

PRESS RELEASE

Emerald Ash Borer Found in Three Tuns Park, Ambler

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an exotic insect that infects native ash trees (*Fraxinus* species) with devastating effects, has been found in ash trees in Three Tuns Park, Upper Dublin Township. Jason Lubar, a Consulting Arborist from Morris Arboretum, confirmed the presence of EAB larvae on August 4, 2016. Three Tuns Park is located off Stout Road near Tennis Avenue and Norristown Road, not far from Robbins Park on Butler Pike and Temple University Ambler.

EAB is nearly 100% fatal to untreated ash trees, where eggs laid in bark crevices hatch and the larvae penetrate the bark to feed, creating extensive serpentine galleries throughout the vascular tissue under the bark. The larvae spend the winter under the bark and enter the pupal stage in mid-spring, before emerging to adulthood through small "D"-shaped exit holes. Adults mate and repeat the cycle. The larval galleries interfere with the transport of water and nutrients, eventually killing the tree.

The one-half inch long, metallic green beetle, whose scientific name is *Agrilus planipennis*, is native to eastern Asia. It was discovered in southeastern Michigan near Detroit in the summer of 2002, possibly arriving in packing materials. Since then it has decimated millions of ash in Michigan and gradually spread to neighboring states. It extends its range through flight of the adult and by transport of infected wood. Quarantines have had limited success. It was first found in western Pennsylvania in 2007 and on the Bucks - Montgomery County border in 2013. Efforts to control the spread of the beetle have been ineffectual.

Infected ash first show signs of dieback on the upper third of the tree. Narrow, vertical fissures may be visible before the bark splits and separates. Woodpecker signs, including larger holes and scraping of bark, often accompany the presence of larvae. The small D-shaped exit holes are most indicative; other borers leave larger, round or irregular exit holes. Dieback spreads to the entire tree, with bark peeling off in large layers, exposing the serpentine galleries. Trees die within 3-4 years of infestation.

Various treatments are available to protect individual trees from EAB infestation, such as injecting healthy trees with an insecticide. The treatment must be repeated every 1-2 years. Costs are generally prohibitive for treating all ash, and success cannot be guaranteed.

Ash are an important component of our Eastern forests, comprising 4-7% of canopy trees. Ash has also been planted as street and residential yard trees. Locally, green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) are most common, although EAB infects all native ash. Ash can grow to 90" diameter and 90' tall, thus dead and dying ash trees can pose a serious threat to persons and property.

For more information, contact Derek Dureka, Upper Dublin Township Parks & Recreation Director, at DDureka@upperdublin.net or (215) 643-1600.