canopy, particularly where ash trees form a large part of the existing tree population.

Currently the Urban Forestry Branch of Parks, Forestry and Recreation is working with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Canadian Forest Service, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and other municipalities to co-ordinate our response to the infestation of EAB in Toronto.

### How can I tell if I have an ash tree on or near my property?

Ash trees are known for their opposing mirror-image branch structure, deeply ridged diamond-patterned bark and compound teardrop-shaped leaves which appear in symmetrical clusters of 5-11 on a single stem.

The City of London has a good ash tree identification document at [http://www.london.ca/Trees\\_Lawns\\_and\\_Gardens/PDFs/EAB\\_identificationguide.pdf](http://www.london.ca/Trees_Lawns_and_Gardens/PDFs/EAB_identificationguide.pdf)



## **How can I tell if an ash tree is infested by EAB?**

Unfortunately, this is extremely difficult without skinning off most of the bark. A lot of the more obvious symptoms associated with EAB, such as shoots (suckers), cracking bark, D-shaped holes and thinning crowns only become evident after two or more years of infestation.

For images and more information, see the Canadian Forest Service document "A Visual Guide to Detecting Emerald Ash Borer Damage" at <http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/download-pdf/26856>.

## **What will happen to the City-owned ash tree near my property?**

Urban Forestry plans to remove dead and dying City-owned ash trees and will replace them, where space permits, as soon as possible. Homeowners will be notified of tree removal and replacement planting.

## **What should I do if I have a privately-owned ash tree on my property?**

Property owners are responsible for taking care of privately-owned trees. When you see signs of infestation or tree death, you should contact a professional tree care company to arrange for tree removal (you can find these in the Yellow Pages and other business directories). You should choose an arborist certified with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) or registered with the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). Make sure to ask if there is a fee for inspection and quotes; some companies provide these services free of charge. You should always get three quotes.

## **Is there anything that can be done to save a healthy ash tree?**

At the present time, a naturally-occurring compound from the Neem tree marketed as *TreeAzin*<sup>™</sup> has been shown to have pesticidal properties and is the only product registered for use in Canada that has been shown to be effective in the control of EAB keeping ash trees alive. The City is trying this pesticide on a small number of healthy, high-value City-owned ash trees.

If your tree is healthy and you are considering using *TreeAzin*<sup>™</sup> you can find more information and a list of approved applicators at [bioforest.ca](http://bioforest.ca). Anyone who wishes to have a City-owned tree injected at the homeowner's expense should contact Urban Forestry at 311.

## **Will I need a permit to remove an ash tree on private property?**

All requests to remove privately-owned Ash trees that are EAB infested will be exempt under the Private Tree By-law provisions. If your ash tree shows signs of advanced EAB infestation, you can request an exemption by calling 311. They will collect information to enable tracking of where ash trees are dying in the City and to track the exemption, so that we are able to respond to calls from nearby neighbours who call in to the City expressing concerns about trees being removed 'without permission'.

## **What will replace the ash trees that will be lost?**

The City stopped planting ash trees in 2003 and has been proactively planning and planting trees in areas where ash trees form a large part of the existing tree population. This includes tree planting in parks, residential and arterial roads and naturalized areas.

Private property owners are strongly encouraged to consider planting new trees. Healthy trees can increase property value, help cool your home and clean the air, along with other environmental, economic and aesthetic benefits. Tree nurseries or landscapers can recommend tree species for planting that are suitable for the site. More information is available by calling 311.

Further information on recommended tree replacements can be found at [http://www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/FreeTree\\_Final.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/FreeTree_Final.pdf) or at [http://www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/Tree\\_List.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/Tree_List.pdf)

## **Where can I get more information on EAB?**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has information at [inspection.gc.ca](http://inspection.gc.ca) and the City of Toronto has information at [www.toronto.ca/trees](http://www.toronto.ca/trees).