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### **What is EAB?**

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive pest that is a native of Asia and was most likely brought to this country in shipping crate lumber. This pest lays eggs on the bark of ash tree specimens (the only species it currently infects). The larvae burrow into the vascular tissue of the trees, just below the surface of the bark. The larvae feed on this tissue during the course of their development. The damaged tissue is that which feeds the tree. The trees can no longer provide food for themselves, causing their demise and ultimate death. All ash tree species are susceptible and will most likely be infested within the next few years. Ash specimens are no longer a viable species for our area.

### **I have been seeing EAB every summer for years; why is it a problem now?**

EAB can be confused with other, less impactful, insects such as Japanese beetle. EAB is a different species and a recent immigrant to the United States. The impacts of this new pest have never been experienced in our area.

### **Why is this the first time I am hearing about this?**

EAB has been in national headlines since 2002 when it was first discovered near Detroit, Michigan. EAB was first found in Illinois in 2006 and it has been the subject of financing and budgets in the state for several years. The first infestation was found in the Village in 2010, at which time local newspapers gave it much attention.

### **Where did it come from?**

EAB is a native species of Asia and most likely came to this country in shipping materials.

### **Where is EAB?**

EAB is spreading throughout the United States, radially, from what is thought to be the original infestation area near Detroit, Michigan. All areas of the Village have been found to have EAB infestations.

### **What are the treatment options?**

There is currently only one treatment option approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. It is an injected product called *Tree-age*. It must be applied by a professional and is not available for sale to the general public. Treatment options observed by Village arborists up to date have not proven successful.

### **Is the Village treating ash trees for EAB?**

Only on a very limited basis. With the lack of proven success of treatments, along with long-term treatment costs and ash tree species populations within the Village, treatment is not a viable option, nor does the Village arboricultural staff believe it is a good long-term solution to providing a healthy and viable Village forest.

### **Should I treat my privately-owned ash trees?**

This is a personal choice. As previously stated, there are options (and many opinions about the options); education is necessary. There are many web sites that can inform you on every aspect of this pest. We suggest you invest your support of information found on resource web sites such as <http://www.emeraldashborer.info/>. EAB web sites hosted by not-for-profit or governmental

entities tend to give you the most straightforward information.

### **The parkway tree looks so healthy; how do you know it is infested?**

After a few seasons dealing with this pest, Village arborists have become very good at identifying infestations. There are several symptoms and signs that show us where the pests are. Primary identifiers are split bark, d-shaped exit holes, and woodpecker damage. Bark tends to split on the smaller trees a season after feeding has begun. When the bark splits, you can visibly see the feeding galleries. D-shaped exit holes from adult emergence are also an identifier. While many pests can leave exit holes, EAB has a distinct size and shaped exit wound. For mature species, our greatest telling damage is the presence of woodpeckers. As EAB larvae mature, woodpeckers find the larvae irresistible and feed primarily on these during the fall and winter months. Heavily infested trees are riddled with holes from this feeding activity, although only a handful of wounds on a tree can be an excellent identifier of the earliest stage of a big infestation. Heavily infested trees can appear to be perfectly healthy, unless you know what you are looking for. Once a tree is infested, it is a matter of a brief period of time before the tree will fail. As in human healthcare, early diagnosis can be made when good health seems obvious. Seeming health does not negate the problem, or its dire prognosis.

### **Does this insect harm any other trees?**

It is understood that this insect currently only infests ash tree specimens.

### **How many Village ash trees are there?**

There are currently over 3,500 ash trees located on parkways (road rights-of-way) and Village-owned parcels. This does not include ash trees located on privately owned parcels.

### **Will the Village contact me before removing my infested parkway tree(s)?**

When a tree is identified as infested, an orange ribbon or painted "X" is put on the tree and an informational door hanger placed on the resident's front door. This is done as a courtesy to let the resident know the status of the Village-owned tree at their parcel. There is contact information located on the door hanger, should there be any questions. The marked tree is typically, but not always, left standing for a few days in order to allow the resident time to call and have any questions answered. For reasons of efficiency, we do not wait to speak with each resident relative to the removal of the Village-owned trees. With the removal of several hundred trees each year, and the added removal of several thousand in the next few years as a result of this infestation, contact with each individual is unrealistic and inefficient.

### **Why is there an orange "X" painted on or an orange ribbon around my parkway tree?**

Typically, an orange ribbon or painted "X" on a tree is placed by Forestry staff in order to identify the tree as compromised and in need of removal. While this is standard procedure for EAB-infested trees, we do mark other trees which may need to be removed for other reasons. If an EAB marking is placed, a door hanger will be posted as well.

### **If I remove the ribbon from my parkway tree, will it still be removed?**

Yes. All tree work is logged in to a database. The work is programmed regardless of whether the tree has a ribbon or not. The ribbon serves as a prompt for residents, and an assisting identifier for staff, but is not the action that generates the removal work.

### **Will the Village inspect privately-owned trees?**

The Village has historically provided inspections and advice as it relates to tree issues. This is always a courtesy, and a service which we are grateful to supply, as time allows.

**Will the Village remove my privately-owned tree(s)?**

No. Private property maintenance issues are just that, private. There is a link to a list of contractors that can assist you with the removal of your private tree on our EAB webpage. These contractors have provided us with a copy of their *Illinois EAB Compliance Agreement* which states that they will observe the regulations as it applies to dealing with EAB infested material.

**Why does an infected ash tree need to be removed; can we wait until the tree is dead?**

When a tree is found to be infested, its expedient removal is recommended in order to prevent the pests from reproducing and increasing the intensity and spread of the problem. Removal and appropriate disposal is consistent with good forestry practice and is currently mandated by the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

**Are we removing all of the ash trees in the neighborhood?**

As previously noted, the ash species is no longer viable in our area. While we are not systematically removing all ash trees from a specific area, the infestation increases each year, and trees are removed as they are identified as infested. Infestations tend to spread contiguously, so while it is not our intent to systematically remove all trees from a specific area, the infestation tends to evolve in this way. Eventually all of the Village-owned parkway ash trees will be removed by nature of their infestation.

**If you identify an infected ash tree on my parkway, will you remove all of the ash trees on my parkway?**

We only remove trees as we find them to be infested, or as requested by the adjacent parcel owner. All residents with Village-owned parkway ash trees are allowed to request the pre-harvesting of the trees in order to give in to the inevitable and get on the replacement planting list more directly. Unless requested, only infested trees will be removed.

**Will the Village remove the stump once the tree is removed?**

Yes. Stumps are added to a list and ground (removed), hopefully, within a few weeks of the removal of the tree. Grindings are then picked up within a week or so. Depending on the season, ground areas are restored with topsoil and seed, or a new tree is planted directly.

**Why do the plants, edging, and landscape block need to be removed prior to stump removal?**

Units used for grinding stumps are essentially large-scale circular saws with teeth that are intended for wood and topsoil only. Blocks, edging, and landscaping prohibit the unit from accessing the stump and can cause damage to the machine. These unapproved parkway installations must be removed prior to removal of the stump.

**Will the Village remove plants, edging, and landscape block prior to stump grinding?**

No. These improvements are actually bad for the trees. Village will not be responsible for damage that may occur to these personal items during the removal process. Therefore, the stump grinding and tree replacement process will not take place until the parcel owner causes their removal.

**Will the Village replace the trees that are removed from the parkway?**

Yes. It is currently the Village's policy to replace all removed trees that currently reside within an acceptable planting site within one year. With the onset of EAB, the subsequent substantial loss of trees, replacement will take place as funding allows. It is, however, our goal to replace

everything that is removed, if the planting site meets current criteria for suitability.

### **How long do I have to wait for a replacement tree?**

It is currently the Village's policy to replace all removed trees that currently reside within an acceptable planting site within one year. With the onset of EAB, the subsequent substantial loss of trees, replacement will take place as funding allows. As of this drafting, the wait is currently within a year. As losses increase, there is potential that this time frame may lengthen.

### **What will be the size of the replacement tree?**

Plants can range anywhere from two and a half (2 ½) inches in diameter, to three (3) inches in diameter. Tree height is dependent upon species characteristics and can vary dramatically. We purposefully choose to plant specimens on the smaller side because smaller trees establish quicker and admittedly are more affordable. When a tree is dug from the nursery, a substantial portion of its root system (feeding system) is removed (as much as 90 percent). This makes new trees very difficult to transplant and establish. The larger the new tree, the more difficult it is to transplant and establish; this causes the rate of failure of newly installed trees to dramatically increase. The increased purchase price and increased failure rate (which results in added cost of subsequent replacement, equipment, and labor) of larger trees have proven to be a challenge to effective use of transplanting dollars. Therefore, the size of tree installed is that which we feel best suits its ability to rapidly establish, quickly put forth new growth, and provide the best, long-term quality and quantity of trees which benefits our community.

### **Can I plant my own tree?**

Yes, but since the planting will take place on Village-owned property, the installation must meet certain requirements (including planting location and species selection) and be previously approved by the Village. Once the installation takes place, the tree becomes the property of the Village, who then assumes ownership rights and responsibilities.

### **Can I choose what type of tree will be installed?**

If the homeowner would like to be involved in the selection process, the Village can provide the homeowner with several choices of species for installation in the Village-owned parcel adjacent to their property. These species are chosen based upon appropriateness for parkway installation, viability of the species, availability, proven success, and diversity. While you may not be given the ability to choose a specific species, you are typically given a choice from among several quality species.

### **Why can't I choose the same tree as all of my neighbors?**

Diversity in the urban forest is important in providing for its future success. As we learned with Dutch elm disease and are now learning with EAB, the planting of a single species in mass quantities is a poor urban forestry practice. Once a species becomes susceptible to a new insect or disease, the community suffers unnecessary and substantial losses of the environmental, monetary, and aesthetic benefits these trees provide. We, therefore, strive to provide adequate diversity when choosing the plants to offer for replanting. These trees are typically not the standard trees you may see on the street or at your neighbor's home. This is a purposeful decision. Usually the trees you are most familiar with are the ones that are overplanted community wide. Adding more trees to their numbers will only cause us to be more vulnerable to the same issues we are currently facing. Trees offered in the program have fewer total numbers throughout the community, and only a certain number of each tree species are available for planting each season, which provides for greater community species diversity and promotes forest durability.

**This is the first I am hearing of EAB; why am I so far down on the replacement list?**

While this may be the first you are hearing of this pest, it has been in Vernon Hills since 2010. With standard tree losses, coupled with the substantial losses due to EAB, the number of failed trees has increased dramatically since 2010. Trees are added to the list in the order they fail. Your place on the list is a testament to the devastation caused by invasive species and the environmental disaster we are currently experiencing. We continue to do the best we can to manage this challenging situation. Your patience is appreciated.

**Is this going to cost me anything?**

No. If you allow the Village to follow the process that is currently in place, failed Village-owned parkway trees are removed, the stumps are ground out, the site is restored (with topsoil and seed), and the tree is replaced (if the site meets current standards) at no cost to you.